

Black & Gold



JACKSON BARRETT (foreground), a Tuscola sophomore, runs the 800-meter run at the Gene Armer Invitational on Saturday. Barrett finished 14th in the event. The Warrior runner has been invited to the Top Times Meet on Friday as a member of the Warrior 3,200-meter relay team. Photo by Dan Chamness.



ALYSSA WILLIAMS, shown here running at the University of Illinois Armory, won two events at the Mt. Zion Girls Invitational on Thursday night. She also anchored the 800-meter relay. Williams has qualified for the Top Times Meet in the 60-meter dash, the 200-meter dash, the long jump and the 800-meter relay. Photo by Dan Chamness.

Warriors finish 25th at Gene Armer Invite

By Daniel L. Chamness
It was simply a massive meet.

The Gene Armer Invitational hosted by the Urbana Tigers and held at the historic University of Illinois Armory featured a total of 36 boys teams. Tuscola would finish 25th overall scoring eight points. Normal Community won the meet with 58 points.

No athlete, or relay team for that matter, that did not reach the top 10 in the prestigious meet did not score any points. The Warriors got all of their points from Will Foltz, Chris Boyd and the 3,200-meter relay team.

Foltz vaulted to a height of 3.65 meters to take fifth overall.

"I was aiming for 12 feet, 6 inches," said Foltz. "But for now, I will settle for 12-0 as my personal best. I am eager to compete on Friday at the Top Times Meet."

As of press time, Foltz sits at 11th overall in Class 1A. They will take the top 12. The deadline to enter the meet was 10 p.m. on Monday evening, therefore Foltz should be in the meet.

Chris Boyd took sixth in the shot put at the Gene Armer with a throw of 15.0 meters. His best throw this year is the second best effort in the state of Illinois at the Class 1A level.

"I was hoping to throw 16 meters or better," said the junior three sport athlete. "I will be working on some last minute improvements to my throwing form. I need to improve my footwork for sure."

The Warriors 3,200-meter relay team of Jackson Barrett, Josiah Hortin, Logan Wallace and Riley Nolan ran a time of 8 minutes, 57.24 seconds and they are currently sitting at 10th in the state with that time. They finished eighth on Saturday.

"That was a good effort for us," said Barrett, who ran a 2:13 split during his leg of the relay, "It was the first time the four of us were able to run it together this season. I know we can go faster."

A number of other Tuscola Warriors competed at the Gene Armer and a handful was able to finish in the top 15. Individually, Hortin (800-meter run), Conner Lewis (long jump) and Barrett (1,600-meter run) all finished in the top 15. Hortin was 11th in 2:13.75, while Lewis finished 12th with a leap of 5.70 meters. Barrett posted a time of 5:00.47 to take 14th.

The 800-meter relay team of Ben Hornaday, Bryce Graves, Hunter Branca and Lewis took 15th in 1:39.26.

Editors Note: Dan Chamness' article on the girls track team was turned in before it was clear who had advanced to the Top Times Meet on the girls level.

Since the boy's story was turned in later, it is now clear that athletes such as Alyssa Williams, Lia Patterson and Keena Clodfelder have secured spots in numerous events for the Top Times Meet. In addition, the 800-meter relay team has also earned a spot in the Top Times Meet. Williams is listed as the top athlete in the long jump, the 60-meter dash and the 200-meter dash.

The meet is scheduled to start at the Shirk Center on the

campus of Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington. It is scheduled to start at 3 p.m. if they are able to follow the time schedule, the last event, the 1,600-meter relay, will be run at 7:50 p.m. on Friday night.

Tuscola posts six wins at Mt. Zion girls invitational

Who made the Top Times Meet for Friday, March 25 is up in the air.

What is not in question is how good the Tuscola Lady Warrior track team is. The answer is pretty good. While the Top Times Meet, often dubbed the indoor state championship, invites on the top 12 competitors in each event to race or jump against each other. The list will not be posted until Tuesday night, which is well past our deadline.

What is clear is Tuscola will not only be represented, but will be represented by quality if the Mt. Zion Girls Invitational is any indication, they will be represented by quality at the highest level.

"I have been very pleased by our short indoor season," said Drew Sterkel, Tuscola's head

coach. "We have grown as a team. I have had many nights realizing how talented we are and get more excited after each meet. I have got a first look at how versatile we are in many events."

The Lady Warriors collected championships in five individual events and one relay event.

Not only was the 800-meter relay a victory for Tuscola, it showed how powerful the Warrior foursome is in that event. They won by over six seconds as leadoff leg Mia Hausmann, a 2021 all-stater in the event, combined talents

with freshmen Lia Patterson and Kenna Clodfelder, and three time state champion Alyssa Williams to win going away in 1 minute, 54.41 seconds.

Williams and Patterson each won two individual events.

Williams dashed to the finish line in :08.16 to win the 60-meter dash. In the field, the Murray State University-bound senior won the long jump with a leap of 5.26 meters. Patterson would win both of her events on the track. The freshman phenom would win the

60-meter hurdles in :09.75. She also dashed to victory in the 400-meter dash, running a 1:00.88.

"Lia only had a 25 minute break between the hurdles and the 400-meter dash," said Sterkel. "That is as tough as you can get. We have a number of athletes that can compete in anything from the 100-meter dash to the 800-meter run. Alyssa has been golden as always. Track is a puzzle. You have to be able to put athletes in the right events and give

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