

Orono turns in impressive runs

BY PETE WARNER
BDN STAFF

With league championship meets less than two weeks away, Maine athletes continue to turn in impressive performances during the high school indoor track and field season.

Intrasquad competition appears to be paying dividends at Orono High School, where Tia Tardy and Becky Lopez-Anido turned in outstanding runs in the 800 meters.

Tardy, a junior transfer from Mattanawcook Academy in Lincoln, lowered her Eastern Maine Indoor Track League/Penobscot Valley Conference indoor record to 2 minutes, 14.29 seconds during Saturday's Meet 5A at the New Balance Field House at the University of Maine in Orono.

The effort was a career best for Tardy, who had run a 2:14.33 at last June's New England Outdoor Championships. Her most recent time ranks her fourth in the country this season, according to MileSplit USA.

Tardy on Jan. 2 had broken the former standard of 2:17.31 owned by Ellsworth's Aleta Looker when she clocked a 2:15.00.

Lopez-Anido also strode to a personal best time of 2:16.25 on Saturday, less than two seconds behind Tardy. That is the eighth-fastest time posted this winter.

It was the first time Lopez-Anido, a junior, had competed in the open 800 this winter. Her effort bettered the 2:17.99 that earned her ninth place at the outdoor New Englands in 2015.

In addition to their potential to score big for Orono at the Feb. 13 Class B state championships at Bates College, Tardy and Lopez-Anido also have positioned themselves for high seeds at the New Englands.

There, they likely will be chasing Connecticut's Danae Rivers, whose 2:12.09 is tops in the nation among high school girls 800 runners.

The New Englands are slated for Feb. 28 in Boston.

Tardy and Lopez-Anido also finished 1-2 in Saturday's two-mile run. Tardy clocked an 11:17.48, which is



BDN FILE

Orono's Tia Tardy takes the lead in the Class C girls meet during the North cross-country championships in Belfast in October.

tops in the state regardless of class this winter. Lopez-Anido ran a 12:02.44, which ranks her seventh in Class B.

In the Kennebec Valley Athletic Conference, Skowhegan senior Maddy Price turned in a triple jump of 37 feet, 5 1/2 inches on Saturday,

which is the best effort in the state thus far.

Nealey chasing pole vault mark

In KVAC boys action on Saturday, Drew Nealey of Belfast demonstrated that he is poised to become the new Class B state-meet indoor record-holder in the pole vault.

The senior cleared 14 feet, 9 inches to achieve a personal best by three inches. He had vaulted 14-6 outdoors on May 1, 2015, but his previous PR indoors was 14-1.

Maine's Class B state-meet record of 14-3/4 was set in 1986 and is owned by Scarborough's Brian Johnson.

The Class A and all-time indoor championship-meet record of 16-2 1/2 was set in 2008 by David Slovenski of Brunswick.

The versatile Nealey also owns the best Class B performances of the season in the high jump (6-2) and the triple jump (42-6 3/4).

Also on Saturday, Hampden Academy junior Thomas Darby ran a state-best in the 55 meters with a 6.72 during EMITL/PVC Meet 5B.

James

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In announcing the firing, Griffin said he didn't have to consult with players because he's always in the locker room and already had all the information he needed.

While James has taken the brunt of the criticism over the decision, the sharpest came from Heat limited partner Raanan Katz, who told an Israeli radio station that James tried to get Erik Spoelstra fired while the two were together in Miami.

James said he never met Katz during his four years there.

"I have no idea who that is," James said. "I don't even

know if a lot of guys that actually played ever met him. I was there for four years and I never met him. ... I don't think he was involved in any of the conversations that goes on with the personnel of the team or the coaching staff or anything. But it's easy to say that at this point."

James asked what was Katz's objecting for speaking out. Told he was previously a shareholder in Maccabi Tel Aviv, where Blatt previously coached, James nodded.

"There you go," James said. "There's a direct correlation right there. Makes sense."

Katz has since backed off his remarks, telling the South Florida Sun-Sentinel, "That was my opinion. I am very careful with what I say. I have no knowledge of what happened."

Bangor

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emergence of a third scorer for the Rams in junior guard George Payne, who scored 16 points against Brewer and 15 against Oxford Hills.

Bangor, 4-11, has a Heal point tournament index of 40.3704, well ahead of seventh-place Windham (18.9506) and No. 8 Lewiston (18.5802).

Fifth-place Cheverus (8-7) is just ahead of the Rams with a Heal point tournament index of 42.8395.

Bangor has three regular-season games remaining to protect its tournament status, the home finale against Class A seventh seed Lawrence of Fairfield (7-7) on Saturday night followed by games at Class A fifth seed Messalonskee of Oakland (10-5) next Tuesday and at Lewiston (2-13) on Feb. 4.

Wrestling postseason set to begin

BY ERNIE CLARK
BDN STAFF

High school wrestling's postseason begins Saturday with conference championship meets around the state.

HIGH SCHOOL REPORT

Those competitions include the Penobscot Valley Conference championships at Ellsworth and the Kennebec Valley Athletic Conference meet at Cony High School in Augusta.

The PVCs — which were cancelled last year because of inclement weather — should feature a battle between defending Class B state champion Ellsworth and perennial

power Foxcroft Academy, the 1-2 finishers at the 2014 conference meet.

Foxcroft has been the dominant Class B team in the region thus far this winter, with quality depth throughout its lineup but particularly in the upper weight classes where brothers Billy (182 pounds) and Brandon (195) Brock, Michael Pendriss (220) and Connor Holmes (285) all have had strong seasons.

Senior Zach Caron, a two-time defending state champion who transferred from Dexter to Foxcroft this year, is undefeated at 145 pounds this season, and along with classmate Antonio Ayala at 126 scored his 150th career victory this year.

Ellsworth has had to deal with some injury issues this winter, particularly with defending 145-pound Class B state champion Dagan Berenyi sidelined since late in the soccer season.

The Eagles do boast considerable strength in the middleweight divisions with a contingent that includes defending state champions Trent Goodman (160), Connor Petros (152) and Peyton Cole (138) along with Logan Lord (126), Josh Wright (145) and Austin Smith (170).

Dexter, Caribou and Bucksport also should contend for top-five finishes at the conference meet, which precedes the Class B North regional to be held Feb. 6 at Winslow High School.

The only northern Maine team that has experienced more success than Foxcroft Academy this winter is Skowhegan, which is favored to win the KVAC championship.

The three-time defending Eastern Maine Class A champions, who have yet to lose a meet this season during a run that includes winning the Noble Invitational championship, are led by four undefeated competitors in Cody Craig (113 pounds), Julian Sirois (152), Kameron Doucette (160) and Logan Stevens (182).

Nokomis of Newport should be in the hunt for runner-up honors. The Warriors feature Christopher Wilson at 195 pounds and Hunter Glidden at 285.

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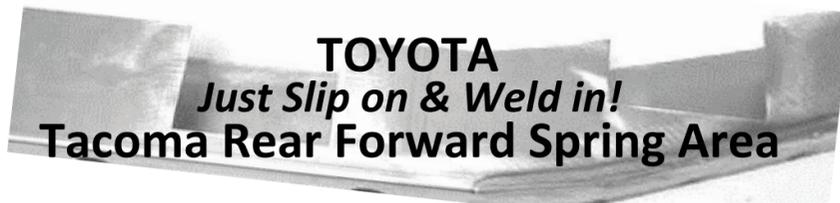
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