

Louisburg track gains experience at state



Louisburg freshman Chris Williams rounds the curve in the 4×100-meter relay as he prepares to handoff to teammate Brandon Cooper on Friday at the Kansas State Track and Field Championships in Wichita.

WICHITA – The Louisburg High School track team traveled to Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships on Friday and it was on a momentum high.

Louisburg captured three regional titles the previous week and qualified for state in 11 events. The momentum died down a little bit Saturday as the Wildcats left Wichita State University without a state medal when the two-day meet concluded.

Even though they didn't leave with any hardware, the Wildcats gained valuable experience as many of those who attended were either freshmen or sophomores.

That was especially true on the boys side as freshman Chris Williams nearly found himself on the medal stand. Williams finished ninth in the 400-meter dash with a time of 51.48 seconds and just missed out on the finals.

The top eight in each event earn a state medal.



Louisburg senior Jarod Woodward launches the shot put Saturday at the state meet in Wichita.

"I thought we competed pretty well," Louisburg boys coach Gary Griffin said. "We were within range of our personal record in most events. We didn't place that well, but we took a lot of younger kids that I hope will get there again and perform better."

Senior Jarod Woodward found himself in a loaded shot put competition that saw seven competitors throw for more than 50 feet, including state champion Ian Rudzik (Ulysses) who threw 62 feet, 7 inches. Woodward recorded a toss of 48 feet to come in 10th overall.

Junior T.J. Dover tried to build off his personal best throw in the discus from the regional meet, but came up just short with a throw of 138-3 and came in 11th.

Louisburg also had a pair of relays who ran strong times. The 4×800-meter relay of Wyatt Reece, Tanner Belcher, Ben Hupp and Michael Minster came in 14th in 8 minutes and 47 seconds.

The 4×100-meter relay team of Ben Minster, Quinn Rigney, Williams and Brandon Cooper tied a personal best in 45.1 seconds and came in 15th.

On the girls side, sophomore Isabelle Holtzen was one spot away from earning her state medal. In the pole vault Saturday, Holtzen came in ninth after she cleared 9 feet.

Kaitlyn Gaza, Mikayla Quinn, Reilly Alexander and Megan Lemke ran just off their personal best in the 4×400-meter relay and took 15th in 4:19, while Lemke, Gaza, Jordon Leach and Hanna Becker came in 16th in the 4×100 relay in 53.1 seconds.



Senior Megan Lemke sprints to the finish in the final leg of the 4×400-meter relay Friday at Wichita State University.

Liz Hildreth, Lauren Becker, Shaylor Whitham and Holtzen took 16th in the 4×800 relay in 10:55 to round out the track events Saturday.

“Overall we came into the state meet with some of the slower

times," Louisburg girls coach Greg Darrington said. "I will say I was pleased on the track. All the relay teams ran some of their best times, or close to their personal record. We are young and I think next year we have a chance to head back to state and earn some medals."

In the field events, junior Chloe Renner recorded a mark of 31-8.25 in the triple jump to come in 15th. Sophomore Sophie McMullen was also 15th in the discus with a toss of 99-10.