

# Arcola girls set school record in 4x100 at LPC meet, Myers wins shot and discus for boys' team

By Mike Monahan

ARTHUR –The Arcola girls' high school track team won the Little Okaw Valley Conference title from 2010-2014, but between then and last Friday had never finished higher than fifth place (minus the COVID year of 2020). All of that changed at Wilson Field as the Lady Riders placed second, in the third year of the Lincoln Prairie Conference, edging out Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond 77-71. Cerro Gordo/Bement won the title with 121 points in the 11-team meet.

"Going in I kind of just wanted to spread the girls out as much as I could and try and get as many top six finishes as possible," said Arcola girls coach Adam Reel. "I didn't really have high expectations of getting second in the conference, but I knew we would have a shot. That is all I really wanted. Credit these girls for the entire year as they have continuously got better, better and better."

The 4x100 relay team of Kelsey Moore, Eva Hopkins, Crystal Ramirez and Ema Simpson finished second with a time of 53.19 breaking the old mark of 53.95 set in 2014 by Samantha Reece, Ryann Fishel, Abigail Rivera and Bekah Montgomery.

As for the school record

Hopkins said, "It is crazy knowing that we have the school record. It is something we will be able to hold on to forever; knowing that the four of us accomplished that."

The 4x100 had gone 54.2.

"We had been waiting for the right meet and our handoffs were perfect," said Ramirez.

## Girls

The same four in the 4x100 won the 4x400 with a time of 4:28.27.

"The 4x100 improved by .8 and both relays showed what they can do and are just scratching the surface," said Reel. "The 4x100 handoffs were much more crisp than throughout the year and every rep we seemed to get a little better at it."

The 4x400 switched the order around putting Hopkins second instead of first. Rameriz led off instead of running the third leg. Simpson ran the third leg instead of the second leg and Moore remained the fourth leg.

"I usually run first, but today I was second," said Hopkins. "The only difference is I don't have to get the baton when I am leading off and that is the biggest difference. We knew we were pretty close to getting second (as a team), we



SOME OF THE NINE members of the Arcola girls track team react to the public address announcer saying "In second place, Arcola, with 77 points." Pictured are Emma Vazquez, Ema Simpson, Kelsey Moore, Eva Hopkins and Crystal Ramirez. Other members participating were Hayden Gauna, Shelby Roberts-McGeehon, Myka Gomez and Laney Nelson. Photo by Mike Monahan.

knew we had to try our hardest."

During the 4x400 music blared out the public address system, which Hopkins said she doesn't hear.

"It was windy and we just really had to push through and find our inner strength and really rely on each other. Knowing we can all do our best if we believe in each other no matter what the weather factors are."

The 4x400 time was three seconds better than their previous best.

"I just think it was all of us having confidence in ourselves and going in with a chip on our shoulder. Knowing we can do it and proving to everyone here that we can do it," said Hopkins.

Rameriz said, "I was running the third leg (of the 4x100) and I saw Cerro Gordo/Bement next to us and I was like 'Oh, my gosh we are going to get it,'" said Ramirez. "I have never been this close to them." I gave it to Ema and she took off and I was like "This is it." I knew it after the handoff we had the school record and a personal best."

For the second straight year Moore won both the 100

and 300 hurdle events. She ran the 100 in a personal best time of 18.00 and the 300 in 50.87, winning by 3.10 seconds over the second place finisher.

"It (winning it for the second straight year) means a lot," said Moore. "I know I had high expectations and I am glad I got to exceed my expectations. I had a PR by .26 in the 100 hurdles. I knew the girl next to me from Blue Ridge was someone I had not run against this year and she was only .5 away from me (season-best times). I knew I had to really kick it in. I was working on hurdles Thursday in practice on my three-step and I ran out tonight and wasn't expecting to three step and I did the first hurdle in three steps and I think that is what really pushed me to get there. It was good to three-step at least once in a high school meet."

The 300 was different for Moore as she led at the final curve by a good margin.

"It is hard being first by the curve because I usually have someone to chase and I am usually more of a chase runner," said Moore. "I see them and I try and go hunt them. So being first from the curve kind

of threw me off. I wasn't expecting to have no one to chase. It was difficult."

Ramirez was second in the high jump at 4-10.

"It has been awhile (since she has done 4-10)," said Ramirez. "I am finally getting back to my old self. I had a back injury and could not high jump for a week. I jumped the last meet (Sullivan Relays) and this was the first time I have run the 4x100, 4x200 and 4x400."

The girls got 15 points in shot put and discus, including a second place finish by

Hayden Gauna in the shot put with a personal best of 30-0.

"We had some big people step up today," said Reel. "Hayden Gauna in the shot put and Emma Vazquez was fourth in the shot put. Myka Gomez went in and got in the top six as well. We were not expecting that type of stuff and they did an amazing job. A lot of kids stepped up and out performed what the projections say and I can't be prouder of them."

## Boys

In the shot put Myers waited for his last throw to be the best in shot put in the meet.

"I was putting everything together and getting a big finish at the end of it," said Myers who won with a heave of 52-2 which was 7-9 better than the second place finisher.

The third throw in his discus was his best as he went 177-6, winning by a whopping 45-4 over the second place thrower.

"I stayed consistent and stayed relaxed," said Myers of the discus. "I just keep every throw the same. I go up little by little and don't worry about peaking."

Myers was the conference champion in both events last year as well.

"This year I got it again and why not, it is my last year here," said Myers, who is headed to Indiana State next fall.

At the Sullivan Invitational Myers extended his own school record to 184-9 and won the discus.

Braden Phillips was second in the triple jump, surpassing

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MITCHEL MYERS, an Arcola senior, puts the 12-pound shot at the Lincoln Prairie Conference Meet at Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond. The Purple Rider athlete not only won the shot put with a throw of 15.92 meters. He won the event by over two meters. He would also win the discus throw, recording a toss of 54.12 meters. He won that event by over 13 meters. Photo by Dan Chamness.

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