

Simpson, a freshman, sets school record in 400 Moore moves up two spots in 300 hurdles

By Mike Monahan
 CHARLESTON –Freshman Ema Simpson finished her season in spectacular fashion at the IHSA Class 1A state track meet at O'Brien Stadium on the campus of Eastern Illinois May 18. Simpson was in the second heat and in lane eight in the 400-meter dash. She ran a school record 1:00.17, which was good for 13th place overall and fourth among freshmen.

Also Arcola junior Kelsey Moore was in the 300 meter hurdles where she ran a 48.30, just .02 from her previous best and good for 11th place overall.

"I'm very happy with how both of them did," said Arcola coach Adam Reel. "I was super impressed with their composure. It can be stressful running at state, but both were calm and focused."

As for both Simpson and Moore, Reel said, "Both athletes were super close to making it to finals and with both coming back next year, I think they will shock people with what they do."

Simpson

Simpson was in the same

heat as the eventual state champion, Ahry Comer of Pope County and also a freshman. Her prelim time was 57.68 and she ran a personal best 56.85 in the finals last Saturday. The fourth place finisher Father McGivney's Lilly Gilbertson ran a 57.96 in the prelims and a 58.61 in the finals was also in the same heat as was Shelbyville's Lily Woolery who finished just in front of Simpson with a time of 1:00.14.

"I had run against Woolery before," said Simpson. "My strategy to improve my time was just to get out of the blocks as fast as I can and take away the stagger between me and the girl ahead (Cadence Manning of ROWVA/Williamsfield). I told myself that this race was all or nothing so I pretty much just sprinted the whole lap and gave it everything I could."

Simpson improved her personal best by an impressive 1.31 seconds and missed making the finals (top nine) by .87. She improved her sectional ranking from 22nd to 13th.

"Coming so close to finals



ARCOLA'S Ema Simpson, a freshman, competed in the 400 meters in the IHSA State Track Meet at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston on May 18. Simpson ran a PR time of 1:00.17 to finish in 13th place in a preliminary race. Only the first 9 finishers in the advance to the finals. Photo by Sally McCarthy.

motivates me for next year because knowing that I have what it takes to advance to the next round makes me want it more and to work even harder to get there next year."

Simpson, who was sixth in

the 200 as an eighth grader (27.79) and eighth in the 100 meter hurdles (19.19 and on the second place 4x100 relay (54.02) and 10th in the long jump (15-1 3/4), knew the atmosphere would be differ-



ARCOLA'S Kelsey Moore (left) a junior, competed in the 300 meter hurdles in the IHSA State Track Meet at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston on May 18. Moore finished in 11th place with a time of 48:30 in a preliminary race. Only the first 9 finishers advance to the finals. Photo by Sally McCarthy.

ent for the high school state meet.

"It was an overwhelming yet exciting experience being at state for the first time," said Simpson. "It was very intimidating considering I'm only a

freshman and was competing against lots of juniors and seniors. The environment was so incredible and the amount of people there was nerve wracking."

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MITCHEL MYERS THROWS the shot put. He and Braden Philips are headed to the state prelims. Photo by Dan Chamness/Moto Johnson.

Track

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ond in the event behind Tuscola's Chris Boyd. In the discus he struggled as he had three scratches, but he did get a throw of 170-2 1/4 to place second behind Boyd again.

"I wasn't really shooting for anything much in the shot put or discus," said Myers, who was third in the discus in state last year with a toss of 166-3 and 22nd as a freshman at 125 feet. "I was just trying to qualify in both really. I just wanted to make it to state. It (making state) feels good. I am just ready to get back to work and get ready for state and place in that."

As for Phillips, who was hoping to get the qualifying mark and get to the Arcola vs. Meridian Class 1A regional semifinal baseball game that started at 6 p.m.

"I was nervous the whole day," said Phillips. "I was more nervous about being able to jump. We had emailed the athletic director (Ryan Hornaday) to see if we could go earlier. He said he thought we should

be done by 6 p.m. The long jump started out fast, but then we had some kids that were also in the high jump and it started going slower and they had to wait for the high jump kids for finals. It made me nervous. When the long jump finals were done I had one run through to make sure I had my mark and on the second jump I got my personal record by four and three-fourth inches. I was getting nervous going into the jumps. I was going to do three jumps no matter what. In my head I had it in my mind I was only doing three jumps and my adrenaline kept pumping and it made me not think about it. I was thinking about the baseball game and other things about that. The adrenaline helped along with the fact there were a lot of people there cheering me on."

Tommy Edelman, the Arcola boys track coach, was in the hammer throw, shot put, discus and javelin throw just to name a few at Millikin, and is familiar with how you can be good in one event and not so much in the other.

"I know where he is coming from and I know it is frustrating," said Eddleman. "We will fix it and he will be ready to go Thursday. So, I am not too worried about it."

Myers said it was an off day for him in the discus.

"That was crazy," said Eddleman of Phillips getting his PR by nearly five inches and who got to the baseball game in time. "Hopefully, we won't run into that again, but we could run into the same scenario again next year. It was lucky the baseball game was here in Tuscola; otherwise it could have been a different scenario as baseball is his No. 1 sport (student-athletes pick what their No. 1 sport would be in case of a conflict). It was exciting and I am glad it worked out. I was getting a little nervous. I know he was stressing about it all day as I have him in class."

Phillips was second behind Royce Harper of Decatur St. Teresa. Others had PR's in the sectional.

"Raul Guerra had a PR in the shot put by about three feet (went 41-7, good for 13th overall," said

Eddleman. "Alan Guevera went 5-3 in the high jump, which was a PR by two inches. I know Alan has been trying to get over that height for a while and he finally got over it. Raul had really struggled in the shot put this year, but he finally had a good week of practice. I was happy with his performance."

Arcola loses just three seniors due to graduation including Myers, Elian Arguiera and Michael Gauna.

"We will have a lot of people back and a lot of people coming in next year," said Eddleman.

Class 1A boys sectional at Tuscola

(top 6 Arcola places)

Team scores: 1. Decatur St. Teresa 124, 2. Tuscola 85, 3. Maroa-Forsyth 83, 4. Shelbyville 67, 5. Tie, Sullivan, Pana 40, 7. Tie, Arcola, Argenta-Oreana 26, 9. Tie, Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond, Marshall 23, 11. Central A&M 11, 12. Cerro Gordo/Bement 4, 13. tie, Warrensburg-Latham, Meridian, Okaw Valley 2
 *personal record; #state qualifier
 400: 6. Aden York 54.72*
 Triple jump: 2. Braden Phillips 41-3 1/4*
 Shot put: 2. Mitchel Myers 54-11 1/2 *#
 Discus: 2. Myers 170-2 1/4

Sports Physicals

\$20

1 to 4 pm
Friday, June 9
SBL Arcola Clinic
 241 West Springfield Road • 217 268-4444

Appointments required. Please call to schedule.

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