

2003 State...

Area athletes poised for podium

Teamwork powers Ross super sophs

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Staff writer

Elon Simms and Adam Wilhelm will have to stick together.

The Fremont Ross sprinters will be the only sophomores in the 400-meter dash this weekend at the state track-and-field meet.

And in Division 1, the Little Giant duo will face fierce competition.

But sticking together will be nothing new for the two-some.

Simms and Wilhelm, since the Fremont Invitational, have been competing in the same event with repetitive success. Simms and Wilhelm went 1-2 at the Great Lakes League Championships, district and regional.

And if the trend continues, the Little Giants will be lining up together in the state finals this weekend at Dayton Welcome Stadium.

The sprinters run prelim-

inaries at 5:50 today with the top four individuals in two heats heading to the finals at 5:10 p.m. Saturday.

"It's been an interesting year with those two," Ross coach Cathy Esposito said. "Those two have been the best of friends. They hang out like brothers."

"In think through this event, they've learned to deal with each other on a different level as far as competing and spending more time together. It's an interesting relationship."

Both are friends, but competitors in an individual race. Esposito has worked hard to keep Simms and Wilhelm from competing against each other.

"I've always said I'm looking for 18 points. I don't care who wins the event," she said. "You can't pit runners against each other on



News-Messenger/Ben French

LITTLE GIANTS Elon Simms, left, and Adam Wilhelm are eyeing spots on the awards podium at the state track-and-field meet this weekend at Dayton Welcome Stadium. The Ross duo will be competing in the 400-meter dash.

See GIANT, B2

Giant sprinters eager for state opportunity

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the same team. It's not wise to do. But if they feel like they're working together to accomplish something, I think it changes the attitude. And that's helped them do what they done so far. I want them to understand when you're wearing the same colors, it all about a common goal."

For sophomores, both Simms and Wilhelm show the maturity to deal with what could be a complex situation.

"It's pretty cool," said Wilhelm. "We're both friends and we really push each other hard in the races. We can tell each other what's wrong with our races without getting mad."

"We're not in the same heat. If we see each other in the finals, then that would be great. Probably both making it on the podium would be the neatest. It doesn't matter who's first or second. We just want to make it together."

Simms had a regional best time of 49.56 seconds, and Wilhelm was right behind at 50.22 seconds.

With one always winning, does the other get mad?

"I don't think so," Simms said. "I don't get mad about anything because he's my teammate. If he beats me, I'm upset that I lost and not because I lost to Adam."

Esposito said both sprinters have a great opportunity to reach the podium, which means qualifying for the finals is enough as the top eight places are awarded.

It's all about attitude.

"Traditionally in years past, we've qualified for state and whatever happens down there is a bonus," Esposito said. "I told them that we can't have that attitude. You guys are going to be competitive and place."

"I want them to win. If they both want to win the event, they're going to both place higher. I think that if they both get on the podium, that's what I've tried to stress to them about this whole situation. If they both get on that podium, it doesn't matter who's higher."

The thrill of possibly placing at state is much more enjoyable because Simms and Wilhelm have each other to share it with.

"It helps them because they're doing it together," Esposito said. "It relieves the pressure. It's hard to stand around all day and warm up by yourself."

Added Wilhelm, "Last year, I was the only freshman. I was by myself, which wasn't fun. At least I have Elon to hang out."

Track & Field

High School Boys

Division I

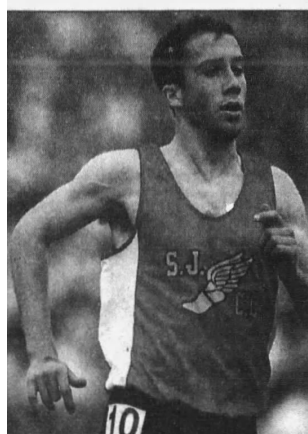
Team Scores

1. N. Canton Hoover	10
2. Wadsworth	8
3. Hilliard Davidson	6
4. St. Xavier	5

Ross Final Qualifiers

400 dash: 4. Adam Wilhelm 49.45.

Geirmundsson finishes third



News-Messenger/Ben French

Geirmundsson runs in the 3,200-meter final on Saturday. The senior wrapped up his standout season with a sixth-place finish.

champions as they came up with 39 points to edge Columbus Hamilton Township (36 points).

Heisi Geirmundsson of Fremont had a throw of 57 feet, 7½ inches to come in third in Division I shot put.

"This was great, I did better than I expected," Geirmundsson said. "The crowd pumped me up. I've never thrown in front of so many people."

Geirmundsson's throw set a school record at Ross. The old record was 55-10.

"I couldn't be happier, this is a great experience," Geirmundsson said. "I just trained hard to get to

this point. The hard work in the weight room really paid off."

Ross's Adam Wilhelm, a sophomore, also reached the podium as he ran the 400 in 49.61 seconds for sixth place.

Ross came in tied for 24th with nine points in Division I.

"I'm pretty pleased. My goal was just to make the podium," Wilhelm said. "No one passed me until the end. I wish I could have run a little faster at the end."

Wilhelm led for most of the race, but runners started passing him as he came out of turn four.

In Division III, Dan Chudzinski of St. Joseph Central Catholic, came in sixth in the 3,200 with a time of 9:48.14.

"This was the goal I had to finish off my high-school career," Chudzinski said. "I wanted to finish on the podium. I'm glad I got there."

"It's a great feeling. I don't think I can put words to it."

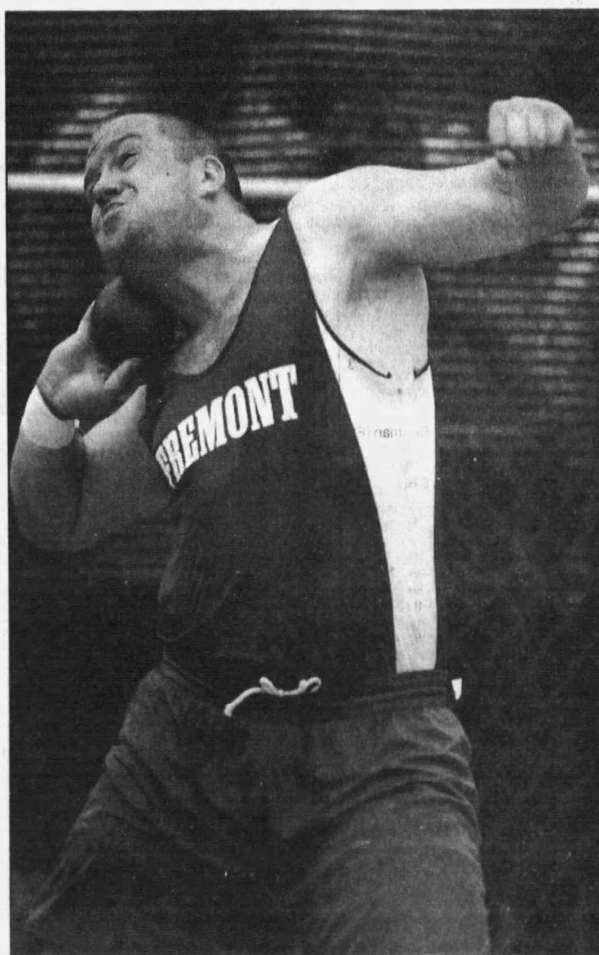
The Midland Athletic League had two more runners, Jason Bumb of New Reigel and Nick Reinhart of Hopewell-Loudon, in the 3,200 with Chudzinski.

"It was cool having two other runners from the MAL in the race," Chudzinski said. "It was like an MAL reunion."

Chudzinski added that having two more MAL runners helped keep him calm.

Rachel Munoz of Lakota came in seventh in the 1,600 run in Division III with her time of 5:18.40.

"I'm just lucky to have family, coaches and teammates here to cheer me on," Munoz said.



News-Messenger/Ben French

FREMONT ROSS SHOT PUTTER Heisi Geirmundsson makes a throw during the Division I state track and field meet on Saturday at Welcome Stadium in Dayton. He set the school record en route to a third-place finish.

Track & Field

High School Boys

State Meet Results

DIVISION I

1, Cle. Glenville 56; 2, Middletown 33; 3, Wadsworth, Huber Hts. Wayne, Hilliard Davidson 28; 6, Pickerington 24; 7, Reynoldsburg 22; 8, Day, Dunbar, N. Can. Hoover 20; 10, Sandusky 16; 11, Strongsville, Cin. St. Xavier 14; 13, Tol. Rogers, Cle. St. Ignatius 12; 15, Tol. Whitmer 11; 16, Twinsburg, Cols. Brookhaven, Mansfield, Cols. St. Charles, Cin. Elder, Cin. Moeller, N. Olmsted, Youngs. Chaney 10; **24, Elyria, FREMONT ROSS, Cin. LaSalle 9; 27, Day, Col. White, Centerville, Wilmington, Uniontown Lake, Can. GlenOak, Kettering Fairmont 8;**

Individual results

400 Dash

1, Philip Turner, Cols. Brookhaven, 47.91; 2, Dan Bailey, Uniontown Lake, 47.95; 3, Greg Day, Bedford, 49.21; 4, Marque Jones, Wilmington, 49.25; 5, John D'Arcy, Clayton Northmont, 49.60; **6, ADAM WILHELM, FREMONT ROSS, 49.61;** 7, Andre Troy, Gahanna Lincoln, 49.79; 8, Edward Fetuiah, Youngs. Wilson, 50.64.

Shot Put

1, Adam Kellermeyer, Pickerington, 64-00; 2, Daniel Pribula, Strongsville, 59-00.75; **3, Heisl Geirmundsson, Fremont Ross, 57-07.50;** 4, Greg Brown, Centerville, 56-07.75; 5, Chris Wohlgamuth, Greenville, 56-02.50; 6, Justin Kershaw, Reynoldsburg, 55-11.75; 7, Dan Orta, Defiance, 54-09.75; 8, Zach Smith, Cin. Moeller, 54-08.25.