

# Lawn school track runners qualify for states

**By Stephanie Heelan Cotsonas**

Lawn Avenue School track coach Nick Alfred is thrilled with the size of his team this year. "This is one of the largest teams who have stuck. A lot of kids usually drop out, but I have 53 kids that compete in the meets. I am really happy because I love to get them interested in track and get them exercising and competing. Middle school track paves the way for high school and even lifelong competitive running."

The team has reached the season midpoint and already a number of people have qualified for the state meet. "Six or seven kids have qualified and I expect about 10 in total," Alfred said.

He can also bring two additional competitors, referred to as the coaches' choice. "It is kind of like the sportsmanship award. I usually bring the one boy and one girl who have come to all the practices, help with equipment and want to compete."

In middle school track, scoring is on the honor system and the kids report their scores to the coaches after the meets. There is no team score kept at regular meets. Alfred approves of this scoring system. "With track and field, you are competing against yourself constantly. They are still working together as a team and there is a huge social aspect, especially at the meets."

After a meet with Monsignor Clarke, Wickford and Davisville middle schools at the North Kingstown High School track on April 30, Alfred said the teams' strengths this year are the distance events and the hurdles. "Ben Stewart, Matt DeMieri-Jewell and Hayden Rudd have all qualified for the 1500 (meters) and Hayden has also qualified for the 3000 (meters). Brooke Doherty is also a strong distance runner," he said.

Katherine Normand and Nicole Perez also competed in the 1500-meters. Perez qualified for the state meet after dropping 15 seconds and 10 seconds in the last two meets, respectively. Perez ran the

400-meters in 72 seconds and said, "I qualified in the 400, too. Everyone is kind of improving." Perez plans to run for the North Kingstown High School track team next year.

Sarah Smith easily won her heat of the 100-meter hurdles under unusual circumstances. "There were only seven hurdles and they made us redo the race, but there were still only seven. I think they pushed the starting line back but a lot of people still qualified," Smith said.

According to Alfred, the times for the hurdles will not count but he will take them into consideration. The race should be 80 meters and eight hurdles when it was actually 80 meters and seven hurdles.

"In the 100 hurdles, Danny Bailey is looking awesome and Holly Bobola is giving an all out effort, even though the hurdles are about as tall as she is. Will Shepard also did well in the hurdles and Sarah Smith is one to watch," Alfred said.

Cara Liberati handily won her heat in the 100-meter dash in 14.6 seconds and was close to breaking the qualifying time. Amina Brown and Jessica Rudman had solid performances in the 400-meter run.

Sixth-grader Sam DiGaspar competed in his first track meet and looks forward to competing again. He was happy with his throw in the shot put, the 100-meter dash, and in the 400-meters, he saved some steam for the end and

finished strong. Evin Barrett was dropped two seconds from his 100-meter time and said confidently, "I think I might qualify by the end of the season."

Caty Schnack ran the 800-meters, but she said she was happier with her throw in the shot put.

Maia White qualified for the 400-meters and needs to drop nine seconds to qualify in the 800-meters. White said, "As a team we are doing really well and everyone is improving a lot and getting better. We have two meets next week and I think the whole team will be go-

ing to states if they practice."

Alfred prides himself on the track and field program he started at Lawn. "It is all about teaching the basics and letting the kids try everything. If someone wants to try every event, I let them so they can see what it is all about. It is all about learning."

The Lawn school will be competing in their last regular season meet today in Bristol against the East Bay teams. This will be their last chance to qualify for the state meet being held May 19 and 20.



Andrew McCarthy hands off the baton to Seamus Murray in the 4 x 400 meter relay. Photo by Stephanie Cotsonas

## Donate old boating equipment to yard sale

The North Kingstown Sailing Team is looking for donations of nautical items for its fund-raising yard sale, which will be held this Saturday, May 10, from 8 a.m. to noon in the high school cafeteria.

Clothing, boat hardware, electronics and small boats are welcome. All items should be in good, working condition.

Yard sale tables are also available for rent to sell nautical gear.

In Jamestown, items can be dropped off at 55 Gondola Ave. on the front porch.

Contributors are asked to attach name and address to any donations so that a receipt can be sent. Call 423-3167 for more information.



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