

# McMullen wins state title in discus



Louisburg High School senior Connor McMullen lets the discus fly on his final attempt of the Class 4A discus competition Saturday at Wichita State University. McMullen won the state title on that attempt with a throw of 173 feet and 1 inch.

---

WICHITA – Connor McMullen walked into the back of the discus ring and took a deep breath.

McMullen had one last throw left. One last throw as a Louisburg Wildcat and one last chance to win a state title.

Going into his final throw of the Class 4A state discus competition, McMullen was trailing Baldwin's Christian Gaylord by two feet Saturday at Wichita State University. On his final attempt, McMullen gathered himself spun and let the discus fly.

The Louisburg High School senior truly saved his best for last.

McMullen recorded a toss of 173 feet and 1 inch to surpass Gaylord and capture his first state championship – an event four years in the making.

“It was definitely a relief when I got that last throw out

there and I knew that it was going to do the job," McMullen said. "I have been looking forward to this for a long time and it is a great feeling. A lot of hard work went into this."



**Connor McMullen shares a hug with his father Scott after winning the Class 4A discus title Saturday in Wichita.**

Believe it or not, McMullen's last throw of the finals wasn't even the most nerve-racking moment of the competition. That moment came in the final throw of the preliminaries.

McMullen, who came in with one of the top throws in the state this year, scratched in his first two attempts of the preliminaries. Another scratch would mean his season would be over and so would his dreams of a state title.

"Scratching the first two is never fun and is probably one of the worst feelings in competition," McMullen said. "But I knew I only had to throw around 150 (feet) to get in the finals. So I just gathered myself and threw one out there."

That one throw was pretty good. He ended the prelims with a

throw of 161-2, which vaulted him to second place behind Gaylord's throw of 163-7.

Then came the finals, and just like the prelims, McMullen got off to a rocky start. He scratched on his first two throws of the finals, which set up his last attempt.

"I really wasn't too nervous coming in," McMullen said. "I think the most nervous I got was in that final throw to get into finals. The first throw in finals was short so I just went ahead and scratched it. I was hoping to get one good throw going into my last one, but it just so happened that it went out the right side. I just got into the back of the ring, took a deep breath and just tried to do what I do and what felt naturally."

McMullen's family and friends couldn't bear to watch his final attempt and several of them had their eyes covered just waiting to hear the reaction from the crowd. When they heard a loud chorus of cheers, they knew it had to be good.

Unlike his second attempt in the finals, McMullen's final throw was straight on and he all but shored up a state title. Gaylord had one final attempt, but came up several feet short in his last toss.



**Connor McMullen looks down on the Cessna Stadium crowd atop the medal stand Saturday after receiving his**

## **first-place medal.**

“Connor made it a little more dramatic than I liked, but it showed the competitor he is to win like he did,” Louisburg coach Gary Griffin said.

McMullen became the first Wildcat to win a state track title since Garrett Griffin won the javelin in 2011. After winning two state medals in the discus in previous years, McMullen was happy to finally grab the gold.

“There is a lot of pride in that,” McMullen said. “It is nice to represent my school and win state.”

That state title came after McMullen won his first state medal in something that wasn't discus. Despite being seeded 13th coming into the javelin competition Friday, McMullen rose to the occasion.

McMullen medaled eighth with a throw of 164-02 and put together his best series of throws of the year. He set personal records with every attempt in the finals to secure the medal.

“That was a fun one because there was no pressure for me,” McMullen said. “I knew that I had a bigger throw in me than what I had done previous. I like throwing on the track surface better than grass so it was good to be able to break out my javelin cleats.



**McMullen got his first state medal in the javelin Friday in Wichita with a throw of 164-02 and finished eighth.**

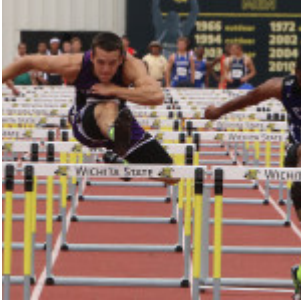
“It was just icing on the cake. I was keeping the arm speed up and improving every time. I wanted to get another medal in either shot put or javelin. The shot put didn’t go as I would have hoped so I was happy to do it in the javelin.”

It was a strong performance since McMullen had only thrown the javelin the last three meets of the season.

“I was happy for him in the javelin too,” coach Griffin said. “It was a bonus for the amount of time he put in on that event. It is amazing he won a medal.”

---

## **Dennis earns state medal in hurdles**



**Louisburg High School senior Sean Dennis finished in fourth place in the 110-meter hurdles Saturday during the Class 4A portion of the Kansas State Track and Field Championships at Wichita State University. Dennis also ran in the 100 and 200 dashes, along with the anchor leg in the 4×100 relay.**

---

WICHITA – Sean Dennis didn't have much time to waste at the Kansas State Track and Field Championships on Friday and Saturday.

The Louisburg High School senior competed in four events over the two days and had to try and stay fresh for each race. It wasn't easy, and the results may not have been exactly what Dennis was hoping for, but in the end he left Wichita State University with his first state medal.

In what has been his best race all season, Dennis finished fourth in the 110-meter hurdles in 15.41 seconds in what was a tough field. Osawatomie junior Jacoby Greenwood, who captured three state titles Saturday, won in 14.62 seconds.

"I am a little disappointed because I knew I could have ran better but finishing in fourth place you really can't complain about it," Dennis said. "It is still a medal and I placed top-five, but I could have ran better."

On Friday, Dennis ran in the preliminaries of the 200-meter dash and just missed out on the finals. Dennis ran a personal best time of 22.82 seconds and finished ninth. The top eight

in each preliminary make the finals.



**Senior Mason Wilde hands the baton to fellow senior Dawson Christy during the preliminaries of the 4×400-meter relay Friday during the state track meet in Wichita.**

Dennis also joined Mason Wilde, Kyle Green and Ben Minster in the 4×100-meter relay, and again, the Wildcats missed out on the final by one spot. Louisburg ran a time of 44.36 seconds to come in ninth.

“I was pretty proud of myself in the 200,” Dennis said. “I was able to PR by quite a bit and still got ninth place. I almost made finals, but I ran my best in that one and that is all I can ask for.”

On Saturday, Dennis ran in the preliminaries of the 100-meter dash and came in 13th in 11.46 seconds. On what was a cold and blustery day that it made it tough to stay warm and loose, Dennis was still able to achieve his goal of a state medal.

“Sean had a good weekend and was very deserving of a medal,” Louisburg coach Gary Griffin said. “He has worked very hard and qualifying in four events is a great accomplishment.”

The Wildcats also competed two other relays. In the preliminaries of the 4×400-meter relay, the team of Wilde, Green, Minster and Dawson Christy came in 15th in 3:36.

Christy, along with Michael Minster, Ben Hupp and Wyatt Reece, also finished in 15th in the 4×800 relay in 9:01.

In the shot put, Connor McMullen finished 12th overall with a toss of 45 feet, 2.5 inches and teammate Jarod Woodward was 14th with a throw of 44-5. Parker Cates finished in 16th in the pole vault.

“It was a good weekend for most of the kids who approached their personal records,” Griffin said. “It was a good experience for the younger kids and hopefully it will pay off in the future.”

---

## **Lady Cats have record-breaking day**



Louisburg’s (clockwise from left) Kaitlyn Gaza, Makenzie Kallevig, Ashley Ruder and Megan Lemke celebrate after finishing third in the 4×400-meter relay Thursday at the Class



## **4A regional meet at Prairie View High School. The Lady Cat team qualified for state in 4:17.**

---

LA CYGNE – Records fell for the Louisburg girls track and field team Thursday during the Class 4A regional meet at Prairie View High School.

Whether they were personal or school records, the Lady Cats had strong performances in several areas and they were able to punch their ticket to state in three events.

Freshmen Isabelle Holtzen (pole vault) and Bailey Belcher (200-meter dash) joined the 4×400-meter relay team of Makenzie Kallevig, Megan Lemke, Kaitlyn Gaza and Ashley Ruder as they will all compete in Wichita later this week at the state meet.

Holtzen got the meet started off on the right foot as she put together her best performance of the season in the pole vault. She set a new personal record as she cleared 9 feet and finished in a tie for second place.

“It is very exciting to be able to go to state,” Holtzen said. “To be honest, state wasn’t even on my radar when the season started. I was just focused on getting better and I got a lot of help along the way from my coaches and teammates. Coach (Kyle) Littrell gave me a lot of tips and worked with me a lot and my teammates were very supportive.”

It was a tight race for the final three spots to qualify for state. Holtzen, along with three other vaulters, including teammate McKinley Mathews, were tied at 9 feet.

None could make 9-6, but what set Holtzen apart is she didn’t miss until that point. Holtzen was perfect until she missed her three tries at 9-6, which helped her with the tiebreaker.

“Coach Littrell told me coming in that first-attempt makes are going to be big because there could be several of us tied at the end and he was right,” Holtzen said. “It was important for me to get off to a good start and luckily I was able to do that.”



**Freshman Isabelle Holtzen clears the 9-foot mark in the pole vault Thursday at the regional meet at Prairie View High School. Holtzen finished in a tie for second and qualified for state.**

Mathews and Paola's Samantha Van Hoecke had to go to a tiebreaker for the final spot to go to state and Van Hoecke won out after she cleared 9-0 on her first attempt.

As for the 4×400 relay team, the four Lady Cat sprinters picked the best time of the year to run a personal best time. The team finished third in 4 minutes and 17 seconds to earn a spot at the state meet.

“We have worked really hard all season for this,” Ruder said. “We have pushed all year to get our personal record and we have always come up short. To finally get it now is just sweet relief.”

It is not bad considering the team didn't even know who was

going to run their opening leg until minutes before the race started. Ruder, Lemke and Kallevig were waiting to hear who would round out the team and ultimately the coaches decided to go with Gaza.

Gaza, a sophomore, had been battling an injury most of the season and is just now rounding into form. As it turned out, it was perfect timing.

She ran a strong opening leg that was a personal best before she handed the baton to Ruder, who stayed at the front of the pack. Then Kallevig waited for her turn.

“My adrenaline was just through the roof,” Kallevig said. “I saw Ashley go with the Paola girls and I was ready to run. I am still a little shocked.”

Paola eventually finished second, six seconds ahead of Louisburg and Independence won the race in 4:04.

Still a state berth was on the line and Lemke wasn't about to let it slip away as the anchor leg.

“I just pushed so hard in the beginning and I just couldn't let anyone pass me,” Lemke said. “It is just so great to see everything come together.”

In the sprints, Belcher qualified for state in the 200 dash and did so in impressive fashion. Belcher had the top time in the preliminaries in 26.17 seconds.

That time set a new school record as Belcher broke Kate Combs' old mark of 26.6 seconds. Belcher went on to finish fourth in the finals.

She almost qualified in the 100 dash as well. Belcher had the third best time in the preliminaries at 13 seconds flat, but finished sixth in the finals in 13.07 in what was a deep regional for sprinters.

The six Lady Cat athletes will begin their journey for a state medal Friday when they travel to Wichita State University for the start of the Class 4A portion of the Kansas State Track and Field Championships.

Events will begin at 2 p.m. and will continue into Saturday.

---

## **Wildcats qualify 11 for state track**



Louisburg's Ben Hupp hands the baton off to teammate Michael Minster in the 4×800-meter relay Thursday during the Class 4A regional track meet at Prairie View High School. The 4×800 relay finished third and qualified for state.

---

LA CYGNE – Louisburg boys track and field coach Gary Griffin isn't psychic, but he did have a good feeling about his team the day before the regional meet.

"I told them at practice that we are taking 11 guys to state," Griffin said.

It was kind of a bold statement considering how there is so much unknown at any track meet, but during the Class 4A

regional Thursday at Prairie View High School, his vision became a reality.

Louisburg qualified 11 athletes for the state meet and scored points in every event the Wildcats competed. Those athletes will travel to Wichita on Friday for the Kansas State Track and Field Championships at Wichita State University.

The Wildcats finished third in the team standings with 71 points. Paola won the team title with 92 points and Girard was a close second with 90.

Seniors Sean Dennis and Connor McMullen headlined the Louisburg qualifiers as both will be busy at the state meet this week. Dennis qualified in four events and McMullen qualified in three.

Dennis earned state berths in the 110-meter hurdles, 100-meter dash, 200 dash and was the anchor on the 4×100-meter relay. Dennis joined Mason Wilde, Kyle Green and Ben Minster to win the regional title in the 4×100 in 44.31 seconds.

“I didn’t think gold was in our view, but we really gave it our all,” Dennis said. “I am just so happy that I can help all those guys go out to state.”

By the time the meet was over, Dennis was spent. He ran preliminaries in three events and then ran finals in four events – all in a span of about three hours.

“It is awesome,” Dennis said. “It was my goal since the beginning of the season to qualify in four events and now that I have done that all that is left is to go and place.

“I did decent in the hurdles, and like always I could have done better, but the important thing is to qualify and now I have another chance out at state.”



**Jarod Woodward releases a throw in the shot put Thursday. Woodward finished with a personal record toss of over 48 feet to take third and qualify for state.**

Dennis finished second in the 110-meter hurdles in 15.24 seconds. He later took fourth in the 100 dash in 11.39 seconds and fourth in the 200 dash in 23 seconds.

“It was a tough day for Sean because he didn’t have a whole lot of recovery time, so his times weren’t great but the whole goal is to qualify and run fast at state,” Griffin said. “Your body isn’t used to it and it is taxing. I was happy he qualified in the 100 because that was literally five minutes after he ran the hurdles. He will run faster out at state and I think he has a chance to win two or three medals.”

McMullen had a good day in the throws for the Wildcats that included a regional title in the discus. Along with that, he also qualified for state in the javelin and the shot put.

McMullen won the discus with a throw of 169 feet, 3 inches to win the event by more than 25 feet and is considered one the favorites to capture the state crown in the event. The other

two events were a little closer.

In the javelin, McMullen recorded a personal best throw in his first attempt with a mark of 159-01 and finished third. Not too bad for competing in the event for just the second time this year.

"I looked at the regional a couple weeks ago and the coaches and I didn't see a lot of strong throws so I thought I would give it a try and qualify for state," McMullen said. "I got two practices in before league and one practice before regionals and I was able to get third in both."

McMullen was on the outside looking in for a state berth in the shot put as he was in fifth-place going into his final throw. That last throw of 47-01 was good enough to get him into state with a fourth-place finish.

"I wouldn't be surprised if he goes out and wins a medal in the javelin," Griffin said of state. "The discus is his thing and I know he is looking forward to winning a state championship, but he is going to have to get off a good one to win it. Everyone has been gaining on him all year. He is a competitor and he has been there before."

Junior Jarod Woodward will join McMullen at state in the shot put as he picked the perfect time to record a personal best throw. Woodward recorded a toss of 48-5.75 on his second throw to finish third.

"It felt pretty good," Woodward said. "I was sick with a migraine so I missed practice but I got about 17 hours of sleep so I was definitely pretty rested. Coach (Greg) Darrington helped me throughout the week on technique that helped me throw the personal record and hopefully 50 (feet) during state."

Along with the 4×100 relay, the Wildcats were also able to qualify its 4×400 and 4×800 relays as well. The 4×400 team of

Wilde, Minster, Green and Dawson Christy ran a time of 3 minutes and 35 seconds to finish fourth.

It also a new personal record as they beat their previous time by five seconds. Wilde, who is also on the 4×100 team, will make his fourth trip to state.



**Mason Wilde (right) hands the baton to Kyle Green during the 4×100 relay Thursday. The Wildcat team won the regional title in 44.3 seconds.**

“State is awesome,” Wilde said. “I have been lucky enough to go every year, so senior year is just like every year. All the hard work has finally paid off and it is a good feeling.”

Christy is also making a repeat trip to state and will do so with the 4×800 relay along with the 4×400. Christy, along with Michael Minster, Ben Hupp and Wyatt Reece came in third in 9:02.80.

“It does feel good,” Christy said. “It has been awhile since we had a good 4×800 team so it is great to be able to qualify in that. It won’t be my first time out at state, but for a lot of the other kids it will and hopefully I can be a leader for them.”

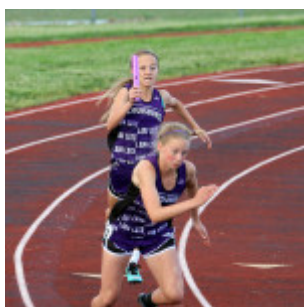


Junior Parker Cates will be making his second trip to the state meet in the pole vault as he finished fourth overall after he cleared 11-0. He was tied with Labette County at 11-0, but Cates won the tiebreaker to advance after he cleared 11 feet on his first attempt.

The Class 4A portion of the state meet will begin at 2 p.m. on Friday and will continue into Saturday.

---

## **Belcher racks up points for Lady Cats**



Louisburg's Hanna Becker hands off to anchor Bailey Belcher in the final leg of the 4×100-meter relay Thursday during the Frontier League meet in Spring Hill. The Lady Cat relay team finished third.

---

SPRING HILL – As just a freshman, Bailey Belcher continues to burn up the track for the Louisburg girls track and field team.

Belcher helped score 26 points for the Lady Cats during the Frontier League track meet Thursday in Spring Hill. She

finished runner-up in both the 100- and 200-meter dashes and later helped the 4×100-meter relay to a third-place finish.

Belcher also scored a few points in the field events as she took fourth in the high jump when she cleared a season-best 4 feet and 10 inches.

Outside of the freshman, Louisburg had a little tougher time coming up with points as it finished sixth with 46.5 points. Baldwin won the meet the 198 points and Paola was second with 173.5.

In the preliminaries of the 100 dash, Belcher recorded the fastest time but was edged out in the finals by De Soto's Tori Marshall. Belcher ran a time of 13.18 seconds to Marshall's 13.08.

Marshall, a senior, once again got the better of Belcher, but not by much. Marshall won the 200 dash in 27.03 and Belcher was second in 27.33. The Louisburg freshman is posting strong finishes despite recovering from a foot injury three weeks ago.

Belcher joined Ashley Ruder, Megan Lemke and Hanna Becker to run the 4×100 relay. The Lady Cat team ran a time of 52.76 to take third.

Also on the track, the 4×400 relay of Kaitlyn Gaza, Lemke, Ruder and Makenzie Kallevig also took third in 4 minutes and 21 seconds. Kallevig, Liz Hildreth, Isabelle Holtzen and Lauren Becker ran the 4×800 relay in 11:26 and came in fifth.

In the sprints, Ruder also scored some points in the 200 dash as she took seventh in 29.78 and Gaza was seventh in the 400 dash in 1:05.

Holtzen continued her improvement in the pole vault as she cleared 8-6, which was a new personal record. The Louisburg freshman came in fourth and junior teammate McKinley Mathews

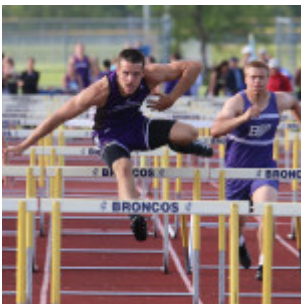
was seventh as she cleared 8-0.

Freshman Haley Earl finished fifth in the triple jump with a mark of 30-4, and another freshman, Sophie McMullen had a throw of 99-8 in the discus to take sixth.

The Lady Cats will try and continue their season Thursday when they travel to Prairie View for the Class 4A regional meet. The meet begins at 3 p.m., and the top four placers in each event will qualify for state.

---

## **Dennis wins four golds at league track**



**Louisburg senior Sean Dennis pulls away from the field in the 110-meter high hurdles Thursday at the Frontier League meet in Spring Hill. Dennis won four league titles on the day, including three individual races.**

---

SPRING HILL – Sean Dennis had one of the best days in his track career Thursday, and quite possibly one of the best performances in Louisburg track history as far as the Frontier League meet goes.

Dennis, a senior, won three individual gold medals during the

league meet at Spring Hill High School as he dominated the track. He then picked up a fourth as he helped the 4×100-meter relay to a first-place finish.

It was the perfect setup for Dennis as he, and the rest of the Wildcats, prepare for the regional meet Thursday.

“Sean had a great day,” Louisburg coach Gary Griffin said. “He competed hard, he ran prelims in all of his sprints and ran well in all the finals. The times were not great because we ran against the wind, but the performance was excellent. I am not sure the last time we had someone win three individual golds and four total.”

Dennis won the 110-meter high hurdles in 16.41 seconds as he pulled away from the competition. He later won the 100-meter dash in 11.44 seconds and the 200-meter dash in 23.20, which was close to a personal best.

Mason Wilde, Kyle Green, Ben Minster and Dennis brought home another league title in the 4×100 relay as they ran to a gold medal in 44.1 seconds to edge Paola at the finish line.

“The 4×100 ran well,” Griffin said. “We still have a little work to do on handoffs, which I think can cut some more time off. They may have to run that fast to qualify for state.”

Senior Connor McMullen joined Dennis as a league champion after he recorded a throw of 175 feet, 3 inches to win the discus. He also scored points in two other events for Louisburg.



**Connor McMullen lets the discus fly Thursday at the Frontier League meet in Spring Hill. McMullen won the league title in the discus with a throw of 175-3.**

For the first time this season, McMullen competed in the javelin and all he did was come away with a third place finish. He finished with a throw of 154-8 to give the Wildcats some big team points.

In the shot put, McMullen came in fifth with a toss of 46-5. He would have finished fourth, but teammate Jarod Woodward surpassed McMullen by one inch on his final throw with a mark of 46-6.

“Connor had a great day scoring big points for us,” Griffin said. “I was happy he started throwing the javelin and he has a great chance to qualify for state in that event at regionals. He has been really consistent the last three weeks in the discus, which leads me to believe that he has a big one in him the next two weeks.”

In the team standings, the Wildcats finished fifth overall with 83 points. Baldwin won the league crown with 145 points

and Paola was second with 108.

Also on the track, Green finished fifth in the 400-meter dash as he ran a time of 52.96. Green, Wilde, Quinn Rigney and Michael Minster ran a 3:42 in the 4×400 to take sixth.

In the 100-meter dash, Wilde and Ben Minster finished sixth and seventh, respectively, to also score points in the sprints.

The 4×800 relay of Wyatt Reece, Ben Hupp, Dawson Christy and Minster finished fifth in 9:22.

Junior Parker Cates, along with freshman Frankie Hurst, had a good day in the pole vault. Cates cleared 11-0 to take fifth overall. Hurst also cleared 11-0 to tie a personal best and took eighth.

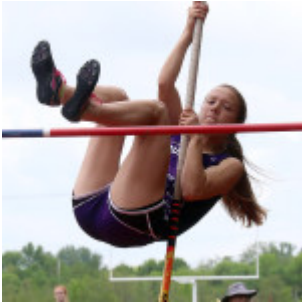
Andrew Goff cleared 5-6 in the high jump to take sixth and rounded out the Wildcat point-getters.

Louisburg will now get ready to compete in its most important meet of the season Thursday as it travels to Prairie View for the Class 4A regional meet. The top four finishers in each event qualify for the state meet in Wichita.

“I think we have the chance to qualify a lot of kids in a lot of events, but they are going to have to perform well on Thursday,” Griffin said. “This is the highest pressure meet of the year. A lot of these kids have been in this situation before and have performed well, but for some of them it is a new experience and hopefully they can relax and perform well.”

---

# Louisburg girls track finds success at Redbud



Louisburg High School freshman Isabelle Holtzen springs up to go over the bar in the pole vault Friday at the Redbud Relays at Wellsville High School. Holtzen set a personal-best in the pole vault as she cleared 8 feet and took sixth overall.

---

WELLSVILLE – Missing a week with an injury didn't seem to bother freshman Bailey Belcher.

All Belcher did was score in all four of her events Friday during the Redbud Relays at Wellsville High School. Those points helped the Louisburg girls track and field team to a fifth place finish with 33 points.

Belcher finished fourth in two of her individual events and joined Megan Lemke, Ashley Ruder and Hanna Becker in the 4×100-meter relay to finish third in 53 seconds.

In the 100-meter dash, Belcher ran a time of 13.63 seconds to take fourth and also finished fourth in the 200 dash in 27.59. She also scored points in the high jump after she cleared 4 feet, 8 inches to finish fifth.

“I felt the girls competed well,” Louisburg coach Greg Darrington said. “I thought Bailey did well for missing a week of practice. She will only get better as she gets into shape

again.”

In the team standings, no team could come close to the race Paola and Baldwin put together. Paola edged Baldwin to win the team title with 162 points and Baldwin finished with 148. Spring Hill took third with 39 points.

Like Belcher, another freshman came through for the Lady Cats.

Freshman jumper Haley Earl had the best individual finish for Louisburg as she came in third in the triple jump with a mark of 31-7.25. Earl also came in seventh in the long jump with a leap of 14-7.

“I really like how Haley Earl is competing and getting better each week,” Darrington said. “I think as long as she works hard she has a chance in competing for a spot in the state track meet.”

Also in the field events, junior McKinley Mathews continues to score points for the Lady Cats. Mathews came in fourth in the pole vault after she cleared 8-6, but another teammate was right behind her.

Freshman Isabelle Holtzen set a personal record in the pole vault after she cleared 8-0 and finished sixth. Sophomore Chloe Renner was sixth in the high jump after she cleared 4-6.

On the track, the Lady Cats also scored points in two other relays. The 4×400 relay team of Kaitlyn Gaza, Makenzie Kallevig, Ruder and Lemke ran a time of 4:23 to finish fourth.

Liz Hildreth, Lauren Becker, Kallevig and Holtzen ran the 4×800 relay to a fifth-place finish in 11:08.

Louisburg will compete in one of its final meets of the season Thursday at the Frontier League meet at Spring Hill. Field events are set to begin at 3:30 p.m.



---

# McMullen wins discus at Redbud Relays



Louisburg senior Connor McMullen lets the discus fly during the Redbud Relays on Friday at Wellsville High School. McMullen won the event with a throw of 187 feet and 3 inches.

---

WELLSVILLE – A year ago, Connor McMullen set a Louisburg High School and Redbud Relays record in the discus with a throw of 187 feet, 3 inches.

On Friday, McMullen returned to Wellsville to try and duplicate, or even exceed his mark. Although he didn't quite get there, McMullen still won the event with a toss of 175-4 at the Redbud Relays.

“Connor has a big one in him and I think it is just a matter of time,” Louisburg coach Gary Griffin said. “We have some big meets coming up, and he will have some good competition the rest of the year.”

McMullen's victory in the discus was the Wildcats' lone win on the day as they finished ninth in the team standings with 28 points. Baldwin won the meet going away with 101 points and

Osawatomie was second with 69.

Louisburg senior Sean Dennis recorded team points in two events and nearly came away with a victory in the 100-meter dash. He was second in the event in 11.72 seconds and Wellsville's Zach Strom won in 11.53. Dennis finished fourth in the 200-meter dash in 23.65.

Dennis was scheduled to go up against Osawatomie's Jacoby Greenwood in the 110-meter hurdles as they both hold two of the top times in Class 4A this season. Instead, Dennis was disqualified for a false start.

"Sean was a little amped up for the race and I think he knew he needed to get out quick," Griffin said. "It was one of those things that happen to sprinters once in a while, but he came back and ran a good 100. I hope it does not happen again."

The Wildcats also put together some points and personal best in several field events.



**Louisburg senior Mason Wilde (left) takes the handoff from senior teammate Zach Knox during the 4x100-meter relay Friday at the Redbud Relays in Wellsville.**

McMullen, before winning the discus, was in the shot put ring and finished fourth with a mark of 46-8. Teammate Jarod Woodward was seventh with a throw of 45-2.

For the first time this season, freshman Frankie Hurst cleared 11 feet in the pole vault, which is a new personal best and placed sixth overall in the process. Teammate Parker Cates took eighth after he cleared 10-6.

“Frankie has a chance at regionals if he can make 11 or higher to make it to state, so it was nice to see him make that height,” Griffin said.

Although they didn't score points, both of the Wildcat javelin throwers set new personal bests. Jacob Jensen recorded a toss of 133-6 to take 11th and Dustyn Rizzo had a throw of 130-1 to take 13th.

On the track, the Wildcats are dealing with some injuries as senior sprinter Mason Wilde was held out of the 100 and 200 dashes, but still ran the 4×100 and 4×400-meter relays.

Zach Knox, Wilde, Ben Minster and Dennis finished sixth in the 4×100 in 45.43 seconds. The 4×400 team of Wyatt Reece, Quinn Rigney, Wilde and Dawson Christy was seventh in 3 minutes and 41 seconds.

Christy later went on to finish seventh in the 800 run in 2:10 and Minster took seventh in the 100 dash in 11.95 seconds.

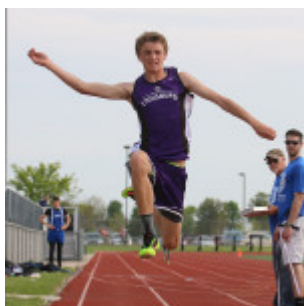
Reece, Christy, Michael Minster and Ben Hupp ran the 4×800 for Louisburg and came in 8th in 8:59.

Michael Minster and Bobby Hargis also ran personal bests in their respective distance races. Minster ran a 2:16 in the 800 run and 11:35 in the 3,200-meter run, while Hargis came in 13th in the 3,200 run in 11:31 and ran a 5:17 in the 1,600 run.

Louisburg returns to action Thursday when it travels to Spring Hill for the Frontier League track meet. Field events are set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

---

## **Wildcats face tough competition at Gardner**



Louisburg's Andrew Goff flies through the air during an attempt in the triple jump Friday at the Trailblazer Invitational at Gardner. Goff set personal records in all three jump events.

---

GARDNER – Medals were at a premium for the Louisburg track and field teams, but the Wildcats still showed improvement even though they don't have the hardware to show it.

During the Trailblazer Invitational on Friday in Gardner, the Wildcats won just one event but set numerous personal records in several others competing against bigger schools including Olathe East, Olathe Northwest and Mill Valley.

"I thought we did some good things," Louisburg boys coach Gary Griffin said. "We are kind of banged up right now though. We

have a lot of aches and pains.”

Louisburg senior Connor McMullen continued to tear through his discus competition as he won his third meet of the season. McMullen recorded a throw of 171 feet, 9 inches to win by almost 30 feet.

Junior Jarod Woodward and McMullen scored points in the shot put as well. Woodward came in third with a toss of 44-11 and McMullen was right behind him in fourth with a mark of 43-5.

Fellow senior Sean Dennis went up against some tough competition in the hurdles and both sprint races. Dennis ran a personal best time in the 200-meter dash in 23.14 seconds to take fourth. He went on to finish third in the 110-meter high hurdles in 15.3 and seventh in the 100 dash in 11.35.

“Sean had some tough competition,” Griffin said. “He ran his best 200 time, but did not run great in the hurdles and 100. He has been pretty consistent all year, so he will bounce back fine.”

Kyle Green put together his best performance in the 400-meter dash as he set a personal record of 52.94 seconds to finish third against some strong runners. Teammate Dawson Christy also ran a personal best 55.11 in the event.

“Kyle’s PR was good to see and I hope he continues to get better,” Griffin said. “The competition was good, but we are striving to get better at every meet, and I think overall we did that.”

Several jumpers had personal bests for the Wildcats. Andrew Goff had personal record marks in the high jump (5-6), triple jump (38-7) and long jump (18-8). Triple jumpers Will Ridley (35-6.5) and Kyle Allen (35-4.5) also had new highs.

Parker Cates cleared 11-6 in the pole vault, which is a new top mark for him, and Frankie Hurst cleared 10-6 to tie his

personal best.

“I thought Andrew Goff had a great day,” Griffin said. “I think he had season PRs in all his events and the other triple jumpers had PRs as well. Parker and Frankie competed well also.”

The Lady Cats didn't have the same type of success, but junior pole vaulter McKinley Mathews had another good outing. Mathews cleared 9 feet to finish fourth overall.

Louisburg returns to the track Friday for the Redbud Relays in Wellsville. The meet is set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

---

## 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.