

SPORTS

Spring sports saw special moments

By Mike Monahan
ARCOLA - First of all a Happy July 4 to everyone.

Last week I reviewed the Arcola High School golf, football, boy's basketball and girls' basketball seasons. Now I will review the boys and girls track seasons as well as baseball and softball.

Boys track

The season was highlighted by Mitchel Myers, who is headed to Indiana State. Myers broke a record many people thought would never be broken. That record was set in 1964 by Terry Miller in the discus as he went 181-5. Myers broke the record first at the 37th annual Tuscola Invitational going 183-0 3/4 before going his best 184-10 1/4 at the Sullivan Redskin Invitational. He finished second in Class 1A state in the discus (173-4) and increased his school record in the shot put to 57-1 1/2, good for second place in the state. Myers became the first boy to place in the state meet in Arcola history in the shot put and first to place in both the shot put and discus in the same year. Myers won the Lincoln Prairie Conference titles in the shot put and discus with throws of 52-2 and 177-6. Earlier in the season Myers broke the shot put school record of 49-4 set by Mikey Robinson in 2007. Meyers first set the record on March 28 at Arcola in the first outdoor meet of the season going 49-9 1/4. He broke his own record five more times.

Braden Phillips was in the state meet in the triple jump and placed 14th overall

going 40-10 3/4 in the preliminaries. His best triple jump was 41-3 1/4 in the Tuscola Sectional.

Braden Phillips placed 14th in the triple jump going 40-10 3/4 in the preliminaries May 25.

Girls track

The girls' season was highlighted by a second place finish in the LPC, its highest finish in a conference meet since winning it all in 2014.

In that meet 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. The same four in this year's 4x100 won the 4x400 with a time of 4:28.27.

For the second straight year Moore won both the 100 and 300 hurdle events in the LPC meet. She ran the 100 in a personal best time of 18.00 and the 300 in 50.87. Moore, then a junior, qualified for the Class 1A state meet with a personal best time of 48.28 in the Okaw Valley Sectional. Her time broke the school record of 48.90 by Ryann Fishel in 2016. Moore finished 11th in the 300 hurdles at O'Brien Stadium with a time of 48.30

Simpson, a freshman, qualified for the state meet at Eastern Illinois with a time of 1:01.87 in the 400. In the state meet Simpson broke the school record of Taylor Edwards, who ran a

1:00.59 in 2013 with a time of 1:00.17.

Baseball

Arcola's baseball team finished 14-5, the second most wins in the history of the program as Jarod Kiger's 2005 team went 17-6. This season was also the second best winning percentage in the history of the program at .737. Arcola won their first regional championship since 1984 by beating Windsor/Stewardson-Strasburg at Tuscola 3-2.

Arcola was 8-2 in the LPC, good for third place.

Arcola sophomore Tanner Thomas was one of five first team unanimous all-Lincoln Prairie Conference baseball players for the past season. In addition, classmate Phillips was a member of the 11 to be selected to the first team.

Named to the second team all-LPC were Arcola's freshman Brevyn Whisman, who was one of nine players named at any position and Jayden Henson-Stice, a sophomore, was one of nine to receive honorable mention status.

Arcola, coached by Mike Phillips, started the season going 3-2 beating LeRoy 7-3, Heritage 13-1 in the conference opener, followed by a 6-5 conference loss to Arthur-Lovington-Atwood-Hammond and a non-conference in over Martinsville 21-2 and an 8-0 triumph over Argenta-Oreana in a LPC game. After a 7-2 loss to Sullivan, the Purple Riders won three straight beating Blue Ridge 23-1, Cerro

Gordo/Bement 21-2 in conference games followed by a 10-6 non-conference win over Arthur Okaw Christian 10-6 to improve to 6-2.

After a 3-1 non-conference loss to Neoga, Arcola won three consecutive contests over Villa Grove (10-3), Tri-County (17-3) and Cumberland (14-8). Following an 8-4 LPC loss to Okaw Valley, the conference champions, Arcola won four in a row, topping Decatur LSA 11-1 in the final LPC game of the season. The Purple Riders beat Tuscola 5-3 for the first time since 2007 and advanced to the regional championship with a 3-1 win over Meridian. The season ended in a 2-0 loss to South Central in the Altamont Sectional. It was the first time Arcola had reached the final 32 teams because in 1984 there were only two classes and there were 64 regional champions.

Softball

The Arcola softball team finished with its best record since 2013, going 15-10-1. Craig VanDeveer guided that team to a 15-7 record and

the last Class 1A regional championship. Arcola was eliminated by LeRoy, the No. 8 team in the state, 2-1 in the Meridian Class 1A regional semifinals. LeRoy went on to finish third in the state.

Arcola's Kacie Sisk, a junior, was one of 11 softball players to be named to the all-Lincoln Prairie Conference team for the 2023 season. Named to the 11 payer second team were senior Keira Hohlbauch, while Ava and Ema Simpson were on the eight payer honorable mention. Ava Simpson is a sophomore while her sister Ema is a freshman.

Arcola, coached by Cara Roberts, was 2-4 at one time after dropping the first two games to LeRoy (12-2) and Shelbyville (11-1) the Lady Riders topped Chrisman in a non-conference game 11-2 and won the LPC opener against Okaw Valley, 5-2. Arcola lost to Effingham St. Anthony (finished third in Class 2A) 19-3 and dropped a 6-2 LPC game to Villa Grove.

After a non-conference 13-2 win over Martinsville, Arcola fell to Arthur-

Lovington-Atwood-Hammond (the LPC champions) 11-1 and to Mattoon, a Class 3A team, 3-1.

The Lady Riders were then 3-6 before winning 10 straight starting with two conference wins over Cumberland (10-6) and Heritage (14-2). After a scoreless tie with Salt Fork, Arcola doubled up Argenta-Oreana 6-3 in a LPC game and won two non-conference contests over Georgetown-Ridge Farm (6-2) and Sullivan (3-2) before returning to LPC play and cruising past Blue Ridge 11-1 and Cerro Gordo/Bement, 12-1. After two non-conference wins over Urbana (6-0) and Decatur St. Teresa (by forfeit) the winning streak was at nine and reached 10 with a conference win, 16-1, over Tri-County. The streak ended with a 10-1 loss to top-ranked Casey-Westfield. Arcola fell to Marshall 3-0 in a non-conference game and to A-L-A-H 3-2 in the final game of the conference season. Arcola beat Sullivan 5-3 and advanced in the regional with a 10-2 victory over Decatur St. Teresa before the season ended.

Arcola EI League baseball canceled due to wet field

By Mike Monahan
ARCOLA - The rain Saturday was too much for the Arcola baseball diamond to hold at Moore Memorial Park

as the Arcola Eastern Illinois League baseball team had its doubleheader against the first place Buckley Dutchmasters canceled.

Arcola, 0-9. Is to travel to Decatur Johns Hill Park to face the Decatur Commodores at 1 and 4 p.m. Saturday, July 16 as they have a bye July 9.

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