

Dover wins regional title, Wildcats qualify five



Louisburg junior T.J. Dover lets the discus fly during the Class 4A regional track meet Friday at Chanute High School. Dover won a regional title in the discus with a throw of 150 feet, 2 inches and the Wildcats qualified for state in five events overall.

CHANUTE – Before this season, T.J. Dover had never given track much thought.

Then this year he decided to give it a try as a way to stay active for football. Needless to say that choice has worked out beautifully for the Louisburg junior.

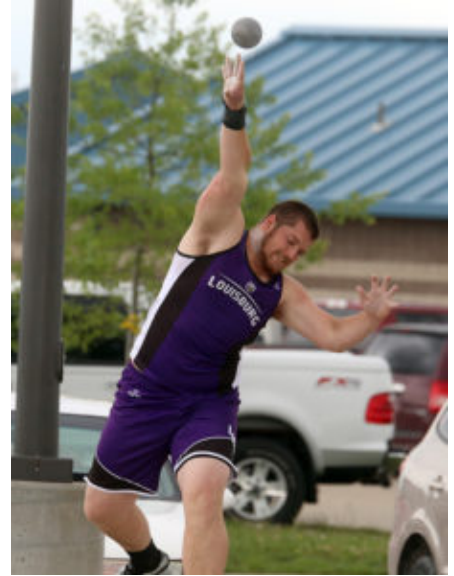
During the Class 4A regional meet in Chanute on Friday, Dover punched his ticket to the state meet as he set a personal record in the discus. Dover recorded a mark of 150 feet, 2 inches and was crowned regional champion.

This was the only time Dover had won the discus competition all season.

“I have been trying to hit 150 for a few weeks now ever since I hit 143 at Gardner and it felt good to finally hit it and win something,” Dover said. “I am happy going into to state and I am excited to see what I can do there.”

Along with Dover’s mark in the discus, Louisburg qualified for

state in five events overall as the top four places at regionals will make the trip to the state meet Friday and Saturday at Wichita State University.



Senior Jarod Woodward lifts the shot put into the air during Friday's regional track meet in Chanute.

"TJ has worked really hard this year and to get a throw off like that at the biggest meet of the year, was awesome," Louisburg boys coach Gary Griffin said. "Hopefully he can improve on that this weekend and get a medal."

Senior Jarod Woodward (shot put), freshman Chris Williams (400-meter dash) and the 4×100- and 4×800-meter relays teams will also compete at the state meet for a chance to get a medal.

As a team, the Wildcats finished fifth overall with 42 points and Paola won the regional team title with 116.33 points. Spring Hill was second with 90.

Woodward will make his second straight trip to state after he

came in third in the shot put with a toss of 49-3 and hopes to leave state meet with a medal this time around. Woodward has a season-best throw of 53 feet, which would put him in the top five in Class 4A.

"I didn't perform to the best of my ability," Woodward said. "In the past meets, I have been progressively increasing, but this week I was trying to change up my technique. Even though I didn't throw as far as I can, I am going to come back and attack it as best I can.

"I just wanted to make sure I got in the top four and that was the most important thing. Last year at state there was a lot of people there so I had some butterflies, but this year hopefully I can get past that and do some big things out there."



Louisburg's Quinn Rigney takes a handoff from teammate Ben Minster during the 4×100 relay Friday.

On the track, Williams continues to shave off time in the 400-meter dash and it continued Friday as he finished runner-up with a personal-best 50.67 seconds.

In all the 4A regional meets combined, Williams has the third-fastest time and he hopes to leave Wichita with a state medal.

“Chris is a gutsy, competitive kid who has kind of exceeded my expectations, but he is peaking right now,” Griffin said. “That time will get him in the finals if he can run that again, and I think he can.”

Williams will compete in two events out at state as he helped the 4×100-meter relay of Brandon Cooper, Ben Minster and Quinn Rigney to a third-place finish in 45.09 seconds, which was a personal best.

“I am pretty happy to go to state in the 400,” Williams said. “I really wanted to go with the 4×400, but to go in the 4×100 and 400 is pretty good.”



Ben Hupp hands the baton off to Michael Minster for the final leg of the 4×800 relay.

The Louisburg 4×800 team of Wyatt Reece, Ben Hupp, Michael Minster and Tanner Belcher didn't have to sweat out if they were going to be a state qualifier. Only four schools entered a 4×800 team so the Wildcats knew they were in before the race, but that didn't stop them from running well.

Louisburg finished in 8 minutes and 48 seconds to take third

overall, but to earn a state medal both relay teams will have to take even more time off.

“The 4×800 crew has worked hard all year, and they are capable of cutting quite a bit of time off so hopefully they can run well,” Griffin said. “We had pretty good handoffs in the 4×100 and that is the key to that race. We will need to do the same this weekend and hopefully aim for the mid 44’s to have a chance to make the finals.”

Other Wildcat results are:

100 dash: Brandon Cooper, 6th, 11.64

400 dash: Blue Caplinger, 13th, 55.72

1,600 run: Wyatt Reece, 6th, 4:58

3,200 run: Devyn Small, 11th, 11:39; Tim Smith, 12th, 12:01

110 hurdles: Jonathan Ventre, 11th, 17.67

300 hurdles: Ventre, 13th, 46.27

4×400 relay: 5th, 3:37

Triple jump: Cooper, 7th, 39-0.50

Shot put: T.J. Dover, 5th, 45-3