

Youthful Lady Tigers can only get stronger

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Although the Amherst Central girls outdoor track team is young, coach Dan Tryon believes the team is balanced from top to bottom and will only get stronger with experience.

"This should be an interesting year," said Tryon. "We are young but with continued hard work could have a very productive year. These young ladies are special. They love coming to practice to work, will do anything you ask of them and are a real fun group to be around."

Tryon said the two anchors of the team are junior Allison Rogers and sophomore Brenna Symoniak. Rogers and Symoniak won Section VI titles last year in the 100-meter dash and 3,000, respectively, and each finished in the top 15 at the New York State Championships.

Rogers also competes in the 200 dash and the 4x100 relay.

"Allison is dedicated and hard-working," said Tryon.

In addition to the 3,000, Symoniak competes in the 1,500 and 4x800 relay.

"She is a fierce competitor who loves being challenged and always answers the challenge," said Tryon.

Rogers is co-captain with senior Diane Herzog (1500, 3000).

"Both are extremely hard-workers and are dedicated to improving everyday personally but also will do anything for the team," said Tryon. "They are amazing leaders through their actions and their inspirational words."

Other returning girls who should contribute are freshmen Alexander Pace (800, 1,500, 4x400 and 4x800 relay) and Ashley



Allison Rogers won the 100-yard dash for the Amherst Central girls outdoor track team at the ninth annual Early Bird Invitational on Saturday at John F. Kennedy High School. Rogers, a junior, is the reigning Section VI champion in the 100.

Photo by John Normile

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Fields (sprinting events) and sophomores Laura Caty (sprinting events), Olivia May (long jump, triple jump), Victoria Sosnowski (high jump) and Hannah Larson (pole vault).

Newcomers who should add depth are freshmen Shanel Chavers (open 400, 4x400 relay), Sarah Lasker (4x800 relay, open 400, 4x400 relay) and junior Kathryn Gross (competitive sprinter).

Junior Yesenia Diaz, who did not participate in track last year, will anchor the Lady Tigers' field events, competing in the shot put and discus.

Two of the team's three relays are set.

The 4x800 relay is Sosnowski, Lasker, freshman Lexi Pace and Symoniak. The 4x100 relay is Fields, Caty, Gross and Rogers.

Amherst finished 2-3 in ECIC Division III in 2007, but Tryon said the meets the team lost were close and competitive.

A team goal is to win the division, but it is hard to accomplish because of the teams they compete against.

"All are well-coached and have excellent athletes," said Tryon.

In order to win the division in 2008, Tryon said the team must be more balanced.

Amherst opened its season with a 77-64 home loss to Holland last Wednesday. First-place finishes went to Rogers (100, 200); Symoniak (1,500, 3,000); Diaz (shot put, discus), 4x100 relay (Rogers, Fields, Diaz, Caty) and 4x800 relay (Sosnowski, Pace, Lasker and Symoniak).

At the ninth annual JFK Early Bird Invitational on Saturday at John F. Kennedy High School, Rogers won the 100 dash in 13 seconds, Alexander Pace took eighth in the 1,500 in 5:25.50, May went 32-4.25 for second place in the triple jump and Caty went eighth in the shot put with a throw of 28-08.50.

Amherst Central 2008 Schedule

4-22 at Iroquois.....	4:30 p.m.
4-26 at Kenmore Track and Field Invitational (Crosby Field) 9 a.m.	
4-29 at Starpoint.....	4:30 p.m.
5-6 South.....	4:30 p.m.
5-10 at Starpoint Spartan Team Challenge (Starpoint High School).....	9:30 a.m.
5-13 Pioneer.....	4:30 p.m.
5-20 at East.....	4:30 p.m.
5-24 at WNY Girls Classic (Lancaster High School).....	9 a.m.
5-27 at Town of Amherst Championships (Amherst High School).....	4:30 p.m.
5-30 at ECICs (John F. Kennedy High School).....	4 p.m.
5-31 at ECICs (John F. Kennedy High School).....	10 a.m.
6-6 at Section VI Championships (Jamestown High School, Strider Field) noon	
6-7 at Section VI Championships (Jamestown High School, Strider Field) noon	

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East possesses right mix to improve record

The Williamsville East girls outdoor track team has the right combination of exceptional talent, returning leadership and new faces for the 2008 season to build on last year's successes and turn the corner toward improving last year's sixth-place ECIC Division II record.

East coach Kurt Holme said middle-distance runners often

serve as the foundation of a track team, and sophomores Melissa Spada and Caroline Steele will enjoy that responsibility for the Lady Flames. Additional support will be found in junior Brianna Zangara; sophomores Kayla Acklin, Morgan Begy, Amy French and Lisa LiPuma; and freshman Lavanya Rao.

The sprint events may be one of

East's strongest areas and will be led by an exceptional eighth-grader, Kala Allen, who took fourth in the 400 and fifth in the 500 at last year's Section VI Championships. Senior co-captain Erin Boyd will supply support.

Others expected to contribute are junior Rhea Francani; sophomores Jessica McNulty, Dani Dee, Regan Prater, Mariah Reed, Ali-

son Milbrand, Juliana Hernandez, Melissa Waziak and Anna Butler; freshman Mary Jo Russo; and two of the top middle school athletes in Williamsville, Sarah Spitznagle and Margaux Gill.

Holme said East's distance race success rests on the fleet feet of senior co-captain Mary Barker, with help from senior co-captains Colleen Lauer and Hillary Scrivanni, seniors Kristen Leonard and Tori Mayer, juniors Nobiru Suzuki and Laura Stelianou, and sophomore Jill Cutspec, who is also a jumper.

The hurdle chores rest in the able hands of senior co-captains Kristin Saviola and Emma Hahn, with support from sophomore Rebecca Slonim and talented freshman Monica Munoz, who also finds time for the sprints and shot put, Holme said.

Pacing the Lady Flames in the long and triple jumps will be versatile junior Kristin Ostansky, who can also do the hurdles, sprints and relays. Also competing in the jumps are fellow juniors Sara Carver and Chelsea Bazilian and sophomores Madaline Torke and Kristina Felber.

Throwing the shot and discus will be sophomores Kristin Alcazaren, Kathleen McCarthy, and Elizabeth Chestnut, with support

from senior Alexandra Minneci.

Holme said optimism, hard work and enthusiasm should be the key ingredients for team and individual success.

East 2008 Schedule

4-19 East at WNY Officials Relays (Erie Community College – South Campus, Jim Ball Stadium) 9 a.m.	
4-24 at South.....	4:30 p.m.
4-26 at Kenmore Track and Field Invitational (Crosby Field) 9 a.m.	
4-29 at Pioneer.....	5 p.m.
5-3 at Depew Wildcat Relays (John F. Kennedy High School) 1:30 p.m.	
5-6 at Starpoint.....	4:30 p.m.
5-10 at Starpoint Spartan Team Challenge (Starpoint High School).....	9:30 a.m.
5-13 Iroquois.....	4:30 p.m.
5-17 at Joe Paterniti Memorial Track and Field Classic (Jamestown Strider Field) 10 a.m.	
5-20 Amherst.....	4:30 p.m.
5-27 at Town of Amherst Championships (Amherst High School).....	4:30 p.m.
5-30 at ECICs (John F. Kennedy High School).....	4:30 p.m.
5-31 at ECICs (John F. Kennedy High School).....	noon
6-6 at Section VI Championships (Jamestown High School, Strider Field).....	noon
6-7 at Section VI Championships (Jamestown High School, Strider Field).....	noon

Underclassmen stepping up for Sweet Home

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Sweet Home girls outdoor track coach Christine Couvutsakis feels she has a solid group of returning athletes which bring leadership and experience.

The Lady Panthers' returning featured runners are sophomores Katie Niblock, Rebecca White and Bianca Smiley.

Niblock took third in the 800-meters at last year's Section VI Championships and qualified for the state indoor meet in the 1000.

"Katie is a versatile athlete that can run just about any event on the track from the steeplechase to the 800-meter run," said Couvutsakis.

White and Smiley are returning sectional qualified in the triple and long jump, respectively. Both are strong in the open 100 and 200, said Couvutsakis.

Eighth-grade newcomer Sabrina Bush moves up from the modified team and should contribute in the 400 dash.

Couvutsakis said the team's strengths are the jumping events, sprints and distance events.

Couvutsakis thinks some of her runners could qualify for the state meet.

Sweet Home finished 1-4 last year.

Sweet Home 2008 Schedule

4-19 East at WNY Officials Relays (Erie Community College – South Campus, Jim Ball Stadium) 9 a.m.	
4-22 W.S. West.....	4:30 p.m.
4-26 at Kenmore Track and Field Invitational (Crosby Field).....	9 a.m.
4-29 at Jamestown.....	5 p.m.
5-3 at Depew Wildcat Relays (John F. Kennedy High School).....	1:30 p.m.
5-6 at Hamburg.....	4:30 p.m.
5-10 at Starpoint Spartan Team Challenge (Starpoint High School).....	9:30 a.m.
5-13 W.S. East.....	4:45 p.m.
5-20 Lake Shore.....	4:30 p.m.
5-24 at WNY Girls Classic (Lancaster High School) 9 a.m.	
5-27 at Town of Amherst Championships (Amherst High School).....	4:30 p.m.
5-30 at ECICs (John F. Kennedy High School) 4 p.m.	
5-31 at ECICs (John F. Kennedy High School). 10 a.m.	
6-6 at Section VI Championships (Jamestown High School, Strider Field).....	noon
6-7 at Section VI Championships (Jamestown High School, Strider Field).....	noon

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Sports briefs

Amherst Central graduates Rosalie Herberger and Robert Tober and Sacred Heart Academy graduate Melissa Radder earned Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference academic all-conference honors. All three attend Hilbert College.

Amherst resident James Piazza allowed one earned run and struck out three over three innings to record the win on the mound as the University at Buffalo baseball team beat Niagara University, 10-6, on April 9.