

Varsity track wins IHSA Sectionals fourth year in a row

Trevians aim to be first to the finish line at upcoming state meet

by Millie Winter

Girls Track and Field participated in their Sectional Meet on May 10, qualifying for 8 events and taking a total of 15 athletes to the State Meet.

The qualifiers included: 3200m relay (Emma Branband, Karan Awatrimani, Caroline Trukenbrod, and Bridget Forbes), 4x800 relay (Karan Awatrimani, Emma Branband, Bridget Forbes, and Savannah Noethlich), 4x400 relay (Marne Sullivan, Grace Mcmanus, Savannah Noethlich, and Emma Fowkes), Sydney Kunkler in Long Jump and Triple Jump, Natalie Karabas in High Jump, Ellie Finnigan in 3200 meter, Emma Fowkes in 100 meter hurdles, and Marne Sullivan and Savannah Noethlich in the 800 meter.

“Our team did outstanding,” said Head Coach Robert Spagnoli. “Our varsity won the CSL South Conference Meet and IHSA Sectional Meet for the fourth consecutive year, I can’t think of too many other teams that can say that.”

For both boys – who will participate in sectionals may 17th – and girls, their overall goal is to qualify in as many events as possible



New Trier girls varsity track celebrate a sectional title win by holding up the plaque | New Trier Athletics Twitter

to have a strong number of athletes heading to state the following weekend (May 17-20 for the girls).

Junior Rebecca Goldman, who participates in various field events, said, “Overall I think we can score a lot of points in a lot of events and win this sectional qualifying a bunch of athletes for state.”

Captain Julia Birdsell said going into the races, “I never doubt NTGTF’s performance. At every meet there will be a PR (personal record) or a 1st place medal won. I expected us to do great.”

Many of the runners wanted to reach their goal of getting a PR. Marne Sullivan, who qualified for state in the 4x400 relay and the 800 meter, said, “My goal was to get a PR

in the 800 running as close to 2:12 minutes as possible.”

The girls head coach, Spagnoli, explained, “We wanted to double up on qualifiers in the individual event. We always want to win the Sectional Meet as a team.”

The same goes for the boys team as well, their successful season pushes them to strive for a successful sectional meet. In the beginning of the season they had a great showing at Maine South. They placed second to Evanston, who, according to Ford Baker, “is the biggest competition in the CSL Division.”

Baker, a boys longer distance runner, said, “Like most guys on the team, the ultimate goal for the end of

the season is to race my best.”

Although each boys athlete has their individual pre race “ritual”, Baker explained, “I jog two miles and then do dynamic stretches.”

Although warming up muscles is important, it is also necessary for the athletes to mentally be prepared and not “psych themselves out.”

“In the moments leading up to the race, I am a ball of nerves, however just before the race starts, a switch flips and I am ready to go,” said Baker.

Going into sectionals, the girls team faced some serious competitors. According to Natalie Karabas, another team captain, “Each event has another event they are trying

to beat. Personally for me, Glen Brook South and Maine West have great jumpers, so I’d say they’re my biggest competition.”

Spagnoli said, “Certainly Loyola, Maine South, Glenbrook South, and Evanston are always extremely competitive annually.”

Before the girls start their events, many of them have a ritual to “pump them up,” explained Karabas. “I always listen to music on the bus ride there, I have a playlist of like 8 songs I always will listen too.”

Sullivan said her ritual includes, “listening to pump up music as well as having a delicious sandwich from foodstuffs for a solid lunch.”

According to Sullivan, the team works towards the idea that, “We couldn’t go into this meet thinking people will give us something, we have to go in with a mindset that we need to work hard to get what we deserve.”

With a lot of time and effort put into this year’s season, and a previous sectional win, “We are fortunate to have a combination of runners, jumpers and throwers that were up to the challenge of defending our previous Sectional Championships,” said Spagnoli.

With state coming up this week and sectionals for the boys, both teams hope to finish their season with passion.

Boys lacrosse eyeing state repeat

Nationally ranked Trevians hope to topple Loyola again to capture state

by Jack Soble

New Trier Boys Lacrosse won the State Championship in 2017 and judging by their current record, it will take a valiant effort by an opponent to change that this year with the IHSA state playoffs beginning May 18.

The 15-3 (at the time of this writing) Trevians are undefeated in state, with their only defeats coming at the hands of Culver Military Academy (the number one team in the country) twice and St. Xavier, a team from Cincinnati who they took down in a rematch later in the year.

“[The second St. Xavier matchup] was a game we were really excited to play,” said senior Wilson MacRitchie, “because we felt we didn’t have our best game the first time around against them, and were looking for some revenge.”

The tough out of state schedule approach has paid off many times before, with New Trier winning not only last season’s title but with rings in both 2015 and 2014 as well. Before that, they had an incredible run of seven consecutive championships from 2005-2011.

“We play a really challenging schedule so we are prepared to play at a high level, but in the end we need to play our best here on out to continue to advance in the playoffs,” said head coach Tom Herrala.

Despite the three losses, the Trevians remain a juggernaut according to multiple national high school rankings. They come in at fourth in the Midwest in the US Inside Lacrosse poll and second in the US Lacrosse Magazine poll.

“The pressure is definitely there, but we try not to think about it,” said

junior midfielder and first team all-conference selection Brian Sitzer. “As long as we put in the work and stay focused, we know that we’re on track to repeat.”

Sitzer is one of five such players on New Trier, including attackman Henry Scherb (who Herrala noted is their leading scorer), midfielder Johnny Mayday, defenseman Nate Carlton, and long stick middle Tommy Defelice.

MacRitchie didn’t think that New Trier had any extra internal pressure put on them to win as the defending champions, but in reality the pressure comes from their opponents, who all have New Trier circled on their calendars.

“Because of this, we have to respect every opponent, and play a great game, our game, against every opponent. We still have the same end goal as last year, to win state,” he said.

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New Trier is dominating the vast majority of its competition despite star attackers Collin Kroll and Nelson Gaechter graduating after the 2017 state title.

Gaechter was an especially huge loss, as he finished his New Trier career with the all-time lead in career assists for Trevian Lacrosse. He also ranks top ten in assists in a season, career points, points in a season, and goals in both career and in a single

season.

For a lot of New Trier teams, if Loyola Academy is on the schedule, it’s the number one game on everybody’s mind.

For a powerhouse like the Lacrosse team, it’s still important, but doesn’t mean quite as much as it would to others, although you would think the opposite considering Loyola ended their dreams of a 2016 championship in the title game.

“It’s a great win and obviously everyone was really excited about it,” said junior midfielder Carson Ochsenhirt. “But all it is a regular season game. And just because we beat Loyola in the regular season, it doesn’t mean they will give up. We need to use this as motivation and to work harder to prepare for them and any other team in our way of winning a state championship.”

Coach Herrala emphasized the team’s message - the only goal is to repeat - best when he said “It’s always nice to beat Loyola but the last game of the year is the most important one.”

Sitzer agreed to a quite literal extent, repeating Herrala’s exact words on the subject. “It’s always nice beating Loyola in any sport,” he said. “But that was just a regular season game. The only game that matters in the end is [the state championship], and that’s the game we’re focused on.”

The Trevians know, however, that to win the state championship they’re almost certainly going to have to face the Ramblers once again.

In the past, per MacRitchie, the regular season winner of NT vs. Loyola has lost the playoff game, meaning New Trier will have to “break the curse.”

“To do that, we know we are going to have to outwork them, and come into the playoffs wanting it more than them,” said MacRitchie. “That is what will be the difference between this season and past seasons.”

Q&A with field hockey player Jenn Kirby

Kirby talks about her playing career and future plans

by David Heiman



Q: How long have you been playing field hockey?

A: I’ve been playing field hockey for four and a half years.

Q: What was your role on the team this year? How did you lead?

A: I was a captain so I was definitely in the role of a leader. I’m typically someone who leads by example but is also supportive and always there to help out others with advice. I’m also a loud voice on the field who is always giving out instructions or support.

Q: Are you going to college for field hockey? If so, which one?

A: I’m going to Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. I have a lot of random connections to that division because my dad played soccer and lacrosse at Whittenburg, a team they play. My coach played at Denison, and Sarah Goff, my old team mate is playing at Depauw, both of which are also in the division. Rhodes went in their conference and won the SAA division championship in 2016 and 2015.

Q: What’s something people wouldn’t know about you by just looking at you?

A: I love to cook and I’m a vegetarian.

Q: Who has influenced you the most in your playing career?

A: I’ve had a lot of amazing coaches like Britnay Benson and Kaz, the field coaches at New Trier, but my friend Ali Gregorian and I have always been very competitive in anything we

do together (we’ve been on sports teams together since 5th grade) so she has really pushed me over the years to work hard and become a better player.

Q: Have you ever played any other sports besides field hockey?

A: I played soccer from first grade until freshman year. It really helped me with field hockey because the sports are very similar positioning wise. They’re both 11v11 and use the same concepts.

Q: If you could have dinner with any three people, alive or dead, who would they be and why?

A: Ryan Reynolds because he’s funny and gorgeous, my Grandma, Dhana, who passed away a few years ago and was the nicest and most caring person I know. Lastly, Rainn Wilson because I am the biggest fan of the office and I love him so much. Plus he is a New Trier alumnus.