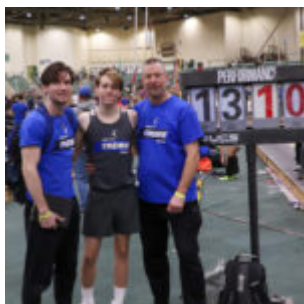


Faulkner sets personal record at national pole vault meet



Louisburg junior Luke Faulkner stands with his pole vault coaches after setting a personal record in January at the National Pole Vault Summit in Reno, Nev. A week later, Faulkner would set a new mark at a meet at the University of Kansas.

Track and field season is still more than a month away from starting, but Louisburg junior Luke Faulkner is already in midseason form when it comes to the pole vault.

Last month, Faulkner participated in two different meets, including a national meet in Reno, Nev., and another at the University of Kansas. At both, he soared to new heights as he set personal records each time.

On Jan. 18, Faulkner traveled to train and compete at the National Pole Vault Summit. He learned from some of the top instructors in the country and then got a chance to compete.

In his group, Faulkner finished third overall where he set a then-personal best of 13 feet and 10 inches, breaking his old mark of 13-6.

“It was an amazing event to compete

at,” Faulkner said. “On that Friday, I learned from elite vaulters and got coached by professional level coaches about new technique work for pole vault and how to get better and I competed the next day.

“I was excited to get results from what I’ve been doing in practice at the gym I go to, Xtreme Athletics, and was happy to place high in my group. It was more important to me to show that I got a new personal record than placing because it showed that I’m improving.”



Luke Faulkner clears a height at the Pole Vault Summit back in January in Reno, Nev.

Although he enjoyed setting a new personal record, Faulkner had a

chance to learn from
his coaches and from some of the best vaulters in the country.

“I learned a lot from my coach, things like top hand extension, extending the top arm to get more pressure on the pole, jump angles and being tall jumping into the swing and getting connected to the pole at the top when finishing,” Faulkner said. “It was an amazing meeting and talking to professional vaulters like Mondo Duplantis, Andrew Irwin, Chris Nilsen, Cole Walsh, and many more that I got to watch that night compete.”

A week later, Faulkner attended at the meet at the University of Kansas and set a new personal best by vaulting nearly 14 feet. He recorded a clearance of 13-11.25.

As a sophomore, Faulkner earned his first state medal at the Class 4A meet in Wichita as he cleared 13-6 to finish fourth and is hoping for even bigger things this season. It is an event that he has grown to love.

“I’ve been vaulting since seventh grade track season in the spring,” Faulkner said. “It became a passion of mine as I got into high school. I really enjoy following the pros and how they’re doing each year and looking up to them.”