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Cards, Cougars rule in BDN



Brodhead-Juda's Ryan Miller sails to first place in the 110-meter high hurdles at Clinton Friday. At left is Turner's Brandon Struebin, who finished third. Staff photo by Jim Franz

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MVP Clankie gives spark to Brodhead-Juda

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CLINTON - Brodhead-Juda girls track coach Ken Peterson looked down at the score sheet in amazement.

"We won by 25 points," Peterson said. "I'm shocked and surprised."

Peterson's Cardinals racked up four first-place finishes, including two by field MVP winner Heather Clankie in Friday's 31st annual Beloit Daily News Invitational track meet.

Brodhead collected 124.6 points, while Clinton was second with 99 points. Parkview took fourth with 82.6 points, while Beloit Memorial's jayvees tallied 43 points and Beloit Turner tacked on 18 points.

Clinton, hosting the meet for the first time, rolled in the boys portion of the event, carding a first-place finish with 122 points. Beloit Turner tallied 103 points and third place, behind second-place Lake Forest (106).

In the girls meet, Clankie notched titles in the shot put (33-3) and the discus (106-7).

“She's just getting better and better every day,” Peterson said.

Clankie gave credit to assistant coach Jerry Amundson with her development, as she set a personal record in the shot put.

“I've worked on my footing for a long time, worked very hard,” Clankie said. “I've been doing track meets all summer and working on a lot of technique. It's starting to pay off. Hopefully, I can get better.”

Peterson pointed to the end-of-the-meet events as the turning point.

“We really won this thing at the end of the meet,” Peterson said. “We were racking up points in the weight events. They were big for us.”

The Cardinals recorded victories by Cassie Wymer in the 800 meters (2:27.0) and the 1,600-meter relay team (4:17.00).

Brodhead-Juda also netted four second-place showings to earn some big points.

“We've beat (these teams before), but it's always been close,” Peterson said.

Shannon Klein also broke the Brodhead-Juda school record with a time of 59.75 in the 400.

For Beloit Turner's Courtney Crouse, it was a good day and a bad day.

The good day resulted in a first-place finish in the pole vault (9-0). The bad day came from her injuring her left knee in the 400-meter relay on an exchange with a teammate.

Crouse said she was experiencing “a ton of pressure” below her kneecap.

“It hurts a lot,” said Crouse. “I sat down and iced it as long as I could. I had no feeling in it, but it was very weak.”

The injury almost forced Crouse to drop out, but she went through with the pole vault, clearly not at her best, falling six inches short of her career-best mark (9-6).

The biggest thing for Crouse was trying to stay healthy. Friday's meet was the Turner senior's first in the last two weeks due to a wrist injury she suffered.

“I am worried with my knee right now,” Crouse said. “I want to make 10-foot so bad.”

Clinton's Emily Buchanan broke the school record in the high jump, registering a leap of 5-5, breaking the school record by one inch.

“Just barely,” Buchanan said. “It's the greatest feeling of my life. I haven't been able to clear 5-3. It was great weather to do it in.”

Clinton's Ann Harsevoort scored a first-place finish in the 3,200 (13:25.7).

The Cougars boys team didn't surprise head coach Ray Vance.

“I knew we had a good chance of winning this when we came here,” Vance said. “There were a lot of teams that happened to have injuries, so that played a part.”

Kevin Kitzman was the only Cougar to grab a first-place finish, taking the title in the discus event (138-7). He also was second in the shot put with a throw of 45-3. The only other Clinton athlete to win an event was Kyle Jones in the shot put (45-4).

Kitzman was named the field MVP of the event.

It wasn't just Kitzman, as the Cougars wrapped up three second-place finishes.

“Team depth really was the key,” Vance said. “It wasn't just one individual, which is nice when you're a coach.”

Turner's 800-meter relay foursome of Paul Sorenson, Brandon Struebin, Nolan Byrom and Joey Williams recorded a meet-record time of 1:32.6, with Beloit Memorial's jayvee squad second, 13 seconds behind.

The 3,200 relay team also fared well as Jose Perez, Joe Pickett, Tim Laursen and Williams registered a time of 8:30.7 - two seconds faster than Lake Forest.

Sorenson nabbed Turner's only individual title in the triple jump (39-10 1/4).

Brodhead-Juda, which finished in sixth place with 72.5 points, was led by Ryan Miller. The Cardinals' senior took home the crown in the 110 hurdles (15.84).

“I was hoping for high 15s and that's what I got, so I'm happy,” Miller said. “I want to get down to 15.5 for conference. Last year, I ran 15.7 at sectionals and that wasn't enough, so I know what it takes.”

Teammate Jordan Riemer garnered a first-place showing in the pole vault (11-6).

“I had to run the 1,600, so I was kind of tired,” Riemer said. “Right now, I'm using 14-foot pole, but I'd like to start using a 15-foot pole, kind of challenge myself.”

Parkview wound up with 43 points with its best finish coming from Tailor Hartman, who took third in the 100 meters (11.5).

The running event MVP for the boys was Rockford Christian Life's Chris Neid. The running event MVP for the girls was East Troy's Jasmine Haines.

? NOTES: Three more new meet records were established, including the 400-meter relay from the Lake Forest boys (43.2), **Rockford Christian's Courtney McKibben in the 100 for girls (15.26)** and East Troy's Tia Nowak in the 400 (58.24).

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