

## Fairport Winter Track Athletes Continue to Improve

Into the sixth week of the 2009-10 winter track season, many if not most, of the athletes have enough conditioning and experience to "expand" their competitive strategies and become more confidently assertive in their racing, jumping or throwing. "We are looking to see more of our athletes competing more on the edge now that they are fit enough and confident enough," said head coach Sean Van Laeken.

One such athlete to do just that was sophomore Ashton Hughes in the 1500 meters. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> league meet [ADF] at Hobart, William Smith Colleges, Hughes followed Van Laeken's race plan precisely. Holding back early and picking off places as she moved up within the field, Hughes approached Alison Lockwood of Geneva, the race leader in the last few laps of the 200m track. The two All State Cross Country runners separated from the rest of the 13-athlete field and quickened the pace heading into the last 200 meters. Deploying an excellent surging tactic in the last few meters, Hughes caught Lockwood at the wire and won the race in 5:13.74. Lockwood said later, "if I knew Ashton was that close to me at the end, I could have responded—she ran a smart race."

Another athlete to make the most of the opportunity with the competition was Loren Metzger in the shot put. "I had hoped last week, meet #2, to throw 28' but had to settle for 5" less than my goal. "Today, I had to make up for last week and throw even farther—that I did with 29' 4". Getting closer to thirty feet is what I had planned on for the early part of the season so I am pleased to be improving, and that is making my coaches happy too," said Metzger as she autographed a program for one of her coaches.

The 600 meters was an important event for two Fairport athletes especially-- Lauren Burke and Cameron Johnson—their first mid-distance races of the season after sprinting in the first two meets. "The plan", Johnson said, "was to go out with even splits for the first 400 meters, around 57 or 58 seconds, and then see what I had coming in for the last 200. If I could run around 90 seconds for the 600--in my first race at that distance--it would tell me I was progressing like I hoped." He did. Going out in 57.4, holding second place while the rest of the field faded, Cam Johnson ran 1:29.3, "a very nice race for his first try at mid distance—on pace for a 1:59.1 for the 800 meters in fact," said Rick Guido, his coach. On the other side, Lauren Burke planned to go out hard and see how all her distance training through the fall and early winter had prepared her for three quick 200s at the 600-meter distance. She went out a tad slower than she planned, 65.8, but maintained her pace for the most part throughout. She ran 1:40.14, the fastest time of the day, but more importantly, she averaged 33s for her three 200s. Later on in the season, her goal is to average 31s for the three 200s. "I felt good in the race and was pleased holding my pace. I am excited to race faster next time." Angie Zabloutny and Rachel Malone finished 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> overall with 1:46.98 and 1:47.22 respectively. Brandon Bachstein had the fastest jv time of 20 contestants as did Lauren Star vs 18 others.

Surprising almost everyone, and including herself, Janessa Mathews, ran the fourth fastest 300 of 81 competitors. She used her upper-body strength to pull away from a tight group to win handily in 44.72. "I had hoped to run in the 45s or 46 so running under 45 was great," said a beaming Mathews. Other notable performers in that event were Scott Nagel and Jillian Gueli—both won their jv races over 34 and 59 competitors respectively.

Justin Green ran 2:51.84 to place 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 1000 meters and Jane Rosenthal ran 3:20.31 to finish 5<sup>th</sup> of 31 athletes. Adam Staveski was the first of 25 jv runners at the 1k distance.

In the spirit of sharing during the holiday season, Lauren Burke tied two others in the 55-meter dash. Her 7.63 time was identical to the hundredth of a second in the [Fully Automatic Timing] photo at the finish line with an East and Rush-Henrietta athlete. "I had a good start and felt comfortable through the whole race—at the end I didn't lean while the others did. I will work on that," she said to coach Mike Van Auker. "In the spirit of sharing, Lauren has tied five other athletes in two events this season," said Van Auker. "And that is something we have not seen in Section V in a long, long time," Van Auker gushed.

James Paratore, Emily Renna and Michelle Barnum all established personal bests in the 55m hurdles. Two finished in the top four of the competition: Paratore, 9.94; Renna, 9.22 and Barnum, 9.91.

Collin Wheatly, though not up to his standards of his last week's vault, did tie for 3<sup>rd</sup> with 10' 9".

The next competition [Hobart, DEF] will be Tuesday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, the last meet of the 2009 calendar year.