

Howell sets new Grant County record in 800

Eastbrook’s Manning advances to state meet in high jump

By Sean Douglas

At the conclusion of last week’s sectional at Marion High School, Eastbrook Head Coach Stu Goble and senior Rachel Manning believed that her high school career was coming to a close after a fifth-place finish in the high jump.

But three days later, as fate would have it, Goble, and Manning, both received word that she had been called back for the event in the Marion Girls Track and Field Regional on Tuesday evening.

And the senior made the most of her opportunity. “I came into it today being like, ‘Well if I lose, it doesn’t matter. I wasn’t supposed to be here.’” Manning said. “It feels like a blessing.”

With a high jump of 5 feet, 0 inches, Manning finished in third place, qualifying for the State Meet for the first time in her high school career.

“Rachel making it was really special,” Goble said. “She’s an incredible worker and an incredible kid. We went from tears last Tuesday and thinking her career is done to...I emailed her on Friday and said, ‘Hey, you’re in.’ She took advantage of her second chance.”

After Manning found out she was being called back, the senior got right to work, putting in a solid week of practice. Not only was she motivated by her coaches and teammates, but she was committed to making the most of her second chance.

Safe to say, she did just that.

“I’ve been jumping bad this season. I’ve been a little hurt. My ankle has been a little sketchy,” Manning said. “[But Coach] was like, ‘You got it. You know how to jump, and you’ve been waiting for this since your freshman year.’” My motivation took root in the fact that I could come, jump, and have fun.

“I really wanted to not take it for granted. I definitely do not think I did.”

Throughout the weekend and into the early part of the week, Manning worked on her approach and using her natural momentum to carry her over the bar. More importantly, she focused on just enjoying the moment and doing what she loves – high jumping.

“She put a couple of good practices in this week,” Goble said. “It was a weight off her back. She had been beating herself up against the wall trying to get back up over five feet, and finally, she got over it.”

Now, with another opportunity lying in front of her on June 5 at Ben Davis High School, Manning plans to use the same approach she used for the regional.

“I’m going to be focusing on that speed and working on the technical things,” Manning said. “But once again, I’m going to focus on taking this opportunity and not take it lightly.”

“There’s more there. We know there is,” Goble added. “We’ve seen her do better. She’s been dealing with an ankle injury this year, so hopefully, we can get a little healthy over the next week, take a few days off...and go back and have fun next week.”

Along with Manning’s tremendous outing in the field, Olivia Howell and Emma Nearingdner shined on the track for the Panthers, setting new personal bests and a new Grant County record.

Howell, after setting a new Eastbrook record in the 800 Meter last week, broke it on Tuesday, finishing in sixth place in 2 minutes,19.65 seconds. That time also broke the record set by former Oak Hill stand-out and current Butler University star Margo Hornocker.

After a stellar freshman campaign, Goble looks forward to seeing what she will accomplish in the future.

“That’s a big deal, because Margo is an awful good runner,” Goble said. “Olivia is just scratching the surface. She is really figuring out this spring how you need to train to be that good. We expect huge



Photo: Eastbrook freshman Olivia Howell set the new Grant County record in the 800 Meter, breaking the record set by Oak Hill’s Margo Hornocker. **Photo by Sean Douglas**

things.”

Neargarnder, after running a personal best 16.06 in the 100 Meter Hurdles in the sectional, broke the 16 mark in the regional, clocking a seventh-place finish in 15.57, missing the school record by 0.07 seconds.

“Emma did an outstanding job in the hurdles tonight,” Goble said. “She was a hair off our school record. She’s got another year left, and we look forward to having a chance to [work with her.]”

In all, Goble was thrilled with his team’s performance.

“The kids were peaking at the right time,” Goble said. “Getting to state was the goal for some of them this year. We came up short in a couple of places, but we ran outstanding times tonight and gave it everything they had to try to get there.”

In her freshman year for the Giants, Jackie Williams has gotten more and more confident with each race. On Tuesday, she ran her best event of the season, finishing in seventh place in the 200 Meter in a season-best 27.05.

“She’s such a great kid,” Marion Track and Field Coach Kevin Alsup said. “We made a few tweaks in her start this week, and it really seemed to pay off. You could see the lightbulb going on. She’s so coachable, listens, works hard, and does exactly what you say. I’m so happy for her.”

Running alongside a plethora of tremendous athletes from Grant County as well as the Fort Wayne area, Williams proved she belonged, finishing as the only freshman to qualify for the finals in the 200 Meter.

“You can’t say much more than that about her,” Alsup said. “She’s just so coachable and makes it worth it to keep investing in her. She just soaks it up like a sponge and goes out and does it.”

Kaiyah Jones of Mississinewa finished her strong junior season with ninth place finishes in both the 100 Meter (13.04) and the 400 Meter (1:03.64), while Oak Hill’s Natale VanDyke recorded the Golden Eagles’ top finish in the shot put, finishing 12th with a distance of 33’1”.

Puzzle answers

7	3	1	2	8	9	4	5	6
5	6	4	1	7	3	2	9	8
2	8	9	6	5	4	1	3	7
1	7	6	5	9	8	3	4	2
4	5	8	3	1	2	7	6	9
9	2	3	7	4	6	5	8	1
3	1	2	8	6	5	9	7	4
6	4	5	9	2	7	8	1	3
8	9	7	4	3	1	6	2	5

	E	B	B	S					C	A	E	N			
G	R	A	P	H	S				C	O	N	S	U	L	
E	M	P	L	O	Y	S			M	O	L	O	K	A	I
L	I	T		O	N	C	L	O	U	D	N	I	N	E	
A	N	I	L		C	A	I	R	N				M	C	F
	E	S	O	X		D	R	A	T			D	O	E	
		M	A	X	S		A	S	I	D	E	S			
			D	I	A	S		S	E	E	L				
			V	E	I	L	E	D		S	E	T	H		
	A	I	R			A	C	I	D		T	A	O	S	
S	R	O				R	O	R	E	M		S	N	I	T
T	E	L	E	K	I	N	E	S	I	S			O	B	I
A	N	I	S	E	E	D			K	A	T	H	R	Y	N
T	A	S	T	E	S					S	A	N	E	L	Y
	S	T	E	P							B	Y	E	S	