

CLASS 5A PREP TRACK AND FIELD

# Benz takes second in discus

*White, Remington also place in Eugene on Friday and Saturday*

By Lukas Eggen  
The Itemizer-Observer

EUGENE — Headed into the OSAA Class 5A state meet on Friday and Saturday, something was different for Dallas junior Kyleen Benz. The three-time state qualifier was on a mission to not let state overwhelm her.

"I was going through warmups doing the usual things to make it feel like it's not a big meet," Benz said. "I wasn't nervous at all. I thought I've been doing this for a while. I should know how to adjust if I do something

wrong." Then, she scratched on her first discus throw.

"I thought, 'Oh my god. What if I don't get any (of my throws) in,' and started psyching myself out," Benz said. Luckily, that stress was short lived as Benz placed second in the discus on Saturday with a throw of 117 feet, 8 inches, her second-straight second place finish.

"It's actually nice," Benz said.

"... I had a good series of throws. I could have done better, but I'm proud of what I did."

Benz, who also took 11th in the shot put, was one of three Dallas athletes to reach the podium at the state meet.

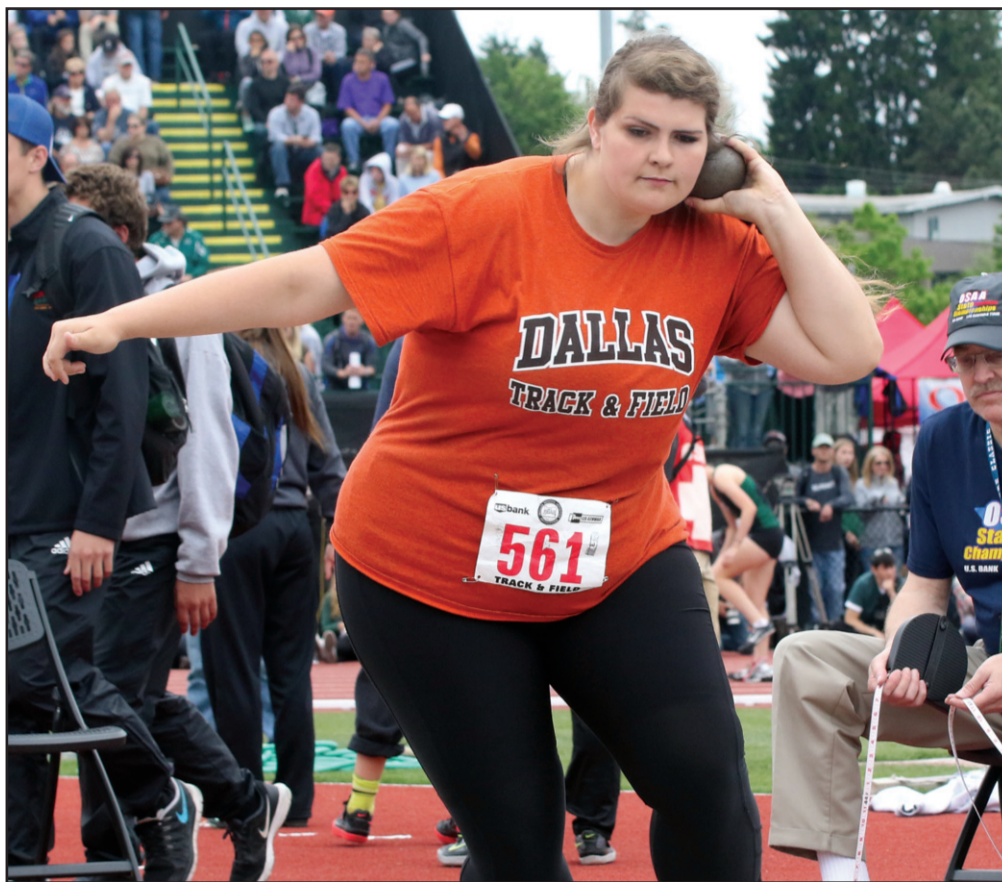
Sophomore Aaron White finished fifth in the boys triple jump with a mark of 42-2½, while senior Danielle Remington placed eighth in the girls javelin with a throw of 108-8.

For White, state marked what he hoped was the beginning of something special.

"It was really great," White said. "I didn't do my best, but the fact that I'm a sophomore it's fun to know that I have the possibly of coming back for two more years."

In addition to his competitors, White battled nerves and taking in the atmosphere of a state meet for the first time.

"It was a little crazy," White said. "I don't think I was ready (for my first jump) a little bit. I was thinking too much and I jumped pretty badly."



Dallas junior Kyleen Benz hurles the shot put to place 11th at the OSAA Class 5A state track and field meet on Saturday afternoon.

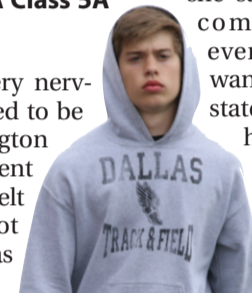
White recovered to reach the podium, though overcoming nerves remains the top priority for the 2016 track and field season.

"I've been jumping for a while, so I don't need to be nervous," White said. "I need

to figure that out if I make it next year."

While White pondered the future, Remington soaked in the present. As a competitor in one of the first events on Friday, Remington didn't have to wait long to compete.

"I wasn't very nervous. Just excited to be here," Remington said. "It all went by so fast. I felt like I just got here and it was over."



White

She may have been the first of Dallas' athletes to compete, but that didn't make the experience any less exciting.

"It's crazy," Remington said. "That's another thing about being early, there's not as many people watching so there's not as much pressure. But the environment is insane. I'm really glad I got to come here."

Remington didn't set a new personal record, but she did beat Lebanon's Katelyn Frederic, providing a bit of revenge.

"I'm glad I placed," Remington said. "I didn't throw as well as I wanted to, but I beat the girl who beat me at districts so that's nice at the end of the year."

As Remington competed for the final time as a Dallas Dragon, performing at the state meet provided her the perfect way to end her high school athletics career, Remington said.

"It's a good way to end," she said. "I'm glad I got to come and experience everything. I definitely wanted to end here at the state meet. I think I could have done better and that would have made it a little better, but I'm not disappointed."

CLASS 5A PREP TRACK AND FIELD

# Peterson makes podium in 200

*Senior sprinter ties for fifth in the 200-meter run at OSAA state meet*

By Lukas Eggen  
The Itemizer-Observer

EUGENE — In a matter of hours, the preliminary heats of the boys 200-meter run became huge for Central senior Thomas Peterson.

"It wasn't super important coming into state," Peterson said. "But it was a big deal for me. It was kind of like redemption because I didn't make the finals of the 100."

Peterson qualified for the finals at the OSAA Class 5A state meet on Friday and Saturday. He would tie for fifth, finishing with a time of 22.77 seconds.

"I was happy I made it in something," Peterson said.

Battling illness and hamstring issues, Peterson didn't compete at 100 percent. But he made the most of his final opportunity to compete with the Panthers.

"I worked through it and I did the best I could, so that's all I could ask for," Peterson said.

He recorded Central's best finish at the state meet. Sophomore Abby McBeth placed ninth in the girls 1,500 in 4:59.76, while senior Taylor Knauss finished 12th in the girls long jump with a mark of 14 feet, 9¼ inches.

Senior Kaj Bansen scratched in the boys long jump.

As Peterson soaked in his last state meet, McBeth reflected on a trying season, one that saw her



Central senior Thomas Peterson ties for fifth place in the boys 200-meter final on Saturday at the OSAA Class 5A state track meet.

track and field year nearly derailed before it began.

Given all she worked through, including issues dealing with over training, finishing ninth at state was something she was proud of.

"Any day you can compete with thousands of people watching you, that's a good day," McBeth said.

LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

"It's a lot of fun to be in this atmosphere, even if I didn't compete at my best. It's still a great experience."

For McBeth, this season provided a vastly different experience for her, but one that helped her enjoy the moment more.

"Last year as a freshman I think I



Central sophomore Abby McBeth catches her breath after finishing ninth in the girls 1,500-meter run on Saturday afternoon.

amped it up a little bit more in my head than it really was," McBeth said. "This year was comfortable, honestly. I wasn't nervous or anything."

McBeth will be the lone state qualifier returning to Central next season. But she'll be one who can not only help other state qualifiers get ready for the experience, but how to manage their time and training throughout.

"I swear I've learned a lifetime

supply of lessons from this whole over training," McBeth said. "Talking to (coach Eli) Cirino, someday I'm going to be able to help my teammates who are going through what I am going through."

And while she's already looking ahead to cross-country, she's also learned one important lesson.

"It's definitely time for a break," McBeth said with a smile. "An actual break with no running, believe it or not."

LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

CLASS 2A PREP TRACK AND FIELD

# Perrydale duo gains experience at state

By Lukas Eggen  
The Itemizer-Observer

EUGENE — In the weeks to follow, Perrydale juniors Taylor Price and Sarah Clark will likely find fond memories of the OSAA Class 2A state track and field meet.

In the moments and days after, the duo were looking toward the future as much as the present.

"I had higher hopes going in, but my body is so drained," Price said. "It was nerve wracking I guess. I think people thought, she's a junior, so she's going to be good, but I didn't really know

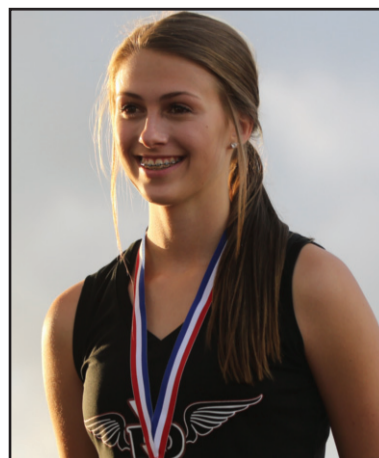
what I was doing." Price finished eighth in the 300-meter hurdles in 52.96 seconds, while Clark took 10th in the javelin with a throw of 95 feet.

"I was extremely nervous," Price said. "I tried to relax, but when I got out there, I was breathing heavily already because I was so nervous. I had to calm myself down."

Clark experienced similar feelings as both competed at state for the first time.

"I was thinking of not messing up," Clark said. "That kept going through my mind not to mess up." As Price and Clark soaked in the state meet experience for the first time, the girls knew this moment was a big one.

"I'm really grateful I made it to state," Clark said. "I'm kind of sad



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer  
Perrydale's Taylor Price took eighth in the 300-meter hurdles.

for the people who couldn't make it to state. Only Taylor and I made it (on Perrydale), so it was really

exciting to get the opportunity." Despite enjoying the experience, Price and Clark also couldn't help but look to the future.

"I want to make state," Clark said. "I want to get first or second next year. I know I need to work a lot harder at practices and condition a lot more for next year. I need to do everything correctly to get my form good. ... My teammates and coach push me to achieve greatness. They try and work me as hard as I can so I can get better. That's what helped me this year. Knowing I can make state pushes me."

Pirates coach Brian Evans hopes their experience at state will do more than motivate them to work harder — he expects to see his whole team gain from it.

"State was a great learning experience for my two girls and, indirectly, a great learning experience for the whole team even if they weren't there to witness the events," Evans said. "I believe the desire the girls gained to get better from their experience at Hayward (Field) will rub off onto all their teammates."

Price and Clark may have hoped to finish higher at state this year, but that doesn't mean their accomplishments are lost on them.

For both, qualifying for state helped cap off a journey that they will treasure for years to come.

"Obviously, I wanted higher, but I can't complain," Price said. "A lot of people would wish to qualify for the finals. I'm very thankful for the support I have from my family and friends."