

Yankton

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the standard set by Steve Schermerhorn in 2001. The mark had been a target of his for some time.

Hejna also posted a mark of 21-11 3/4 in the long jump, finishing second to Roosevelt's Taryn Christion (23-1 1/2). Junior Lee Rose finished seventh at 20-7 3/4, with junior Brady Hale 17th at 19-9 3/4.

He finished his day with another personal best, a mark of 46-5 3/4 in the triple jump. Brandon Valley's Alex Wilde won with a mark of 46-11 1/4. Hale finished ninth with a mark of 42-5.

The triple jump ranks second in YHS school history and bests his previous personal record by nine inches.

Senior Brice Cowman started his state meet off with a close finish and fourth place in the 3200. His clocking of 9:45.75 was only 1.61 seconds behind first place Caleb Diggs of Douglas. Yankton's Justin Grode was 14th in 10:22.02.

Senior James Hofer made the podium in the pole vault for a second straight year, clearing 12-9 to finish eighth.

Senior Ryan Olson just missed the podium in the 800, placing ninth in 2:04.34.

Yankton finished 12th in the boys' 3200 relay, as senior Justin Grode, junior Connor Chambers and sophomores Gabe Dannenbring and Jared Rafferty finished in 8:39.09.

Junior Nick Raab finished 18th in the discus with a toss of 123-0.

Yankton qualified one relay for finals today (Saturday), the 1600 relay. The four-sons of Olson, Rose, Mason Strahl and Blake Savey clocked a 3:32.40. Hejna will likely conclude his YHS career by subbing in for one of the legs of that relay.

The Bucks finished ninth in the 400 relay prelims (44.24) and 800 relay prelims (1:33.24), and were 12th in the medley relay prelims (3:53.60).

"We were hopeful to get a few more through, but ninth



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Yankton senior Brenna Fitzsimmons, 369, takes off and prepares to take the baton from freshman Madason Tessier during the prelims of the girls' 800-meter relay at the South Dakota State Class AA Track and Field Meet on Friday in Sioux Falls. Yankton qualified for finals in the event, as well as the 400, 1600 and medley relays.

seemed like a common theme today," Youmans said. "We'll have to be very good on the boys' side tomorrow, take advantage of every opportunity of we want to get on the podium."

Junior Charlie Stephenson finished 10th in the 110 hurdles (16.05) and 300 hurdles (42.38), just missing finals in both events.

Girls

The Yankton Gazelles qualified for finals in all four

relay preliminaries on Friday, as well as posting two qualifiers in hurdle races.

"The girls are set up for a good day," Youmans said. "We're in the position that we wanted to be in. We control our own destiny."

Senior Hailey Luken won her heat and tied for the top preliminary time in the 100 hurdles. Teammates Madason Tessier (16.21) and Danielle Salvatori (16.73) finished 12th and 18th.

"It was a big confidence boost for Hailey last Thurs-

day when she beat (Roosevelt's) Valerie Moos and (Harrisburg's) Haley Brugge-

man," Youmans said. Tessier also made the finals of the 300 hurdles, clock-

ing a 47.70. Luken also teamed with Rebecca Moser, Erin Luken and fellow senior Brenna Fitzsimmons to qualify for the finals of the 400 relay in 50.48.

Fitzsimmons teamed with junior Danielle Beckmann and freshmen Tessier and Emma Stewart to qualify for

the 800 relay finals in 1:47.40. Fitzsimmons, Moser and Erin Luken teamed with Lauren Graves to qualify the medley relay in 4:25.02.

Beckmann, Graves, Erin Luken and senior Whitlee Larson sent the Gazelles to the finals in the 1600 relay, clocking a 4:05.44 to place fourth in the prelims.

The first round of the Annie Kruse-Tamara Gorman battle went to Stevens' Gorman in the 3200. The Raiders standout (11:07.58) was favored in the event, and beat out Kruse (11:23.08) for the title. Yankton's Savannah Woods finished fourth in 11:32.77, with eighth grader Madison McClure ninth in 12:02.71.

"We knew that the distance crew had to work hard to keep us in the hunt," Youmans said. "The distance events are a place where we need to put multiple girls on the podium."

Round two between the state's top girls' distance runners will come today (Saturday), with Kruse holding the top time in the 1600.

Kruse, Woods, Graves and Larson teamed up to finish third in the 3200 relay, clocking a 9:36.11. Larson scored an eighth place finish in a tightly-contested 800, clocking a 2:21.33.

Stewart scored a sixth place finish in the long jump with a mark of 16-2. She also finished 16th in the triple jump with a mark of 32-7 1/4. Fellow Gazelle freshman Lindsey Hale was 17th in the long jump at 14-1 3/4.

"Stewart was a nice surprise," Youmans said. "She's a kid that we'll have with us for a couple of years. She scored some points for us, and we'll get to see her continue to evolve."

Beckmann just missed a pair of open event finals, placing 10th in the 400 (1:00.08) and 11th in the 200 (26.23).

Sophomore Adrienne Kusek placed 19th in the discus with a toss of 96-6. Stewart tied for 14th in the high jump at 4-8.

You can follow James D. Cimburek on Twitter at twitter.com/JCimburek. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net

Class B

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(150-0 1/2), with Irene-Wakonda's Kevin Hinseth eighth (141-6).

• Freeman Academy's Ryan Haggerty finished seventh in the 3200 (10:48.89).

The Freeman girls scored 20 points to rank third after the opening day, highlighted by a runner-up finish in the 3200 relay (9:57.83). Gayville-Volin finished third at 9:59.65.

Also for Freeman, Cailey Roth finished third in the 800 (2:22.20), Shelby Jensen finished fifth in the long jump (15-6 3/4) and Taylor Hermesen (107-5) was seventh in the discus.

Scotland's Carley Skorepa earned championship honors in the discus with a toss of 127-3, and placed eighth in the shot put (35-11).

Gayville-Volin took home two places in the 3200, with Laura Nelson (12:05.0) placing second and Genevieve Clark (12:30.37) finishing seventh.

Marion's lone state meet entry, senior Erica Schoenwald, placed seventh in the long jump (15-1).

In the pole vault, Menno's Christina Herrboldt (9-0) placed third, Centerville's Rebecca Hybertson (8-6) tied for fourth and Irene-Wakonda's Rainy Brewer-Nysven (8-0) finished eighth.

Irene-Wakonda's Lauren Sokolowski, the defending state champion in the 100 hurdles, qualified for the finals in that event. Shannon Sokolowski, just a seventh grader, qualified for both hurdle finals.

Parker girls placed 7th in the 4x100 meter relay on Friday. Pheasant girls will also compete today in the 4x200 relay. Brittany Olson will move as a preliminary finalist in two events.

The meet concludes today at Howard Wood Field.

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Class A

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The winning throw from Jensen came on his final attempt in the prelims.

"I knew I'd have to throw good just to beat him," Jensen said. "He's a great thrower, but I had a good week of practice."

Once it came time to throw, Jensen said his nerves actually helped him.

"I was really focused for state, but sometimes you need those (nerves) to throw well," he said. "It gives you a faster twitch, and that gets me going."

Jensen's title also got started a trend of area athletes having a strong day in Madison.

Bon Homme senior Caitlin McLouth finished second in the girls' long jump, reaching 17-feet-2.5. McLouth was particularly excited when she heard that mark, considering she pulled her hamstring a year ago and still finished 10th in the event.

"I started cheering like, 'Yes, yes,' like I knew I could do it," she said. "Coach had to tell me to calm down a little bit."

"He said, 'They can still get you.'"

Sioux Falls Christian senior Kara Koth was the only one to beat McLouth, finishing first at 17-3.75.

For McLouth, who will also Friday qualified for the 100-meter hurdles and will compete in the triple jump today (Saturday), she was happy with second.

"I'm very excited; just energetic for some reason," she said, smiling.

Bon Homme freshman McKeely Merkwan was just as pumped about her performance.

Merkwan tied for second place in the pole vault at 8-feet-9, which was a personal best.

"I'm just so glad I got the chance to get here," she said. "My goal was 8-6, and any-



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Bon Homme's Scott Van Winkle tries to clear the bar in the Class A boys' pole vault on Friday at the S.D. State Track Meet in Madison.

thing better is awesome."

Merkwan figures to only get better, considering her parents are constructing a pole vault pit at the family farm, she said.

"We have it at school, but this way my brother and I can practice whenever we want," Merkwan said. "I love it; it's my favorite thing."

The Cavalier girls weren't the only ones shining at Trojan Field.

Senior Scott Van Winkle finished third in the pole vault at 13-feet — one of four vaulters to tie at that mark. Gavin DeHaai of Sioux Falls Christian was the champion at 13-6.

"I was sitting fourth (at 12-

10.25), but in practice I've been going 13-0. I knew I could be up there," Van Winkle said. "That was my goal, top three."

Van Winkle credited his volunteer coach, as well as former Bon Homme vaulter

Austin Koch for help this season.

Elk Point-Jefferson sophomore Josie Heeren also had some help, but it came on the track.

Heeren finished second in the girls' 800-meter run at

2:20.42. She gave champion Tori Glazier of Custer a battle, but the Wildcats standout defended her title in 2:19.4.

"It was tough, but it felt good to have someone to compete with like that," Heeren said. "In our regular meets, I don't have anyone like that."

Vermillion eighth-grader Maddie Lavin had someone like that in Friday's 3200-meter run.

Lavin, who led the race for three laps, took third in 11:49.85.

"I was trying to stick with it," she said, "but it was a good race."

Lavin said a top-3 finish was her goal, especially after taking seventh last year. The competition certainly helped, she said.

Madison freshman Hailey Streff was first in 11:32.06, followed by Lead-Deadwood seventh-grader Mattie Fairburn in 11:42.0.

"It makes you a lot more motivated to go faster," Lavin said. "It's a good atmosphere to run with."

In other area girls' action, Elk Point-Jefferson's Keely

Bertram qualified with the best time in the 200-meter dash (26.6) and the second-best time in the 100 (12.91).

Ethan-Parkston's Darbi Gustafson finished fourth in the shot put at 37-feet-8.

Patience Nesheim of Ethan-Parkston qualified in the 400, while Bon Homme qualified in the 800 relay.

In area boys' action, Camden Myers of Ethan-Parkston was fourth in the high jump (6-2) and Beresford's Riley Schaap finished fifth in the 3200-meter run (10:33.79).

Bon Homme's Van Winkle qualified in the 400, while Ethan-Parkston's Wes Dvorak and Bon Homme's Dakota Bodden qualified in the 110 hurdles.

Dakota Valley finished sixth and Beresford took seventh in the 3200 relay, while Bon Homme qualified in the 400, 800 and 1600 relay.

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