

CLASS 5A PREP TRACK AND FIELD

White looks to follow in dad's steps

Sophomore hopes to make his presence felt by qualifying for state meet

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Dallas sophomore Aaron White is out to make a name for himself.

He enters this week's Mid-Willamette Conference track and field championships with the league's best mark in the triple jump (42 feet, 6 inches) and the sixth best long jump (20-1½).

But when White looks to earn a trip to the state track and field meet, he'll be doing more than just announce himself to the track and field community.

He'll help carry on a family legacy.

White's foray into the long jump and triple jump wasn't by chance. White's father, Jason, was one of Dallas High's most talented jumpers.

"My dad held the high school record for about 25 years in the triple jump," White said. "He was one of my coaches when I was little. He had me try the long jump and in high school, I did the triple and it's kind of been my thing since."

And as White has seen his marks in the long jump and triple jump improve, he's inching closer to his father's triple jump mark of 44-7 — something they both would love to see happen.



Dallas sophomore Aaron White is ranked first in the triple jump in the Mid-Willamette Conference.

"I think he wants me to beat it," White said. "He's worked with me a lot at it. Jumping, it's easy doing it, but getting good at it is really hard."

White has excelled his sophomore season, despite battling a hip injury.

"I hurt my (left) hip my freshman year during basketball," White said. "It has a

tendency to pop out of place."

While White is unsure whether he'll be 100 percent healthy for districts, the thought of what he could do

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may not come in the form of an injury, however.

"Most of my jumps that are really good I end up scratching on," White said. "It does (get in your head). You think about it while you're running down the runway and it kind of gets to you."

White won't be alone in his quest for a state berth. Brett Rowden ranks in the top six in both the shot put (fifth in the MWC) and discus.

For the girls, sophomore thrower Kyleen Benz is ranked first in the discus and third in the shot put, senior Danielle Remington is ranked third in the pole vault and Kayley Sayer is fifth in the long jump.

All of these athletes, and more, stand a chance at making their presence felt, Dallas coach Bill Masei said.

In a competitive league, Masei isn't sure how many of his athletes are going to be running at the state track and field meet. But, for White, the MWC district meet can be more than just a state qualifier. It can be his moment to shine. And that's a thought White can't wait to see happen.

"It'd be big for me," White said. "I'd sort of make a name for myself. There's not a whole lot of sophomores who get to go to state."

McBeth: Sophomore grateful for opportunity

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For a runner who made her name by pushing her limits, she had to learn when to take her foot off the gas.

"I'm learning where my body's limits are," McBeth said. "I've learned to keep under a certain mileage number a week or to only cross-train for a certain amount of time. I've had to learn when my body is telling me to slow down."

A limited race schedule may seem like trouble, but McBeth established herself as a contender. In the 1,500, her time of 4 minutes, 53.55 seconds is the sixth fastest in Class 5A, despite running the event just four times.

Qualifying for state, however, won't be an easy task.

"Our league is so incredibly talented," McBeth said. "It's a matter of smart racing. The older girls will try to control the race. I have to focus on running a smart race more than anything."



Central senior Alex Quinn (center) prepares for the 100-meter hurdles on May 6.

McBeth will also compete as part of the 4 x 400-meter relay team at districts. She will be one of several

contenders the Panthers hope to see qualify for the state meet. Senior Julia Kenyon owns the MWC's top

mark in the high jump (5 feet, 3 inches), while Taylor Knauss is ranked in the top four in both the high jump

and triple jump.

Senior Sai Tapasa has the fifth best throw in the MWC in the shot put, while Reba Hoffman is ranked sixth in the league in the long jump.

On the boys side, Kaj Bansen is tied for the league's best mark in the high jump, while Kyle Miller is ranked second in the discus. Thomas Peterson is ranked second in the MWC in the 100 and third in the 200. Max Lydum and Doug Clem are ranked third in the MWC in the shot put and javelin, respectively, while Alex Quinn is ranked fourth in the 300 hurdles and fifth in the 100 hurdles.

In a highly competitive league, Central coach Eli Cirino is excited to see what happens.

"We have a few kids with a chance to advance to state, but overall, it's just going to be fun to see where we stand in this league," Cirino said.

"It's been a great season, a little humbling sometimes, but we now know that we can compete at this level, and our kids are anxious to show what they can do in our first 5A district meet. ... We have a very young group with lots of freshmen and sophomores competing and we are looking to have a great experience that leaves them excited and hungry for the future."

The future is something McBeth is hoping to focus on as well.

After seeing her running future nearly vanish before her eyes, McBeth has a new outlook at districts. Much like her coach, she's excited to see what happens when she steps on the track.

"I'm just looking for anything that I can get at this point," McBeth said. "I'm happy to get the times that I have so far. I'm going to be thankful for whatever happens, honestly."

CLASS 1A PREP TRACK AND FIELD

Yeager hopes to earn state bid in final year

Senior ranked second in shot put and discus

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — Falls City senior Tristan Yeager didn't enter the 2015 season demanding a state berth from himself.

His biggest accomplishment may have come before the season even started.

"I wasn't really expecting anything when I first started the season," Yeager said. "I was just glad I talked my pals Arlin Schwanke and Bo Beauchamp to do track."

Yeager came out for the track and field team for the first time as a junior, when he gravitated toward the throwing events.

"I just like to throw because it's fun," Yeager said. "I'm not a big fan of running long distances or running in general."

As a senior, Yeager is ranked second in Special District 1 in the shot put and discus with throws of 41 feet,

SD1 Track and Field Championships

What: Special District 1 track and field championships.

When: Friday, 11 a.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m.

Where: Portland Christian.

Admission: Adults, \$5; students, \$2.

Who: Athletes from Falls City, C.S. Lewis, Columbia Christian, Columbia County Christian, Crosshill Christian, Damascus Christian, Jewell, Life Christian, North Clackamas Christian, Oregon School for the Deaf, Portland Lutheran, Portland Waldorf, Southwest Christian, St. Stephen's Academy, Willamette Valley Christian and Portland Christian high schools.

What's at stake: Winners and second-place finishers from each event at the district meet automatically qualify for the Class 5A state track and field championships, May 22-23 at Hayward Field in Eugene. Any athlete meeting a predetermined qualifying standard may also qualify for state, regardless of number.

5½ inches and 130-8, respectively. He is also ranked fourth in the javelin with a mark of 139-6.

"The key to a successful throw is when everything goes smoothly, and at the end, it's explosive," Yeager said.

Yeager enters as Falls City's best chance at sending an athlete to the state track and

field meet. While he's trying to keep his expectations in check, he knows making state in his final year would be the perfect way to end his high school career.

"It would mean a lot to go to state," Yeager said. "I've been waiting a long time to get another chance to go, so hopefully this time it goes in my favor."

CLASS 2A PREP TRACK AND FIELD

Price, Vergin eye state berths for the Pirates

Perrydale duo look to place at district meet

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

PERRYDALE — The Perrydale track and field team has never had the biggest team in its conference.

But coach Brian Evans has high hopes for his athletes.

Junior Taylor Price and senior Alysia Vergin will be in the mix to place at districts and qualify for state, Evans said.

Price is ranked second in the 300-meter hurdles and javelin. "Taylor started throwing javelin and set a school record," Evans said. "To be honest, I'd be surprised if Taylor doesn't go to state in one or both events."

Vergin is fifth in the 100 hurdles, sixth in the 100 and seventh in the triple jump. She's looking to end her high school career with one more memory.

"Since it is my senior year and knowing this is my last shot for state gives me a surreal feeling," Vergin said. "I'm not ready for it to be over. ... At this point, qualifying for state means everything to me. It would be the perfect way to end my seventh and final year of track."



Vergin

Tri-River Conference Track and Field Championships

What: Tri-River Conference track and field championships.

When: Thursday, 2 p.m.; Friday, 3:30 p.m.

Where: Kennedy High School.

Admission: Adults, \$6; students, \$4.

Who: Athletes from Perrydale, Central Linn, East Linn Christian, Kennedy, Regis, Santiam and St. Paul high schools.

What's at stake: Winners and second-place finishers from each event at the district meet automatically qualify for the Class 5A state track and field championships, May 22 at Hayward Field in Eugene. Any athlete meeting a predetermined qualifying standard may also qualify for state, regardless of number.

On the boys side, senior Kirk Fairchild enters the week fifth in the high jump.

While Perrydale lacks the numbers to compete for a team title, Evans is hopeful that the Pirates will have several strong individual performances.

And, for Price and Vergin, he sees a golden opportunity for both to book their trips to Eugene.

"I'm very excited for both girls," Evans said.