

2001 State...

Area's best bound for D



News-Messenger file photo/Ben French

KELLY LYITLE, left, and Fallon Bailey discuss Bailey's time during an early-season meet at Ross High School. The two Little Giants sprinters are headed back to the state meet this weekend to cap successful track and field careers.

Lytle, Bailey provide Ross with track identity

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

They don't discuss track and field much with each other, but Fremont Ross sprinters Fallon Bailey and Kelly Lytle admit they've had several discussions about each other.

It seems wherever the Little Giants roam, opposing runners want the lowdown on two of the fastest high-schoolers in northwest Ohio.

"They call him the bald guy," Bailey said of the close-cropped Lytle on Wednesday. "They ask, 'Where's he at. How's he doing.'"

"A lot of people have come up and asked how she's running," Lytle said. "They say, 'Wow, that girl from your school is pretty impressive.' I always agree with them. I say, 'Yes, she is. She is amazing.'"

Inside: State meet schedule, participants. **Page B2**

As Lytle and Bailey prepare for their final meet as Little Giants, this weekend's Division I state championships in Dayton, the extent to which their sprinting prowess defines the Ross track program becomes more pronounced.

"I think at this point they are the identity because of their success, not just this year but forever, ever since they've been a part of this program," Ross coach Cathy Esposito said.

Lytle will compete in his fourth state meet (100-, 200-meter dashes) beginning Friday. Bailey is entering her second state meet (100-, 200-meter dashes, 400 re-

lay), but she is the one who has placed, coming in fourth in the 100-meter dash last season.

The two athletes, both of whom plan to run for Division I college programs, are proud of their place in Ross history. Lytle, who is bound for Princeton University, holds the school's 100 dash record, while Bailey, likely headed for Purdue University, has the 100 and 200 dash records.

"I think Fremont Ross has always been known for that (sprinting)," Lytle said. "With the last few years, since we've been competing at a high level and doing well in the postseason, I think people have come to know us."

Said Bailey, "Together, we've earned respect around here. You can't ask for more. ... Maybe

we've earned it by coming out and working hard, but we're just out here doing what we love to do."

Although the two runners respect each other's abilities, they rarely talk about sprinting. That may be because their styles are so different. Lytle is a lithe glider; Bailey barrels down the straightaway like a freight train.

"When I watch those two run," Esposito said, "it never looks like Kelly's running as fast as he is. Whereas with Fallon, you can tell when she's working hard. ... To look at them, it looks like Fallon is working a lot harder to get that time."

Bailey and Lytle would rather joke and encourage each other than talk shop.

See SMITH, B2

Smith hoping for personal best in discus

Continued From B1

"We try to keep it light," Lytle said. "When we go out on the track, then we focus and try to take care of business."

Lytle overcame a second knee operation last fall to qualify for his fourth consecutive state meet. He finished fourth in the 100-meter dash and second in the 200-meter dash at last week's regional. Lytle enters state with the seventh-best regional time in the 100 and the fifth-best time in the 200.

Lytle hopes to place in the top six. He finished seventh in the 100 and 200 last year.

"I want to make the podium and place well," Lytle said. "But whatever I do down there will just kind of be icing on the cake after this whole year. There have been multiple times when I thought the season might be over. It's kind of a miracle that I even made it, I think. Whatever I do down there will just be something extra."

Bailey is coming from a different place. She is shooting for a state championship after winning last week's regional in the 100 dash. Bailey enters with the second-best regional time in the 100. She finished fourth in the 200 at regional.

"I'm going to try to the best of my ability," Bailey said. "I just have to have a good start, run a complete race, finish strong. I think it'd be pretty exciting (to win)."

Bailey will also anchor the girls 400 relay team, which is making its second consecutive trip to state. The team — members include Taneshia McKinstry, Keia Irons, Adrienne Robertson and Bailey — enters state with the seventh-best time.

McKinstry, Robertson and Bailey ran on last year's 400 team, which failed to qualify for the final. Irons replaced Tiffany Sweeney, who graduated after last season.

Smith 'done being nervous'

Ross senior discus thrower Jamie Smith qualified for her first state meet with less than her best at last week's regional.

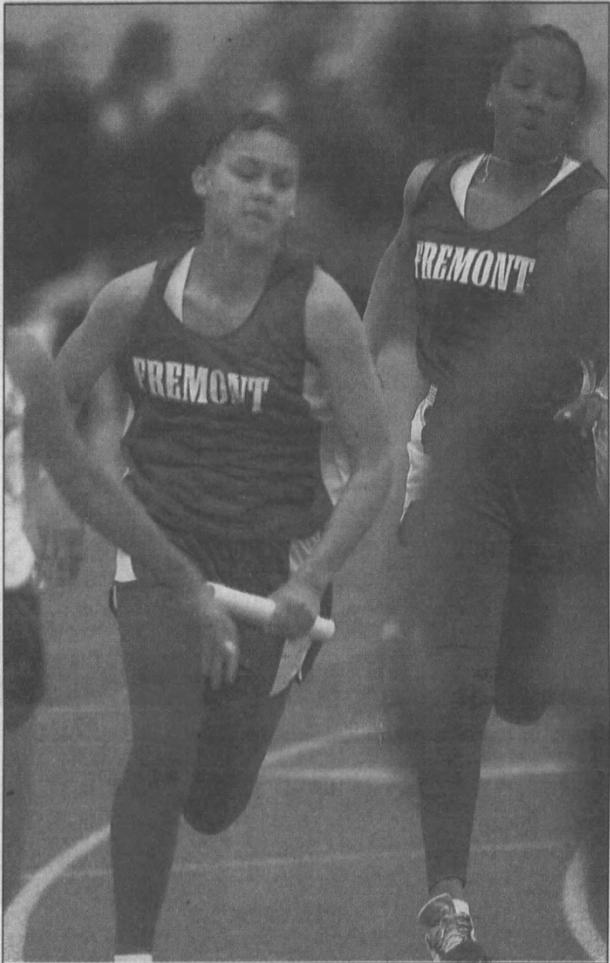
She placed fourth at Amherst with a toss of 121 feet, 7 inches, more than four feet behind her personal best, a 125-9 accomplished when she won the Great Lakes League at the Ross track.

Smith is hoping to place and record a new personal best.

"I think I'm all prepared," Smith said Wednesday. "I just wanted to get there. If I come in dead last, so what. I'm done being nervous. I've already made it there, so I can chill out."

STATE TRACK AND FIELD: Dayton's Welcome Stadium

Ross, SJCC relays running hot



KEIA IRONS, left, of Fremont Ross takes the baton from 400-meter relay teammate Taneshia McKinstry during Friday's Division I state track and field meet at Dayton's Welcome Stadium. The Little Giants broke the school record and qualified for today's finals.

News-Messenger photos/Ben French

Bailey, Lytle advance to pair of finals

By ANDREW CARTER
Staff writer

DAYTON— Dreams of state gold came into focus Friday for girls relay teams from Fremont Ross, St. Joseph Central Catholic and Woodmore as the Ohio High School Athletic Association state track and field championships opened for business.

Despite temperatures that dipped far below normal for the month of June, area athletes booked their spots in today's finals with strong performances.

The Ross 400-meter relay team, consisting of Taneshia McKinstry, Keia Irons, Adrienne Robertson and Fallon Bailey, won its heat going away to qualify for the finals. The squad posted a combined time of 49.02 seconds, the second fastest qualifying time of the day behind Cleveland Collinwood.

The significance of their accomplishment was not lost on the group in the wake of their outstanding run.

"We knew what we had to do," McKinstry said. "We had to bring our time down which we did in this weather. You can't ask for anything better."

Irons, a junior making her first appearance at the state meet, was euphoric following the race.

"I feel so good right now," Irons said. "My spirits are just very high. I'm just happy."

Robertson echoed her teammates' sentiments and touted the hours of preparation the group has put into reaching this level.

"I feel so great," Robertson said. "We've been working on this all week. We've been doing handoffs. We've been working so hard and this is it, we deserve it. We



MISSY TUCKER of St. Joe hands off to teammate Mehgan Merrill during the Division III state track and field meet at Welcome Stadium.

put our work in for it. But we still have to race tomorrow."

The SJCC 400 relay team kept its dream season

rolling right along by winning its heat in the Division III competition, posting a time of 51.76 seconds. Senior Tiffany Dicker, junior Mehgan Merrill and freshmen Missy Tucker and Heather Doerner celebrated their success once again following the victory in their heat.

"It's real exciting, especially because two of our people are freshmen," Doerner said.

"Our goal was to get ourselves to state," Tucker said.

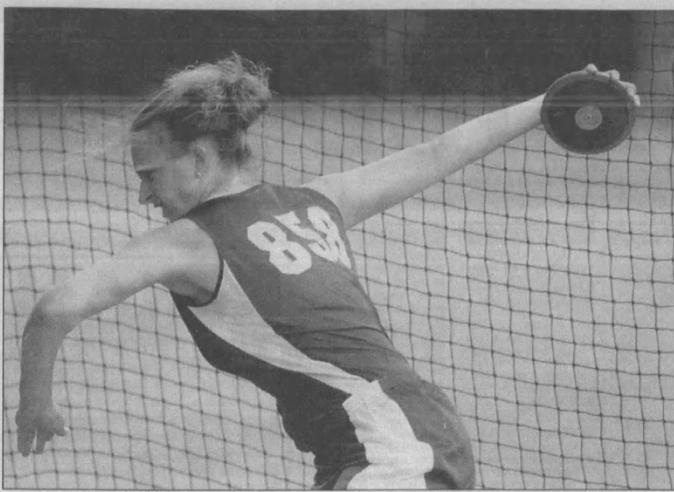
"And we've been improving.

We're just really excited

that we made it."

The veteran Dicker was ecstatic over her team making such a strong showing in its first appearance at the state meet.

See GIANTS, B5



News-Messenger photos/Ben French

JAMIE SMITH of Fremont Ross lets fly with a discus throw during the Division I state track meet Friday in Dayton. Smith, a senior, finished ninth in her first trip to state.

Giants qualify five for finals

Continued From B1

"It's so exciting for me to bring up two freshmen and we have such a healthy team," Dicker said. "We improve every meet."

Merrill said the SJCC squad had a definite mission in mind this season, especially with the success the team experienced in the district and regional.

"I'm so happy for the girls," Merrill said. "We've been running our butts off and we wanted to get to state and prove everybody wrong. And we got it."

Early in the Division I 1,600-meter relay, it appeared that the Woodmore team wouldn't advance, but a strong finish allowed the Wildcats to reach today's finals. The team of Renie Lavigne, Kori Slates, Amanda Weidner and Katie Lavigne posted a time of 4:07.02, coming from sixth place to finish second in the heat.

"They were at least sixth, but they realized what they had to do," Woodmore coach Gary Whiting said. "There's no tomorrow at this point. They went out after it. Times were actually pretty good today considering the weather, but I think a little better mental preparation maybe tomorrow. I think they'll be there."

Ross's Fallon Bailey continued her quest for a state crown in two other events Friday. She placed fourth in the first heat of the 200-meters, posting a time of 25.8 seconds.

Bailey finished fourth in the 100 semifinals, recording a time of 12.15 seconds.

Kelly Lytle of Ross will also appear in the finals of two events today. Lytle finished fourth in the second heat of the 100 with a time of 10.87 seconds. He then placed third in the first heat of the 300 hurdles semifinals, turning in a time of 22.76 seconds.

Old Fort hurdler David Myers didn't realize he had qualified for today's finals until reporters approached him following the 110 hurdles. Myers, who was visibly upset at the prospect of not advancing, finished fourth in the second semifinal heat with a time of 15.58 seconds.

"It didn't really seem like I ran too good today," Myers said. "I



DAVID MYERS of Old Fort finished fourth in his heat Friday, earning him a spot in today's 110-meter hurdles final.

was a little bit tight, I think mostly because of the weather. It's fast track, I just hope I can run faster tomorrow. I felt like when I crossed the line I had tow guys right beside me. I don't like that. I like being ahead of them. Hopefully, I won't be quite as nervous tomorrow."

David Skeel of Clyde reached the finals of the shot put, but did not reach the podium. Skeel's best throw in the semifinals was 52 feet, 2.75 inches. His top effort in the finals was 50-4.75.

"I just wish I would have done better in the finals, thrown a 53 or 54," Skeel said. "I'm real pleased with everything that I've accomplished. I'm excited about getting down here. I can't complain. I just wish I would have finished better."

Oak Harbor sophomore Mandy Quisno and freshman Jeanne Osborne saw action in their first state championship meet and gained some valuable experience. Quisno finished 12th in the shot put, managing a top throw of 34-8.75.

"Mandy moved up the ladder in the shot put, coming in here right around 16th," Oak Harbor coach John McKittrick said. "It's not exactly what she wanted, but finishing 12th her first time here as a sophomore, that's a pretty good showing. We're proud of her

that she made it here and she came here to compete. She's got two more years to look forward to and I'm sure she's going to be here again, hopefully next year in both the discus and the shot."

Osborne and Genoa's Amanda Cedoz had two of the top six times in the 100-meter hurdles, but neither reached today's finals since only the top four places in each, not the top eight, earn finals berths.

Osborne's time was 16.77 seconds, while Cedoz posted a time of 16.79 seconds.

"Jeanne's a freshman and we couldn't be more happy that she made it here this year," McKittrick said. "Again it's not what we wanted; we were hoping she would make it to the finals and place, but it's a learning experience that's only going to make you stronger for the upcoming season."

Cedoz and Woodmore's Catie Lavigne came up short in their bids to reach the finals of the 300 hurdles. Cedoz placed sixth in the first semifinal heat with a time of 48.04 seconds, while Lavigne came in fifth in the second heat with a time of 47.46 seconds.

In other action Friday, Jamie Smith of Ross finished ninth in the finals of the discus. Her best throw in the finals covered 122-11.

"It wasn't exactly going how I wanted it," Smith said. "I tried to deal with as good as I could. I would have enjoyed throwing better. It looked good in practice, but it was warmer and sunny. But I had everybody cheering me on and it was good."

The SJCC boys 3,200 relay team, consisting of Mike Zimmerman, Adam Miller, Dan Chudzinski and Jeremy Velliquette, placed 11th in the finals of the event. Their time was 8:23.38.

The Woodmore girls 3,200 relay team placed 11th in the finals with a time of 10:07.29. The team included Kathy Camp, Cindy Dibert, Casey Ulinski and Meredith Magsig.

DON'T LOSE MONEY!
See pages B8 & B9.

Scrapbook

Warren sets an ND crew record

News-Messenger reports

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Notre Dame sophomore Ashlee Warren became the second Irish rower to earn first team CRCA All-Central Region recognition on May 23rd.

Warren, a Gibsonburg native, earned her distinction after competing in the sixth seat of the varsity eight and posted the team's best ergometer time of seven minutes, 14.30 seconds.

Academically, Warren earned CRCA National Rowing Scholar-Athlete honors with a 3.505 grade-point average in the College of Science.

The Notre Dame crew team won five of its eight races this past season and earned its first national ranking in school history. The Irish finished the year ranked 16th in the nation.

Ashlee is the older sister of Golden Bear first baseman Lexi Warren, who is playing for the Division IV state softball title today.

BASEBALL

Sheets, Pollick garner All-OAC honors

TIFFIN — Heidelberg College baseball players Bill Sheets and Devin Pollick were named to the All-Ohio Athletic Conference team.

Sheets, a Fremont Ross graduate, earned first team honors with a 9-2 record with a 4.46 ERA. In 12 starts this past season, Sheets compiled 70 2/3 innings surrendering 70 hits and 28 walks and striking out 76. He finished the season among the OAC leaders in strikeouts per nine innings with 9.74.

Pollick, a St. Joseph Central Catholic alum, earned second-team honors even though a broken wrist ended his season after 29 games. He earned first-team honors last year.

Pollick finished the year with a .436 average, seven doubles, five triples, two home runs, 27 runs scored, 26 RBI and seven stolen bases. He earned his third varsity letter.

Harris receives coaches award

DEFIANCE — Being a man of many skills, Kyle Harris received recognition for the many positives he brought to the Defiance College baseball team.

Harris, a Green Springs native, was awarded the Distinguished Coaches Award for the 2001 season. As a catcher, outfielder and designated hitter, he finished the season with a .375 average, three home runs, four doubles, two triples and six stolen bases.

Root helps Scots to rout

WOOSTER — Fremont Ross graduate Spencer Root was 2-for-3 from the plate as the College of Wooster eliminated Hiram College 22-2 on May 1. The outburst against the Terriers marked Wooster's highest output of the season.

The Fighting Scots (34-10) just missed qualifying for the NCAA Division III Regional Championships.

SOFTBALL

Rocket closes out second season

TOLEDO — Fremont Ross graduate Jenny Schaff finished her sophomore season with Toledo tied for second on the team in two offensive categories, home runs (two) and RBIs (13). Schaff ended with a .255 average with 13 runs, 35 hits and nine doubles.

The Rockets (19-36) finished last in Mid-American Conference West with a 2-19 record.

SWIMMING

O'Connor floats to the top of the class

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Leadership and smarts go hand in hand. Fortunately for Molly O'Connor, she shares both qualities at the University of Kansas.

The former Fremont Ross swimmer was named to the Academic All-Big 12 Second Team on February 13. She had to maintain a 3.0 GPA to be eligible for the honor. O'Connor is a Civil Engineering major.

O'Connor was selected as a team captain for her upcoming senior season with the Jayhawks.

TRACK AND FIELD

Area runners hit their stride

TIFFIN — Old Fort graduate and Heidelberg senior Heidi Burks was named a Clyde A. Lamb Scholar-Athlete Award winner for the past academic year on May 14th.

Burks holds the school record in the indoor 500 meters and is a member of the record-setting 3,200 relay team. She won the OAC championship in the 500 during the 2001 indoor championships. Burks earned her fourth varsity letter, the eighth total of her running career.

For her classroom efforts, Burks earned All-OAC First-Team Academic Track and Field/Cross Country this year. Burks, an elementary education major, has appeared on the Dean's List during six of seven semesters and earned an Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges Scholarship.

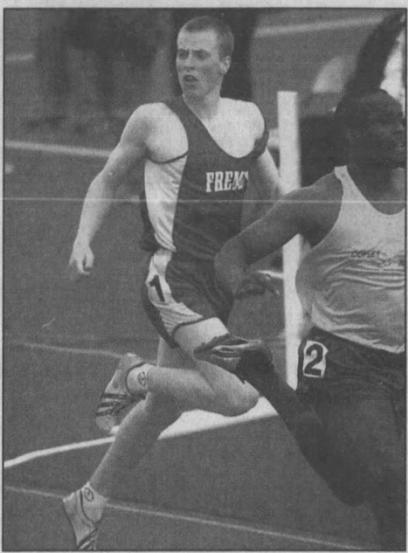
Also earning a team letter award for The Berg was freshman Joni Wilhelm. Wilhelm, a St. Joseph graduate, competed in OAC Championships on May 15th, finishing ninth in the 800 with a time of 2:25.09.

Salas competes in MAC meet

KENT — Kent State junior and Fremont Ross graduate Michelle Salas helped lead the Golden Flashes to fifth place at the Mid American Conference Championships held May 17-19.

Salas finished 17th (105'9") in the discus final and 12th (140'02") in the hammer throw.

The Golden Flashes finished the regular season ranked 22nd in the United States Track Coaches Association national power rankings. It marks the fourth straight year that the Flashes have been ranked in the top 25.



News-Messenger photos/Ben French

KELLY LYTHE of Fremont Ross crosses the finish line in the 100-meter dash Saturday at Dayton's Welcome Stadium. Lytle finished seventh in the 100 and second in the 200.

State Track and Field Meet

Lytle, relays sizzle

Ross star earns silver; St. Joe takes bronze

By ANDREW CARTER
Staff writer

DAYTON — Fremont athletes made their presence known Saturday on the final day of competition at the Ohio state track and field championships.

Ross seniors Fallon Bailey and Kelly Lytle closed out their careers with strong performances and the St. Joseph Central Catholic girls completed a dream season by reaching the podium.

Lytle ended an injury-filled senior season on a high note by finishing second in the 200-meter dash, thanks to an outstanding final 50 meters in which he outkicked John Kelly of Thomas Worthington and Copley's Elisa Adkins to finish as the runner-up to Kendall Stevens of Lima Senior.

Stevens' winning time was 21.76. Lytle's time was 22.03. Kelly finished with a time of 22.07 and Adkins posted a time of 22.12.

Inside: Woodmore relay second; full list of area placers. **Page B3**

"It's been a long road this year with multiple injuries, but I worked hard and felt pretty good in the 200 and, thankfully, placed well," Lytle said. "I took out the first 50 real hard, because I knew they could see me being in the outside lane. I kind of backed off a little bit towards the end of the curve, then gave it all I had down the straightaway. I'll take second place."

"Wasn't that amazing?" Ross coach Cathy Esposito said of the 200. "That was such a great race for him. He looked so strong in that race. He's going here in the fall to Princeton to run track and it's great way for him to begin a new and more challenging season."

See **STREAKS, B3**



TIFFANY DICKER, right, of St. Joe hugs teammate Melissa Tucker after the Streaks 400-meter relay team finished third Saturday at Dayton's Welcome Stadium.

200 dash.

7 SEVENTH PLACE
Kelly Lytle, Fremont Ross, 100 meters.

David Skeel, Clyde, shot put.

Margareta (Brent Christman, Ben Yetter, Ben Barnette, Dustin Malott) 400 relay.

8 EIGHTH PLACE
Jeremy Velliquette, St. Joseph, 800-meter run

Montana Garcia, Woodmore, 3,200 run



MEREDITH MAGSIG of Woodmore, right, hugs race winner Amy Arnold of Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy after the 3,200 run Saturday.

Streaks prove point with third-place finish in Div. III

Continued From B1

Lytle placed seventh in the 100, posting a time of 11.25 seconds.

"I felt all right coming out, but a lack of conditioning and being in shape from not running as much and good competition, but I ran all right," he said. "I'm happy."

Bailey stood on the podium following the 100 and 200 dashes and 400 relay as the Little Giants scored 11 points to finish 16th in the team standings.

Bailey placed sixth in both dashes, recording a time of 12.39 seconds in the 100 and coming back with a time of 26.12 seconds in the 200.

"For the 100, I came in here and tried to improve on last year's place and time, hoping that I could break the school record," Bailey said. "I finished in the top six, which is OK, but I would have liked a little bit more."

"In the 200, it was my first trip ever at state, and I just wanted to stand on the podium in the 200 and I accomplished that goal," she added. "I would have liked to run a 25 or possibly a 24. It was kind of disappointing that I ran a 26, but it got me to the podium."

Bailey ran the anchor leg of the Ross 400 relay team that set a school record by running the event in 48.78 Saturday to finish fourth in the state.



FREMONT ROSS 400 relay members, from left, Fallon Bailey, Keia Irons, Adrienne Robertson and Tanesha McKinstry do a dance as they wait for their medals after finishing fourth Saturday.

"We came in here trying to run a 48, and we came in with second-fastest time," Bailey said.

"We knew that if we ran a 48 timed fully automatic that it would get us there, and that's what we came to do."

Bailey's relay teammates — senior Tanesha McKinstry and junior Keia Irons and Adrienne Robertson — echoed their sentiments.

"What a way to go out, with graduation tomorrow (Sunday)," McKinstry said.

"We made it, a 48.7, that's great," Robertson said.

"We were very good today and we

had very good weather," Irons said. "You can't ask for anything more."

Esposito praised her team for its performance at the state meet.

"The girls as a team placed 16th," she said. "How many teams were there? Sixty-three or something like that. You can't complain about that and that was done by six girls."

St. Joseph Central Catholic's

girls 400 relay team completed an amazing run through the post-season by finishing third in the Division III finals. The team of senior Tiffany Dicker, junior Mehgan Merrill and freshmen

Missy Tucker and Heather Doerner set yet another school record by recording a time of 50.91 seconds Saturday.

"It's just awesome, knowing that I came down here three years and haven't ever got to run on this track," Dicker said. "And now it's my senior year and running and placing. Our goal was top three, top three, top three, and knowing that we got this is awesome. It's just a great experience."

Patrick Henry won the race with a time of 50.43 seconds, while Spencerville was second with a time of 50.48 seconds. Johnstown Monroe was fourth with a time of 50.95 seconds.

"It was a really close race," Doerner said. "I could see the other girls coming up behind me from the corner of my eyes. I knew I just had to throw myself at the finish line. When I found that we did get third, it was awesome. It just felt so good."

Reaching the podium Saturday was the culmination of a long road for a team that featured two first-year varsity athletes and quite possibly the beginning of a great run for the SJCC relay team.

"I'm hoping to come back the next three years," Tucker said. "In the beginning, the parents doubted us because of our new coaches. We owe it all to coach (Johnny) Alridge and coach Ken

ny (Morresette). If it wasn't for them, we wouldn't be where we're at. We wanted to prove the parents wrong. They thought we weren't even going to make it to past districts, and we made it to states and now the finals."

Jeremy Velliquette of SJCC finished eighth in the finals of 800 run. His time was 1:59.46.

Old Fort senior David Myers ended his career on the podium in the 110 hurdles. Myers, who was moved from Lane 1 to Lane 8 due to a computer timing error, finished fifth in the race, posting a time of 15.38 seconds.

"It was a little bit better than yesterday (Friday)," Myers said of his performance. "The wind didn't really bother me. My coach told me that Lane 1 is supposed to be the last one that gets the wind, no matter what place you're in. But the computer timed me wrong and they put me out in Lane 8. I would have rather been in one. My time probably would have been a little bit faster."

"I wanted to beat my (time of) 14.85 and I didn't get it today," Myers said. "Fifteen-three is slow. I felt like I was about the fifth one out of the blocks. I'm pleased with everything, though."

The Margaretta 400 relay team of Brent Christman, Ben Yetter, Ben Barnette and Dustin Malott placed seventh in the Division II meet.