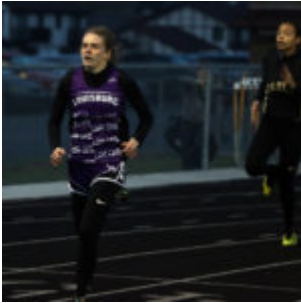


Gassman breaks record in 300 hurdles to lead Lady Cats



Louisburg sophomore Carlee Gassman distances herself from the rest of the pack in the 300-meter hurdles Thursday at the Paola Invitational. Gassman set a school record time of 47.57 seconds in the event and finished first.

PAOLA — As Carlee Gassman crossed the finish line in the 300-meter hurdles, she had a big smile on her face as she won the event by almost three seconds.

Her smile got even bigger just moments later.

Gassman recorded a time of 47.57 seconds Thursday at the Paola Invitational and broke a 29-year-old school record in just her second meet as a Wildcat. The Louisburg sophomore eclipsed Elizabeth Nicks' record of 48.1 in 1989 and head girls coach John Reece was at the finish line to tell her.

"Carlee had a great race," Reece said. "It was neat to see her excitement when I told her the time and that she broke the record. 'I love this race' was her reaction as she jumped around in the infield. I hope this record stands for 29-plus years as well."

After finishing second in the event in her first meet of the season at Leavenworth, Gassman knew that setting a new record was doable.

"I was very excited to find out that I broke the record," Gassman said. "I noticed the record earlier in the school year and thought I could beat it. I ran in the 400 hurdles in Iowa before moving here, so I didn't have a time to compare it to coming into the season. Then when Reece told me I was a second off the school record after my first meet, I knew I could beat it after that."

Gassman's record-breaking performance was one of many positives for her and the rest of her Lady Cat teammates in Paola.

Louisburg finished fifth in the team standings with 61 points, while Paola won the team title with 195.5 points and Spring Hill was second with 104.

Although Gassman's run was the lone victory for the Lady Cats, Louisburg recorded three runner-up finishes.

Senior Kaitlyn Urban had a strong performance in the triple jump as she took second with a mark of 32 feet, 5 inches. Junior teammate Eileen Benne set a personal best attempt at 30-7 to take seventh.

Gassman would also go on to finish fourth in the long jump with a mark of 16 feet and Benne also scored points in the high jump after she cleared 4-8 to come in sixth.

"Kaitlyn is another one of those hard workers who will continue to improve because of her work ethic," Reece said. "She jumped well at Paola and I hope the trend continues. Eileen also did great at Paola and set a PR to help with team points."

In the pole vault, senior Isabelle Holtzen had another high finish for the Lady Cats. Holtzen cleared 10 feet to finish second overall. Her teammate, sophomore Avery Graham, also finished strong after she cleared a personal best mark of 9-6 to take fourth.



Louisburg's Kaitlyn Urban sprints down the straightaway during the 4×100-meter relay Thursday in Paola. The Lady Cats finished second in the event.

Holtzen, Urban, Gassman teamed up with sophomore Sydni Keagle to record its third, second-place finish of the day. The Louisburg 4×100 relay ran a time of 52.45 seconds to take runner-up and finished right behind Paola, which ran a 52.17.

Louisburg's 4×400 and 4×800 relays also scored points. Mikayla Quinn, Gassman, Holtzen and Urban took fourth in the 4×400 in 4:25 and the 4×800 team of Payton Shaffer, Kennady Wilkerson, Shaylor Whitham and Quinn was seventh in 11:29.

"The 4×100 is starting to find their groove and the girls are getting the baton around the track which is sometimes half the battle," Reece said. "All the relays are showing improvement but we still have work to do."

Keagle also scored points for the Lady Cats in the 100-meter hurdles as she recorded a personal best time of 16.77 seconds to take fourth overall.

“Sydni continues to improve her competitiveness which in-turn leads to running PR’s,” Reece said. “She is training well and it is showing. I feel that she will take on any race I put her in and do well.”

Louisburg returns to the track Thursday when it travels to the Anderson County Invitational in Garnett. The meet is set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results are:

100 dash: Jordon Leach, 10th, 14.01; Kaitlyn Urban, 17th, 14.35; Andrea Gaza, 20th, 15.06

200 dash: Leach, 19th, 30.45

400 dash: Mikayla Quinn, 11th, 1:09; Gaza, 16th, 1:15

800 run: Payton Shaffer, 12th, 2:44; Shaylor Whitham, 15th, 2:51; Kennady Wilkerson, 18th, 3:10

100 hurdles: Kristen Bell, 11th, 19.59

300 hurdles: Sydni Keagle, 12th, 59.06; Bell, 16th, 1:05

Shot put: Shea O’Hara, 18th, 26-1; Lexie Reece, 20th, 25-1.5; Aiyana Penca, 21st, 24-7.5

Discus: Reece, 12th, 85-2.75; Melia Rice, 14th, 83-6.5; Kody Lowry, 18th, 68-7

Javelin: Rice, 16th, 64-8; Lakin Cunningham, 17th, 60-5; Lowry, 19th, 53-0