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Benkley shatters meet, school marks in 3,200 as Pirates warm up to outdoor

Records are made to be broken, but it usually takes track and field athletes several weeks outdoors to take serious aim at new standards.

Don't count Port Washington's Bianca Benkley among the procrastinators.

The freshman standout obliterated a pair of records when she won the 3,200-meter girls' race in last Saturday's Viking Invitational at Wisconsin Lutheran High School.

Benkley's time of 11 minutes, 32.27 seconds not only shattered the meet record by more than eight seconds, it blew away the previous Port girls' mark of 11:39.8 set by Courtney Nault in 2003.

"It's a good starting point," Port girls' coach Joe Adamak said of Benkley's performance.

"Our plan was to come out and go for the record, and Bianca and our other girls in the race set the pace. They all had outstanding times for this point in the season."

Benkley finished 1.6 seconds ahead of runner-up Leah Rendflesh of South Milwaukee. Other Port runners in the scoring pack were Ashley Hilton and Diana Seer, who finished fifth (12:06.65) and seventh (12:21.9), respectively.

Benkley also anchored the winning 3,200 relay for the Pirates, who placed seventh overall in the 13-team girls' meet. She combined with Hilton, Seer and Payton Greisch for a 10:10.94 time that was more than nine seconds faster than the runner-up relay.

"We were actually hoping for a much better time than that, but we'll keep working on it," Adamak said.

Port scored 45 points in the meet, which was won by Wisconsin Lutheran with 112.5. Milwaukee Lutheran took second with 96 points, and South Milwaukee was third with 77.

The Pirates' other scoring finishes were a third by Marly Trier in the discus (101 feet, 6 inches), fourth by Greisch in the 400 dash (1:10.68) and fifths by Trier in the shot put (30-2) and Sarah Carini in the discus (90-4).

Just out of the scoring with a ninth-place finish in the 800 run was Port's Bonnie Allen (2:33.8).

In the boys' portion of the meet, the Pirates took eighth out of 13 teams with 42 points.

Milwaukee Marquette won the title with 116 points, 10 more than runner-up Wisconsin Lutheran.

Setting the pace for Port were four second-place finishes — from Joe McIlree in the 400 dash (51.31), Jared Sandlin in the 800 run (2:01.91), the 1,600 relay of Adam Prom, Steven Nelson, Sandlin and McIlree (3:33.62) and the 3,200 relay of Prom, Nelson, Casey Karpin and Justin Fote (8:25.76).

The Pirates' other scoring finishes were sixths by Fote in the 800 run (2:05.27), Adam Schoenfeld in the triple jump (40-4) and the 800 relay of Schoenfeld, Prom, Nelson and Brennan Liebscher (1:36.79) and an eighth by Zach Hauser in the discus (116-11).

"It was a pretty good day for us," said Port boys' coach Mark Pasten, who singled out McIlree's 400-dash and his team's two relay finishes as strong efforts on a drizzly day.

"We knew coming into the meet that Marquette and Lutheran were deeper than us, so we didn't try to put a lineup together to score the most points we could."

The Pirates were also slowed by the loss of senior distance runner Jeff Bartow, who withdrew midway through the meet due to illness.

Pasten praised junior Augie Yates for a 10th-place finish in the 1,600 run. Yates' time of 4:49.99 was 15 seconds faster than his previous-best effort.

This week, both Port teams ran at the New Berlin Relays on Tuesday and will

participate at the Titan Invitational in Oshkosh at 4 p.m. Friday.

On May 5, the Pirates will travel to Cedarburg for the North Shore Conference Relays.

Black Hawks win invitational title

It took 10 first-place finishes, but the Grafton boys' track and field team piled up enough victories to secure a championship by the narrowest of margins at the annual Slinger Invitational on April 21.

Coach Kevin Kriegel's squad scored 64 points, one more than the host Owls in a battle for top honors in the three-team meet. Greendale had 50 points.

"It was a small, low-key meet, but it was a good confidence builder for our team," Kriegel said.

The Black Hawks were led by double winner Jason Zahn, a sophomore who placed first in the shot put (48-2) and discus (146-11).

Grafton's other individual firsts came from Ryan Grange in the high jump (5-8), D. Foster in the 100 dash (11.4), Sean Hanley in the 400 dash (53.4), Justin Tomashek in the 800 run (2:04.1) and Ryan Rieboldt in the 3,200 run (11:02.7).

Winning relay races for the Hawks were the 3,200 team of Chris Rose, Stefan Lundgren, Eric Gergens and Adam Kahmann (9:19.5), the 800 team of Foster, Kevin Wegner, Jake Bronowski and Grange (1:36.2) and the 400 team of Jason Karrels, Bronowski, Wegner and Foster (46.5).

In the girls' portion of the meet, Grafton placed second with 63 points. Slinger was first with 85 points, and Greendale had 36.

Freshman Cathy Brunette led the Hawks with victories in the 100 high hurdles (16.8) and 300 low hurdles (51.2).

Grafton also got firsts from Sara Grange in the 100 dash (13.3), Emily Van Langen in the 200 dash (28.3), Samie McKee in the high jump (5-0), the 400 relay of Emily Schreiner, Grange, McKee and Van Langen (53.2) and the 3,200 relay (11:21.5).

Next up on the schedule for both Grafton teams are the Waukesha North Invitational at 10 a.m. Saturday and the North Shore Conference Relays at Cedarburg on May 5.

Pirates trail at Cedarburg meet

The Port boys' and girls' teams both placed third in a meet at Cedarburg on April 20.

Cedarburg topped the three-team girls' standings with 92.5 points, followed by Beaver Dam (51.5) and Port (31).

Placing first for the Pirates were Claire Kinzer in the pole vault (7-6), Trier in the shot put (33-6-1/4) and the 3,200 relay of Gresich, Seer, Hilton and Benkley (10:13.08).

The Port boys scored 35 points in a four-team field, finishing ahead of Milwaukee South, which had 17. Beaver Dam took first with 77.5 points, and Cedarburg was second with 35.5.

Taking first for Port were Jason Marhal in the 1,600 run (5:26.22) and Schoenfeld in the triple jump (39-5).