

Lady Cats qualify in 10 events, break 4 records, win 4 regional titles



Louisburg freshman Delaney Wright lands in the sand pit after breaking the school record in the long jump with a mark of 17-11.75 on Friday at the Class 4A regional meet in Paola. Wright qualified for state in four events.

PAOLA – Delaney Wright was already having a great season for the Louisburg girls track and field team as a freshman.

On Friday, she took it to even bigger heights.

During the Class 4A regional meet at Paola High School, Wright qualified for state in four events, broke two school records and earned a regional title in her first postseason track meet.

Wright won a regional title in the long jump and finished second in the 200 and 400-meter dashes. She also helped Carlee Gassman, Rain Pugh and Sydni Keagle to a second place finish in the 4×400-meter relay.

"I am so grateful for everything,"

Wright said. "I had been having trouble with my hip this week and I just wanted to come out and make state in at least one event. I didn't realize I would make it in four. It is an unbelievable feeling."

Wright's day was just one of the many positives for the Lady Cats as they broke four school records, had four regional champions and qualified for state in 10 events.

As a team, the Lady Cats nearly earned the regional runner-up trophy as they racked up 86.5 points and finished a half a point behind second place Baldwin and Bishop Miege, who tied for second. Paola won the regional title with 107 points.

Wright began her historic day in the long jump as she was sitting third going into the finals when she popped her best jump of the season in her first attempt in the finals. Wright had a mark of 17 feet, 11.75 inches, which won her a regional championship and broke a school record in the process.

She eclipsed the old record of 17-10.5 set by Carolyn Burk in 1995 and Wright currently has the best jump in Class 4A heading into the state meet.

"I was so surprised," Wright said.

"Carlee (Gassman) and I said a prayer right before finals and we both just went for it. It was a great jump and I am just really happy."

Her record-breaking streak continued in the 400 dash as she was second overall in 1 minute, just .05 seconds behind Ottawa's Summer Spigle. Wright finished .28 seconds ahead of

Baldwin's Carly Lindemeyer as all three runners reached for the finish line.

Wright's time broke Sue Truman's 44-year-old record of 1:00.30 that was set in 1975.

"It was just a battle," Wright said. "It was all about who had the most heart and we all wanted to go to state. It was a great race. This season has really exceeded my expectations. I just wanted to come out and do my best and do what it takes to win."

She later qualified in her third event as she took second in the 200-meter dash in 26.45 seconds. In the last event of the night, Wright, Gassman, Pugh and Keagle recorded a season-best time of 4:15.28 to take second overall in the 4x400 relay.



Junior Carlee Gassman clears the final hurdle Friday at the Class 4A regional meet in Paola. Gassman won the regional title in the event in a time of 46.69.

As for Gassman, she is heading to state in three events. The Louisburg junior won the regional championship in the 300-meter hurdles in a season-best time of 46.69 seconds and has the second-best time going into the state meet this weekend.

"I'm blessed to have gotten the regional title," Gassman said. "Honestly, I started out the season a little rocky and to know that I've been working hard enough to keep improving my time, makes me extremely happy."

Gassman also helped the 4×100-meter relay earn a trip to state as she joined Pugh, Keagle and Jordon Leach to finish second overall in 50.70 seconds. Bishop Miege was first at 50.54.

"I'm so proud of both the relay teams," Gassman said. "We have so much talent and determination. I think out at state we are going to run our hearts out and good things will come from that"

Leach continued the historic day for the Lady Cats she broke the school record in the 100-meter dash with a time of 12.66 second and broke LeAnn Rhoten's mark set in 1980. Her time was also good enough to win her first regional title as she heads into state with one of the top times.

"The prelims were pretty tough and I didn't think that I ran all that well," Leach said. "Coach

(John) Reece told me I was ranked first going in so that they are chasing me. I knew that I needed to step up in the finals and I just went for it. I was so nervous though. I have raced a lot of these girls before, and it is always a toss-up on who wins and after I crossed I almost cried. It felt so good."



Senior Jordan Leach sprints after taking the handoff in the 4×100 relay. Leach won regionals in the 100 dash and broke the school record in the process.

Sophomore Alyse Moore provided the Lady Cats with their biggest surprise of the day as Moore, who had thrown in just two meets prior to regionals, finished her day as a regional champion.

Moore set a new personal record by almost 25 feet as she finished with a mark of 129 feet, 11 inches, which came in her final throw of the prelims. She is now headed to state

in two different sports as she is also the starting shortstop on the softball team.



Sophomore Alyse Moore won the regional championship in the javelin Friday in Paola with a new personal best mark of 129-11.

“I’ve worked all week on it and I’ve been focusing a little more,” Moore said. “Whenever I let it go, it just felt really natural for me and I was so excited to be able to go to state in track too, along with softball.

“It definitely surprised me that I was able to win it. It all has to do with Coach G (Alex Gentges) because he has really worked with me and put in extra time whenever I have to

come late

because of softball. It is definitely all because of him helping me out and it feels awesome to be able to win.”

Keagle competed in a difficult field of the 100-meter hurdles, but the Louisburg junior rose to the occasion as she recorded a time of 15.99 seconds to set a new school record and earned her first state bid in the process as she came in fourth.

She broke the 40-year-old mark of 16 seconds that was set by Barbara Spies in 1979.



Junior Sydni Keagle races down the straightaway and clears the final hurdle Friday in Paola. Keagle was fourth in the 100 hurdles and broke a 40-year-old school record.

Junior Avery Graham also earned her first state bid in the pole vault as she took fourth overall after she finished at 8-6. Graham cleared that mark early in the competition, but sustained an ankle injury after and wasn't able to vault.

Louisburg will begin their journey

to a state medal Friday afternoon at Cessna Stadium on the campus of Wichita State University. The top eight in each event will earn a medal.

“Having so many people qualify for state just proves how much talent we have on our team,” Gassman said. “I’m so proud of everyone who made it and I know everyone is going to do their absolute best this weekend.”

Other results are:

100 dash: Rain Pugh, 6th,
13.23

200 dash: Jordon Leach, 10th,
29.49

1,600 run: Shaylor Whitham, 10th,
6:25

High jump: Eileen Benne, 5th,
4-8; Shelby Grandon, 7th, 4-6

Pole vault: Malee Rutherford, 11th,
7-0

Long jump: Carlee Gassman, 5th,
17-1; Sydni Keagle, 10th, 15-7

Triple jump: Benne, 12th,
29-5.5

Shot put: Shea O’Hara, 11th,

32-0.50; Cayden Forrester, 13th, 24-9

Discus: Rinny McMullen, 5th,

100-11; Aiyana Penca, 8th, 90-8; Melia Rice, 13th, 81-2

Javelin: Davis Guetterman, 10th,

91-7; Lakin Cunningham, 17th, 71-3