

Youth wins home meet for Lady Cats



Louisburg freshman Bailey Belcher crosses the finish line in the 200-meter dash Thursday during the Louisburg Invitational. Belcher won both the 100 and 200-meter dashes to help the Lady Cats win the team title.

It had been a while since the Louisburg girls track and field team had a chance to win its home meet, but on Thursday the Lady Cats came through.

The Lady Cats captured the Louisburg Invitational team crown as they racked up 162 points to hold off Spring Hill, which had 156. Louisburg got points from several different athletes and won six events in the process.

“I believe winning our home meet the first time in a few years was great for us,” Louisburg coach Greg Darrington said. “The thing I was most proud of is the fact that we scored points in almost every event. I was really proud of the girls’ effort Thursday.”

Believe it or not, it was four freshmen who won five of those six events for Louisburg and each played big roles in that team title.

Freshman sprinter Bailey Belcher had one of her best meets of

the season as she won the 100 and 200-meter dashes. Belcher won the 100 in 12.6 seconds and held off Osawatomie's Saige Weaver.

It was also the first time Belcher had run the 200 this season and couldn't have asked for a better start as she ran a time of 27.3 seconds.

Another freshman, Mikayla Quinn, completed the sweep of the sprints for Louisburg. Quinn won the 400 dash as she ran a time of 1 minute and 6 seconds. Teammates Makenzie Kallevig (1:07) and Hanna Becker (1:10) also finished second and fourth, respectively.

"Bailey is doing a great job this year," Darrington said. "Thursday was the first time she ran the 200 for us and won. She was a team player giving up one of her events to do the 200. Quinn did an awesome job as well. I believe this would be her third meet that she has won the 400."

Freshman jumper Haley Earl captured the long jump with a leap of 15 feet, 5 inches and later finished fourth in the triple and high jumps with a mark of 31-7 and 4-4, respectively.

"Haley has really stepped up this season," Darrington said. "Her improvement has let us move Bailey into the 200 which has helped our team. I am excited to see where Haley can finish this season as long as she keeps improving and working hard."

Sophie McMullen had a strong start for her first varsity of the season in the throws. McMullen a freshman, won the discus with a throw of 105-6 and later finished second in the javelin with a mark of 86-2.

Ellie Katzer came in third in the discus (92-3) and Lexie Reece (87-0) was fifth to score points for Louisburg as well. Sophomore Paige Buffington was third in the javelin (85-3) and Katzer (73-11) came in sixth.



Louisburg sophomore Paige Buffington rears back to throw the javelin Thursday during the Louisburg Invitational. Buffington finished third in the event.

"I think all our throwers are starting to improve," Darrington said "The last couple of meets Ellie Katzer has earned some team points for us finishing third the last two meets. I think if Sophie, Ellie and Lexie Reece keep working hard at the discus, one of them could place in league meet for us."

Junior McKinley Mathews continues to improve in the pole vault as she cleared a season-best 9-0 to finish runner-up and teammate Isabelle Holtzen was third at 7-6.

Chloe Renner placed in three events in the jumps. Renner was second in the high jump (4-6) and sixth in the long jump (14-4) and triple jump (30-3.5). Belcher (14-5) came in fifth in the long jump.

On the track, Louisburg 4×800-meter relay team of Isabelle Holtzen, Savannah Reinhart, Liz Hildreth and Lauren Becker took first in 11:38. Hanna Becker, Belcher, Megan Lemke and Ashley Ruder ran a good 4×100 relay to take second in 53.5,

while Kallevig, Lemke, Quinn and Ruder were third in the 4×400 relay in 4:30.

In the 800 run, Reinhart led Louisburg in fourth place with a time of 2:48. Hildreth (2:49) and Holtzen (2:50) were fifth and sixth, respectively.

Madelynn Yalowitz picked up some points in the 3,200-meter run as was fourth in 14:12. Louisburg also had a slew of other fifth-place finishes including Lemke in the 100 (13.5) and 200 (28.4), McKinley Mathews in the 300 hurdles (59.7) and Holtzen in the 1,600 run (6:20).

Louisburg returns to the track for two meets this week. The Lady Cats will travel to Prairie View on Thursday and then to the Gardner Invitational on Friday.