

CLASS 5A PREP TRACK AND FIELD

Dallas trio earns state berths

White wins district title in the boys triple jump on his final leap

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — It wasn't easy for Dallas at the Mid-Willamette Conference track and field championships on Wednesday and Thursday. But the Dragons, who finished seventh in the boys and girls team standings, pulled through to send a trio of athletes to the OSAA Class 5A state meet on Friday and Saturday.



White

Dallas coach Bill Masei said. "We had some surprises both good and bad, but that's how districts usually go. We qualified three kids to state. I feel those kids will be competitive at state."

Sophomore Aaron White wanted to win the boys triple jump badly. Ranked first in the MWC coming in, White hoped to inch closer to, or pass, his father's mark in the event. Then, Lebanon's John

"I felt our kids overall competed hard and fought through injuries to finish competitively."

CLASS 5A TRACK AND FIELD STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Dallas qualifiers: BOYS — Aaron White, soph., triple jump (seeded fifth).
GIRLS — Kyleen Benz, jr., shot put (seeded eighth), discus (seeded seventh); Danielle Remington, sr., javelin (seeded eighth).

Bates recorded a mark of 42 feet, 3½ inches to take the lead. With one jump remaining, White had one last chance to win a district crown.

"In the beginning, I was a little inaccurate on the board and I had a few good jumps that were scratched," White said. "When the guy before me got a 42-3½, it gave me motivation to try and get as far as I could."

On his final attempt, White got off a clean jump — and he knew he had a chance to win the district title.

"It felt a little farther than my other ones," White said. "You can tell which ones are good and which ones are bad, and that one felt pretty good."

White finished with a mark of 42-6½.

"I was real excited afterward," White said. "But I couldn't go overboard be-

cause the other competitor was right there."

White won't be alone at state. He'll be joined by a fellow newcomer to state and a veteran who is looking to break through.

Ready for more

Junior Kyleen Benz is a state veteran at this point. She's competed at the state meet in each of her first three years, taking second in the discus in 2014.

This year, Benz hopes to earn her first state title.

Benz placed second in the discus with a throw of 112-5 and earned a wild card berth in the shot put with a mark of 36-2.

For some, state can be a

nerve-wracking experience. But Benz won't be intimidated by the moment.

"The whole season you're building up for state," Benz said. "The fact that I'm going, which was my goal, calms me down because I've already accomplished my goal."

While White and Benz clinched a trip to state during the meet, the Dragons' final state qualifier took a different path to Eugene.

Going wild

When the MWC district track meet ended Thursday evening, senior Danielle Remington didn't know her final fate.

Remington placed third in the javelin and pole vault. Her mark of 119-4 in the girls javelin fell just short of the qualifying standard of 120.

But there was hope.

"We knew as of Thursday that there was one more spot left," Remington said.

All she could do, however, was wait for news on the wild card berths.

"I tried not to worry about it, but I was thinking about it a lot," Remington said. "I kept checking to see and couldn't wait to find out."

As Friday and Saturday



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Dallas senior Danielle Remington placed third in the javelin and the pole vault on Wednesday and Thursday.

passed, Sunday finally brought the news — Remington was going to state. "I was really excited," she said. "It took away a lot of the disappointment from districts in general."

With her spot secured, Remington hopes to shine at the state meet.

"I just want to go and have fun," she said. "I really want to PR (set a personal record). I'm seeded eighth, so I'm not even seeded that low and we're all close. ... The nerves are always there, but they don't affect me too much. I'm excited to be part of this environment."

Duo: Clark aiming to reach podium at state

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"I am very proud of Sarah," Price said. "... She deserves it and I can't wait to be right beside her at state cheering her on."

Price would get her moment in the 300-meter hurdles, where she resolved to give it everything she had left.

"I just told myself I was going to push and give it my all and hope that it would be enough," Price said. "No matter how tired I was, I would tell myself to keep pushing because I knew that

I wanted it. I knew that this could possibly be my last run, so it was either go hard or go home."

The question was, did she have enough in the tank to finish in the top two.

"She missed some key practices the week before, and I was very worried about her conditioning, and told her she was going to have to dig down really deep with grit and determination in those last 100 meters, and she did," Perrydale coach Brian Evans said.

Price overcame stumbling

CLASS 2A TRACK AND FIELD STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

When: Thursday, 10 a.m.; Friday, 2:30 p.m.
Where: Hayward Field, University of Oregon, Eugene.
Admission: Adults, \$10; students and children, \$5.
Perrydale qualifiers: GIRLS — Taylor Price, jr., 300-meter hurdles (seeded fifth); Sarah Clark, jr., javelin (seeded ninth).

on the final hurdle and finished second with a time of 50.65 seconds, setting a new school record.

"I was so proud of myself because I didn't think I

could do it," Price said.

As Clark and Price turn their attention to the OSAA Class 2A state meet, Clark isn't shying away from her expectations.

"I know for a fact that I can throw at least 120 feet, which makes me feel better about myself," Clark said. "If I really work for it, I can get a really high place for javelin."

Evans has similarly high expectations.

"We have some approach issues to work on, but I fully expect her to set a new school record at Hayward Field," Evans said.

Price, on the other hand, is just ready to experience state.

"I'm happy to have the opportunity and no matter

how I place, I am very proud to have made it to state with this only being my first year," Price said.

The Pirates also saw a pair of third-place finishes.

Alysia Vergin placed third in the 100 hurdles, while Taylor Rossi took third in the triple jump, narrowly missing out on qualifying for state.

"I only have nine girls on our track team, but two are going to state and two more nearly qualified, so I am very happy with that," Evans said.

CLASS 5A PREP TRACK AND FIELD

Falls City senior headed to state meet

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

PORTLAND — Falls City senior Tristan Yeager wasn't quite ready to see his high school career end.

Yeager won the Special District 1 title in the shot put with a throw of 40-10½ before taking second in the discus with a mark of 127-0.



Yeager

meat went well and our kids came out and did a great

Yeager secured a spot in the OSAA Class 1A state meet in both events.

The district

job," Mountaineers coach Emily Kenagy said.

Yeager figures to be a contender in both of his events. He is seeded third in the discus and eighth in the shot put headed into the state meet.

Other performances included a third-place finish in the shot put from Bo Beauchamp, fifth place in

the discus by Arlin Schwanke and a fourth-place performance by Robert Kempfer in the triple jump.

Madelyn Hendrickson took eighth in the 100-meter run for the girls.

"Overall we had a lot of fun and was successful in sending one athlete to state for discus and shot put."

CLASS 1A TRACK AND FIELD STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

When: Thursday, 10 a.m.; Friday, 2:30 p.m.
Where: Hayward Field, University of Oregon, Eugene.
Admission: Adults, \$10; students and children, \$5.
Falls City qualifier: BOYS — Tristan Yeager, sr., shot put (seeded eighth), discus (seeded third).

Itemizer-Observer

Athlete of the Week



Yasmine El-Hato Dallas High

El-Hato, a junior, did a little of everything for the Dallas softball team. El-Hato went three for four against Lebanon on May 13, including a home run, helping the Dragons to a 13-3 win. Against Crescent Valley on Thursday, El-Hato threw a complete game. At the plate, she drew a walk and a double, home run and a grand slam to help propel Dallas to the 14-3 victory. The Dragons finished third in the Mid-Willamette Conference.



Rebeka Preston Santiam Christian

Preston, a freshman, had a big day at the West Valley League's track and field championships on Thursday and Friday. Preston won the girls 200- and 400-meter runs in 26.75 seconds and 1:01.04, respectively. She also ran the anchor leg of the 4 x 400 relay team that placed second. Preston will compete at the OSAA Class 3A state track and field championships on Thursday and Friday at Hayward Field in Eugene.

To submit nominations for the Itemizer-Observer Athlete of the Week, contact Sports Editor Lukas Eggen at 503-623-2373 or leggen@polkio.com by 9 a.m. on Monday.

Knauss: Central qualifies four

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Her last jump on Thursday was 16-8¾.

"I knew it was a good jump," Knauss said. "But I didn't know it was that good."

She would find out just how good when the long jumpers came down for awards. It was then she received shocking news.

"The presenter said since you're the district champ, I need to know how to pronounce your name," Knauss said. "I was like, wait, what? I had to walk off because I thought they had to be kidding me."

Knauss, who also placed third in the triple jump, was headed to state — just not in the event she thought.

"It feels great," she said. "I'm a senior, and I know it's coming to an end. I really just winged it in the long jump because I wasn't expecting anything out of it. I just had that, what the heck, go for it attitude."

She may have shocked herself, but Central coach Eli Cirino said he saw the potential early.

"I am very proud of how (Taylor) came through," Cirino said.

Knauss will be joined at state by senior sprinter Thomas Peterson, senior jumper Kaj Bansen and sophomore distance runner Abby McBeth.

Back for more

Peterson has tasted being a state champion before. This year, he's looking for a repeat performance.

It was about a year ago that Peterson finished his 2014 season the way athletes dream of — on top. As part of the boys 4 x 100 meter relay team, Peterson helped the quartet win a state title.

Entering this season, Peterson had a new mission.

"Moving to 5A, I don't think people expected us to do that well," Peterson said.

He did his part to send a message.

Thomas Peterson was dominant in the 100, tying the meet record, and almost won the 200 as well, Cirino said. "He has a great chance to make the finals and do

well in both at state."

Peterson won the MWC title in the 100, defeating top-seeded Hunter Mattson of Corvallis, finishing with a time of 11.06 seconds.

"His seed time was faster than mine," Peterson said of Mattson. "I beat him in the prelims and I thought maybe he was just taking it easy to beat me in the finals, but that wasn't the case."

In the 200, Peterson narrowly placed second by .11 seconds.

With one last meet left in his high school career, Peterson just wants to go out with a bang.

"It's my senior year," Peterson said. "I just want to do the best that I can (at state) and know that this is a good way to finish my high school career."

Wild cards

Central senior Kaj Bansen and sophomore Abby McBeth figured their seasons may be over.

Both entered districts with hopes of earning an automatic state berth. But after Bansen took fourth in

the high jump and triple jump and McBeth placed third in the 1,500, they left more disappointed than hopeful.

"I really wasn't too happy with (my jumps)," Bansen said. "... To be honest, I didn't think I would (get a wild card berth). I thought I was done and had my last sporting event as a Central Panther."

For McBeth, not knowing her fate was difficult to deal with.

"It was a tough period because I didn't know whether I should be excited or disappointed," McBeth said. "I just decided to prepare for the best."

As both received the news that they qualified, their attention turned to Eugene.

And while they may have taken a different path, both are ready to shake things up at state.

"It's so hard to judge how things will play out based on rankings," McBeth said. "I think you just have to do what you can do and see where that takes you."