

## Fairport's Emily Renna leads her teammates to the State Indoor Championships

Emily Renna, a junior, qualified for the 2010 NYS Indoor Track & Field Championships at Cornell University with three personal bests en route to qualifying in the 55 meter hurdles and the triple jump-- she led her teammates to an exemplary day of competing.

Renna has been on a roll the last few weeks establishing five-personal bests in the hurdles and triple jump. On Saturday at RIT's Gordon Field House, she won her preliminary round of the hurdles with a robust 8.69 seconds. In the next round, the semis, she defeated two of her nemeses, Dorian Broady of Wilson and Lauren Kellner of Sutherland with another personal best, 8.67. In the six-person finals, the fastest hurdlers in Section V this season, she ran another personal best, 8.54, as she finished 2<sup>nd</sup> to the top hurdler in Section V, senior Allie Van Buren of Batavia, who ran 8:32. In the span of nine days, Renna lowered her personal best by an astounding .44 of a second. A huge improvement in such a short period of time and distance. "I was really tired after three hurdle races and a leg on the 4 x 200 meter relay, but I was excited to be doing so well," she said as the 3<sup>rd</sup> call was heard for the triple Jump. Jumping with three jumps almost all at once because she had been hurdling, and no break there from the schedule nor from the officials, she recorded her 2<sup>nd</sup> best jump of all time, 34' 9.75" to snag the 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the competition behind Paige Ware of Gates Chili's chart leading 36' 5" effort. She had secured her 2<sup>nd</sup> individual event for the March 6<sup>th</sup> NYS Championships in Ithaca.

Renna's teammates on the 4 x 200 meter relay were Julia Sanger, Janessa Mathews and Lauren Star in the semis. They ran 1:52.09 winning their heat, one of their fastest times of the 09-10 campaign. "The trick with qualifying rounds is to conserve as much energy as you can while still advancing. That usually means running as slowly as possible while not giving away your position," said Sean Van Laeken, head coach. The girls qualified as the 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest team, while Rush-Henrietta—the Class A Sectional champion—surprisingly did not advance. Aquinas just edged Batavia in the rounds, 1:48.71 to 1:48.72. In the finals, following the 4 x 400 meter relay with several of the same individuals for Fairport, Aquinas ran 1:48.14, easily outdistancing Batavia and Fairport. Fairport ran 1:51.34, just .01 of a second off their season's best. That foursome included: Julia Sanger [27.5[]], Lauren Burke [28.1], Emily Renna [28] and Janessa Mathews [27.4].

Returning to earlier in the meet, the other individual qualifier was junior Lauren Burke in the 600 meters. Burke, decided to hold back and "save something" for the two relays at the end of the day, the 4 x 400 and 4 x 200 meter relays. However, it was still the 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest 600 meters in school history, 1:38.39, and was good enough to qualify Burke despite some tense moments early in the race. Tara Murphy of Wilson unexpectedly decided to hurry the race along with a 60 second 400 meters. "It really surprised me she went out that fast; it really forced everyone else in the race to change their race strategy I would guess," said a smiling Burke minutes after the race. As it was, Shavonna Hinton of Webster Thomas won the race coming off the early fast pace behind Murphy with a 1:37.74 effort. It resulted in her mother's exclamation: "she finally caught that girl from Fairport." Murphy faded in the back straight after turning the race on its ear with her fast, early pace.

"The rounds-of-the-relays is a tricky proposition to say the least, a Russian Roulette gamble: cut the margin too closely--you lose and don't advance. Play it straight up, let it all hang out—and you don't have enough "gas in the tank" in the finals. It happens a lot that a gamble doesn't pay off and a good team is lost in the rounds—and that happened to a number of superb teams losing in the rounds in this meet, but that didn't happen with our boys and girls," said Rick Guido, the sprint coach. The plan was to slot in Lauren Star in the 4 x 200 meter relay in the rounds and then have Lauren Burke take her place in the finals. The girls won their heat, advanced and ran faster in the finals—that was good. "In the 4 x 400 meter relay semis, Michelle Barnum got the girls in good position, and they were in a position to do

well with the other legs; Jane Rosenthal, an alternate in the rounds, ran 66.2 and kept the team in excellent position, even closing the gap that had opened up. Angie Zabloutny, who has been running consistently well all season, ran a 63.2, and grabbed the lead for good, increased it so much that Janessa Mathews could follow her coaches' instructions to "shut it down" early in the race. She did and the team won the heat, advanced to the finals with the 5<sup>th</sup> fastest time of the six teams in the finals—and that is just how to do it," said coach Ken Schaumberg. In the finals, Michelle Barnum led off with a 28.9, and she would say later, "a bit too fast to go out I suspect." She ran 63 and ran close to the lead in the 3<sup>rd</sup> position. Angie Zabloutny, as she did in the early rounds, took the lead again and opened it up considerably with a 63.3. Janessa Mathews, not pressed, ran 64.9 and increased the lead for Lauren Burke, who anchored with a 62.6 as she cruised to the finish line. The girls won the championship with a 4:14.16 to advance to the state championships. Coach Van Laeken commented as the athletes assembled for the podium pictures, "it is hard to understand how this year we could win the State Q's seventeen seconds slower [4:14] than last year when we had three teams all running 3:57? Go figure!"

The boys, not to be outdone, had planned their race strategy similarly to what the girls did but didn't have the luxury of "replacements." They would just have to cut the margins dangerously close. They did. It worked. They won their heat with a 3:40.22, the 5<sup>th</sup> fastest of the six-team final. However, in the finals, they would have their "A game" on, and they ran the best they could—and have in years. Leading off was Ian Steltmann with a 52.6, a personal best; Peter Larman, determined to "get it done" also had a personal best of 52.8, either indoors or out. "It is remarkable to me what Peter has been able to accomplish with so little land running—all his training is in the pool, either on the water treadmill, hydrorider or aqua jogging, for as much as two hours a day," said Rick Guido.

Cam Johnson ran the 3<sup>rd</sup> leg in 53.2 and cut the Edison three-second lead some handing off to Justin Green, who ran 53.3. "We said to the boys in our meeting after the rounds, we felt they could run either 3:31 high or 3:32 low, off their 3:34 they ran at Sectionals. They just had to execute their first 200 meters either faster or slower depending on what we felt they could handle. They did exactly what they had to do. It's just unfortunate Edison's speed is what it is--the fastest 4 x 400 meter relay we have seen around here in a while—3:28.64. They just had too much speed for us, but the boys did so well. We could not be more proud of them, believe me," said Rick Guido. The boys ran 3:32.24, a season's best time this year or in the recent past, too.

The girls and boys' 4 x 800 meter relays each finished 4<sup>th</sup> respectively with Jane Rosenthal [2:29.8], Rachel Malone [2:29], Lauren Star [2:34.8] and Ashton Hughes [2:31.7] running a respectable 10:05.39 behind Webster Thomas' winning 9:53.12. Simon Ghebrewoldi [2:09.5], Matt Spitzer [2:10.6], Alex Gilmore [2:11.4] and Brandon Bachstein [2:14.5] finished in 8:46.66 behind RH's leading 8:09.08.

Other competitors for Fairport were: James Paratore in the 55 meter hurdles with an 8.77, a personal best in the rounds. He finished 4<sup>th</sup> in heat #1 and 17<sup>th</sup> overall. Ashton Hughes finished 6<sup>th</sup> in the 3k, her 3<sup>rd</sup> best time ever, 11:00.5; Kevin Jablonski ran 10:31.61, finishing 11<sup>th</sup> in the 3200 meter run, and the boys 4 x 200 meter relay of Russell Kolker, Mike Optis, Jamie Brooks, Ulysses Miles ran 1:40.95 to finish 5<sup>th</sup> in their heat and 14<sup>th</sup> overall.

The Outstanding athletes at the State Qs for Fairport were Emily Renna, Lauren Burke, Janessa Mathews, Michelle Barnum, Angie Zabloutny, Jane Rosenthal, Ian Steltman, Peter Larman, Cam Johnson and Justin Green.