

State-bound relay team finds needed leg

By BILL BRAY
Staff writer

There's a new kid in the blocks for the Ross girls 4x100 relay this year and the addition has helped the team qualify for the state track and field meet.

Freshman Christy Linder is the addition and Ross track coach John Elder is glad to have her.

"This year we looked and looked for a first leg," Elder said. "That's what we've been looking for is that fourth fastest and Christy was it."

Tonya Elder, Shannon Heidelberg and Marci Reinbolt make up the remainder of the relay and can relate to Linder and her freshman status.

Linder, a former distance runner, gave credit to all three of her teammates in her progress as a sprinter.

"Tonya helped me with my handoffs and Marci helped me with my starts."

"What about me?" Heidelberg said laughing. "And Shannon's taught me how to get the lead," Linder replied.

According to her teammates, Linder's success comes with a balance of dedication and speed.

In the 4x100 relay it is important to find the right combination to get the team's chemistry flowing. The right combination for Ross is Linder leading off, Elder running the back stretch, Heidelberg cruising the third turn and

Reinbolt blasting off toward the finish line.

"Christy comes out of the blocks fast with her speed," Reinbolt explained. "Tonya likes to run against the wind because she has strong legs, Shannon has the speed coming around the curve and I just take off after Shannon hands me the baton."

The junior trio have had a taste of regional track meets the last three years. It did not taste very good.

"Our freshman year we missed our handoff in the finals," Tonya Elder said. "Then last year we got sixth place, so it's pretty exciting to finally make it."



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FREMONT ROSS 4x100 relay team includes from left, Tonya Elder, Marci Reinbolt, Shannon Heidelberg and Christy Linder.

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In qualifying for the state meet. The Fremont Ross 4x100 relay team is currently rated as one of the top 16 4x100 relays in the state with a school record 49.97 seconds. They know that there will be 15 other foursomes down there shooting for the same success they are.

Tonya Elder said that she knows when she gets the handoff from Linder she has to move.

"I gotta go," she said. "I don't

believe that I am the fastest person but I got to get the handoff and go."

Heidleburg wants to get the baton from Elder and reach Reinbolt as soon as she can.

"I know that I have to do the best I can for my team," the anchor Reinbolt said. "It's up to me to get them in position to finish strong."

Strong is what the team will have to be tomorrow afternoon at 5:45 p.m. in the state meet's preliminaries to be the first Ross girls 4x100 relay team to reach the state finals.

In Division I, the Fremont Ross girls 4x100-meter relay team of Marci Reinbolt, Tonya Elder, Shannon Heidelberg and Christy Linder was eighth in their heat with a time of 50.24.