

Class B

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place finish in the 800 (2:22.33). The Bobcat runner didn't know how much energy she would have left after competing in the medley relay just 20 minutes prior to start of the 800.

"My coach and I had made a decision that I was going to run the last leg of the medley relay," Koerner said. "I didn't know how that would go, so I wasn't really thinking I would do this well in the 800."

Koerner and Roth are very familiar with running against each other since they reside in the same town. Running against that type of competition prepared both of them for the event.

"Lillie (Koerner) is a great runner and being from the same town took a lot off my plate," Roth said. "Now that she is senior, I can win a couple more races."

Alcester-Hudson had the fastest qualifying time coming into the state meet in the 3200-meter relay and the Cubs didn't disappoint in the finals. It was almost a nine-second win for Alcester-Hudson (10:01.63).

"Having other teams to push you really helps," 3200 relay member Jessica Wegh said. "During the season, we run against some of the fastest teams in the state."

Freeman Academy followed Alcester-Hudson in second place in the 3200 (10:10.02). It was a solid start to the morning for the Bobcats.

"I think starting a meet like this with a good race and a strong finish is a big confidence booster," Koerner said. "I knew it would be a tough day for us, because we don't have much depth to our team."

For the Centerville Tornados, Kieran O'Malley took her talents off the hardwood to grab two medal finishes in the long and triple jump. O'Malley had the

top-ranked jump (16-11.75) coming into the state meet, but she isn't used to jumping in rainy weather. That proved to be a main factor in a sixth place finish (15-7.75).

"I'm going to make an excuse about the weather, but when it rains — we don't have practice," O'Malley said. "I wasn't really used to the rain and I tried my hardest, but just came up a little bit short."

O'Malley expressed some of her frustration in the medley, where her team was sitting sixth going into the third leg until O'Malley picked up three positions to hand the baton off to Becca Steadman.

"All four of us were really nervous, because we had the third best time in the medley," O'Malley said. "I was kind of staying in the sixth place area and I told myself 'I gotta get going, so I can give Becca a chance.'"

In her final event of the day, O'Malley brought home a fourth place finish in the triple jump (33-2.25). Her meet isn't over as she sets her sights on the medley and the high jump, where she sits in the middle of the pack at 4-feet-10.

"I think I had more confidence after running that medley," O'Malley said. "I got over to the triple and they didn't give me any run throughs. I was just praying, but I got into finals and went from there."

Other top placers in the triple jump were Kellie Winckler of Andes Central in second (33-9) and Irene-Wakonda's Lexy Schnek in sixth (32-11.75).

The 3200-meter run has been known as a gauntlet making eight trips around the track. Steadman of Centerville ran her way to a fourth place finish (12:14.5).

"I just tried to keep my pace and not to push it," Steadman said. "The competition helps my times a lot."

Steadman gave up her chance of a top place in the 800 run in hopes of helping out the medley relay team and O'Malley couldn't give her enough respect.

"I want to thank Becca (Stead-

man), because she gave up her 800 just so that she could run with us," O'Malley said. "That was a huge difference helping get us to finals."

Other winners in the girls division were Haley Hinseth of Irene-Wakonda placing fourth in the shot put (36-6.5) and Centerville's Sam Blake taking eighth (35-1).

In the boys' division, Mount Marty College recruit Tyler Payer had a tough day in the long jump and triple jump, but managed to get a pair of medal finishes.

Payer posted the longest jump (22-0) during the season, but at the state meet he met up with multiple jumping champion Jeff O'Connell of Philip. The Tripp-Delmont-Armour native landed in third place with a jump of 21-feet-7.5.

"I had really high expectations coming in," Payer said. "I'm pretty happy with third and it was kind of tough getting a good jump."

It was a tougher time in the pits for Payer in the triple jump, where he had a couple of scratches to find himself in seventh place (40-8.75).

Payer isn't frowning about medaling twice as he looks forward to breaking the school record in the high jump on day two.

"I'm hoping to place in the top three," Payer said, "even though I'm sitting in the pack at around six-foot. I'm hoping to beat that school record, that's the only one I haven't gotten out of the three jumps."

Andes Central's Colter Florey jumped a fifth place finish in the triple (41-5.75) and his younger brother Conner placed sixth in the long jump (20-0).

Spencer Bloch of Scotland knows all about throwing a shot put, but throwing a shot put in rain makes it a little trickier. Bloch said that he was happy with his third place finish in the shot (47-4), but knows that he could have easily placed higher in the meet.

"I threw alright; I could have thrown better of course," Bloch

said. "I thought if I went in and threw my best, I could probably win it. The competition was tough."

The pole vault had a flood of local athletes medaling including four of the top eight finishers. Leading the way was Dustin Livingston of Irene-Wakonda placing second (12-6), while teammate Garrett Anderson taking eighth (11-6).

Menno's Tyler Handel has been battling back pains for the last couple of weeks and the making for a long day took a toll on his body. Handel was able to place fourth in the pole vault (12-6), followed by teammate Ben Fischer in seventh (11-6).

"I was seeded pretty high in everything I was in and there is pressure there — even if people act like there's not," Handel said. "I just wanted to do my best with the physical problems and I wasn't really expecting much. I haven't been pulling off the times I've been doing."

Handel also qualified for the 100-meter run and one of the legs in the 400-meter relay. The Menno native is hoping that a seamless schedule for him on day two will keep those back pains away for at least another day.

"Going into day two, there's going to be less pressure," Handel said. "I'm in finals and as long as you finish, you get a medal."

Sophomore Duane Jongeling of Parker had a solid start to the state meet, starting helping the Pheasants to a second place finish in the 3200 relay (8:33.49). Jongeling also came in with the third-best time in the 3200 run and managed to cut off almost 10 seconds off his best time.

"When I heard it from my teammates that I ran a sub 10, it explains a little why my side hurts now," Jongeling said. "I was happy that I finally got the school record."

Jongeling also has a top-three time in the 1600-meter run and is hoping to repeat the experience he had day one.

"I just thinking of going out and see what I can do with the



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/THE P&D

Irene-Wakonda's Dustin Livingston goes over the bar during the Class B boys' pole vault Friday in Sioux Falls. Livingston cleared 12-6 to finish second in the event.

mile," he said. "I'll see if I can stick with the lead pack."

Other individual winners were Irene-Wakonda's Scott Davis taking eighth in the shot put (44-6.75) and Jake Vollmer placing seventh in the 3200 (10:27.44).

Qualifying for finals was Menno's Brady Viet of Marion in the 200 and 400.

The action continues today (Saturday) starting at 9 a.m. at Howard Wood Field in Sioux Falls.

Class A

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An Augustana recruit, Koupal finished first with a jump of 10-feet-6, a mark that was one foot lower than her qualifying height.

"The weather really changed things," she said. "The rain made it difficult, because the runway was wet and had grass on it, and it was hard to hold on to the pole."

Koupal had set a new state record last year at 11-4, and admitted Friday to aiming for that mark again.

"I was hoping I'd get either a new record or do what I did last year," she said. "It's a good feeling, though. I didn't just want to jump once and have the title."

"I wanted more competition than that."

One athlete who took joy in Friday's conditions was Platte-Geddes junior Destinni Girton.

As one of three athletes with a qualifying mark of 5-foot-3 in the girls' high jump, Girton won the event at 5-foot-3, edging Wagner's LaShawn Medicine Horn — who saw the bar barely fall off in her final attempt at 5-3.

"I love this weather, this is perfect for me," she said. "I don't care if it's wet like this, I just hate being hot. This is exactly what I wanted coming to state."

Girton missed on three attempts at 5-4, but by that point, she had already captured a state championship that eluded her in frustrating fashion last year.

"Last year I was seeded second and I didn't even finish in the top 12, and I supposedly choked, so this year, I was really pumped up," she said. "My coach always tells me it's a mental game, that it's 90 percent mental and the rest is actually ability."

"I went out there wanting to win."

The same could be said for Ethan-Parkston's Marie Malloy and Dakota Valley's Matt Lupkes, who were both seeded highly in the girls' and boys' long jump, respectively.

Malloy finished second in the girls' long jump at 16-feet-1.75 after not only coming in as the defending state champion but with a qualifying mark of 16-10.75.

Clark-Willow Lake senior Tess Johnson easily took first place at 16-11.25, so weather wasn't necessarily a hindrance to only specific athletes, Malloy said.

"Everyone was in the same conditions, so it was hard, but I wasn't alone," said Malloy, who also advanced to the finals in the 100-meter dash. "It was fair because everyone had to suffer, I guess."



JEREMY HOECK/THE P&D

Destinni Girton of Platte-Geddes won the girls' high jump at 5-feet, 3 inches during Friday's Class A portion of the S.D. State Track & Field Championships in Madison.

Malloy also ran a leg in Ethan-Parkston's 800-meter relay, which was held concurrently with the long jump. She admitted later to being hurried in her jumps.

"Having the 100 and (800) relay before the long jump really took its toll," she said. "I felt like I was rushed in my jumps, but I'll take second over anything worse."

In the case of Lupkes, a senior for the Panthers, a pair of faults in the finals led to a third-place finish in the boys' long jump.

The USD football recruit came in with the top qualifying mark, at 21-7. While Lupkes encountered troubles in scratching his first two attempts in the finals, Flandreau senior Carter Ahlers — seeded fifth — won the event at 21-2.75.

Though he slipped down to

third place, Lupkes said he was satisfied with the way he overcame all the issues.

"I've kind of been struggling all season, but everyone pretty much has with all this bad weather," Lupkes said. "I had to keep adjusting to everything

today, so I was pretty happy about that, I guess."

Dakota Valley also qualified for the finals in the 400 and 800 relays, despite senior Zach Sexton being sidelined with a hamstring injury in the preliminaries.

"Zach got hurt, and that's a big loss for us," Lupkes said. "His hamstring has been bothering him for the last couple of weeks. He started in the 100 and went about 40 meters and had to pull up."

In other preliminary and finals action from Friday:

- Bon Homme senior Tad Schuurmans advanced to the finals in the 100 and 200, while teammate Jared Van Winkle, also a senior, made the finals in the 400.

- Beresford's Holden Cotton tied for fourth in the high jump.

- Henry Wegehaupt of Ethan-Parkston tied for sixth place in the pole vault.

- Viborg-Hurley made the finals of the 400 relay, while Bon Homme and Vermillion advanced to the finals of the 800 relay.

- Vermillion also finished eighth in the boys' 3200 relay.

On the girls' side, Vermillion advanced to the finals in the medley relay, and Tanagers' sophomore Blair Gilkyson finished sixth in the 3200-meter run.

The Class A meet concludes today (Saturday) at Howard Wood Field in Sioux Falls.

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