

North's Felton battles through injuries, wins section title in triple jump

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Sean Felton remembers the injury like it was yesterday.

The Williamsville North senior was high jumping during the outdoor season last spring when he heard a popping sound in his left leg. It turned out to be a fractured left shin and a partially torn left medial collateral ligament, a result of jumping too much, said Felton.

Felton was in a leg cast for most of the summer and missed out on playing for the North football team. After rehabbing, Felton wanted to at least compete one more season for the school's indoor track team but another injury, this time a hip flexor a month ago while competing in a meet at Buffalo State College, set his training back a bit.

However, Felton persevered and won his first Section VI title on Saturday at Fredonia State College. Felton won the triple jump with a personal best leap of 43-10. His old personal record was 42-9.5.

"It's a great feeling," said Felton. "My mentality was the same, to beat everyone who was there and come out with a victory."

"He's had a choppy season as far as his training goes so accomplishing this is pretty amazing," added North coach Julian Blake.

The mark qualified Felton for Saturday's New York State Championships at Cornell University. It's the first time he is going to the state meet.

"I can't wait to compete against the best in New York State," said Felton. "I'm counting down the days."

Felton also hit a personal best in the long jump with a leap of 20-10.5.

Felton is not the only person from North to qualify for the state meet.

Seniors Sarah Mikulski and Meredith Kirby also qualified. Mikulski is going in the 55-hurdles where she finished second in 8.81. She ran an 8.76 in the semifinals.

Kirby finished third in the 300 in a time of 44.02 and will run the 300 leg as part of the intersectional medley relay.

Mikulski took second in the hurdles at last year's sectionals and went on to finish fifth at the state meet.

"I was real excited to live up to my expectations," said Mikulski. "It was a little more stressful this year."

Mikulski got good competition in the hurdle finals from West Seneca East's Stephanie Smigiera, who came out of nowhere and lost to Mikulski by two hundredths of a second.

Mikulski said even if Smigiera beat her, she scored a school record 8.73 (better than state qualifying time) at an earlier meet and would have qualified.

Mikulski hopes to do just as well as last year's state meet.

Kirby has never competed in a medley relay (300, 600, 1000, 3000) but is looking forward to the challenge.

"I've been in relays before so I don't think it will be too hard to adjust," said Kirby. "It will definitely be a new experience for me."

Kirby said she is not going into the state meet thinking first or last place. She just wants to do her best, she said.

"I've waited the past four years for this moment," said Kirby. "It was worth the wait. I'm really proud that I was able to get there."

Kirby also placed fourth in the triple jump in 32-10. Her teammate, Emily Curry was third with a personal best jump of 33-10.

"I really didn't know if I was even going to be competing in it because I was tired from running the 300 and the 4x400 relay," said Kirby. "I decided at the last minute to jump. I was happy with my performance. I didn't think that I would do as well as I did but I felt I had a good chance of getting a patch (top four finishers get patches)."

Kirby also anchored the girls' 4x400 relay that took second in 4:17.26. Amy Loud, Mikulski and Michele Bauman also competed on the team.

The North girls had a number of great finishers.

Amy Loud took third in the 55 dash in a personal best 7.62 and fourth in the 55-hurdles in 9.41. She ran a 9.22 at trials.

Kim Berus took fifth in the 1000 by breaking her own school record and running a personal best time of 3:12.42.

Dawn Hu placed fifth in the 1500 race-walk in 8:39.25. Teammate Rebecca Pittmann was ninth in 9:23.03.

Caitlin Triantafillou placed sixth in the 600 (1:49.85) as did Shelbey Gray in the hurdles (9.61) and Emily Curry in the long jump (15-2.5).

Rachel Dorogi came in eighth in the 3000 in 11:29.31.

North's 4x800 relay of Triantafillou, Dorogi, Caitlin Curry and Berus placed third in 10:28.83.

North's 4x200 relay of Gray, Whitney Barrett, Jessica Little and Raven Baxter placed fifth in 1:56.23.

Barrett also ran a personal best 8.13 in the 55 dash trials.

Besides Felton, the North boys also posted some good scores.

Steve Oehler broke his own school record in the 55 hurdles, running an 8.02 in the semifinals. His old school record was 8.13. He finished third at finals in 8.04.

Sinclair Johnson came in fourth in the 300 in 39.58. Mike Thielman went 10:22.05 in the 3200 to place fifth.

Rob Golightly ran a personal best 2:53.90 in the 1000 and came in ninth.

Collin Preston, Oehler, Evan Hughes and Johnson joined forces to place third in the 4x200 relay in 1:41.29.

Tom Calandra went 6-0 in the pole vault and took sixth.

"Both teams worked really hard and had to overcome some adversity at the end of the season with kids getting sick," said Blake.

"To have a lot of them place in the top four and get sectional patches was nice."

The state meet begins on Saturday with the girls' races at 9 a.m. and the boys' races starting at 2 p.m.

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A healthy Van Buren repeats as hurdles champ

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

For much of 2008, Allie Van Buren hasn't been healthy but the Williamsville South sophomore made sure she was ready to go at last Saturday's Section VI Championships at Fredonia State College.

Van Buren, who has been battling a slightly strained groin muscle since running in the Cornell University Southern Tier Invitational on Jan. 5, repeated as the section 55-hurdles champion in a time of 8.61.

"I wasn't worried about the injury and I pushed pretty hard," said Van Buren. "I was confident that I could do well and I did."

The finish qualified Van Buren for Saturday's New York State Championships, which coinci-

dentally, will be held at Cornell.

Van Buren isn't sure at what point in the Cornell meet she injured her groin. She only remembers it feeling really tight after the meet.

Van Buren said she went to a chiropractor and got acupuncture and also received certain exercises to build up the muscle. She still practiced with the team but it was only a few weeks ago that she started to train heavily.

"Coach (Sam Hasan) had me not running as hard and I think that worked really well," said Van Buren.

"Over the last week and a half, she has been feeling a lot better," said Hasan. "She started to grab the ground and explode. Her speed was back."

It's the second straight year Van Buren has won the hurdles and the ninth time out of the last 10 years a South girl took first in the event. Van Buren also won the hurdles in the outdoor season last spring.

Van Buren has gone to states every year she has been with South. In seventh and eighth grade, she went as a member of

the 4x400-meter relay.

Van Buren is one of three South girls to qualify for the state meet.

Sophomore Amanda Breymeier is returning to states in the high jump after taking second at sectionals with a leap of 5-1. Junior Ashley Ferenczy took fourth in the 600 in 1:43.82 and will run the 600 leg of the intersectional medley relay. Ferenczy missed the state meet by seven hundredths of a second last year.

Other good finishes for the South girls include third place for senior Jennifer Lopez in the shot put (34-2) and sophomore Jenny Mooney in the 1500 racewalk (8:29.50, new school record), a

fourth place for Breymeier, Ferenczy, Van Buren and Mooney in the 4x400 relay (4:24.70) and a sixth place finish by Elisa Frazier, MaryCatherine Aungst, Alison Ferenczy and Colleen Hurlbise in the 4x800 relay. Frazier (2:31.47), Aungst (2:41.4) and Ferenczy (2:43.6) each dropped their times in their legs by five or six seconds, Hasan said.

The girls' 4x200 relay of Bethany Syracuse, Skye McCellan, Lindsey Porter and Rachael DiVita also did a good job, Hasan said.

No South boys qualified for the state meet.

Dan Polis missed finals in the 55 hurdles by one place, taking seventh in a personal record 8.37.

Hasan said Polis began the season running in the mid 9s.

RJ Grampp hit a personal best 37-0.5 in the triple jump to take ninth.

The boys 4x200 relay of Polis, Grampp, Nick Hoffman and Nick Helmick ran a personal best 1:47.8. The 4x800 relay of Alex Podvezko, Peter Galbo, Bruce Hilder and John Stark ran a time of 9:06.54, two seconds off their best time of the season, Hasan said.

"All of the kids did an awesome job," said Hasan. "Even the ones that didn't make sectionals improved their times. As a coach, that's what I look for."

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North Bailey	92	90
Main-Transit B	87	95
Ellicott Creek	85	97
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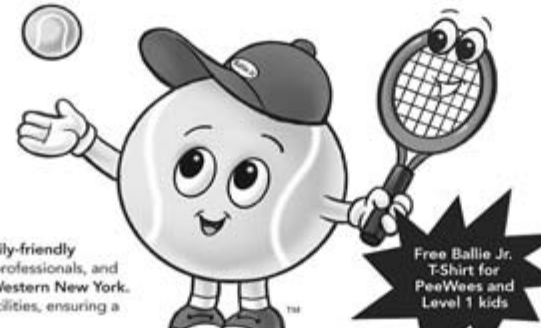


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