

Track trio gears up for Nike Nationals

By paul babin

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CAPE COD - Sandwich High School indoor track athletes Emma Riedel, Caroline Conena and Tim Regan will compete in the Nike Indoor Nationals at Reggie Lewis Center in Boston Friday March 13-15.

Regan and Riedel qualified for the 55-meter dash while Conena's 1:41.02 clocking in the 600-meter dash earned her a spot in the 400 or 800 meter events because the 600 is not offered in the Nike.



The boys indoor track team (4-2) finished third in the Atlantic Coast League behind Marshfield and D-Y while the girls (3-4) were fourth behind D-Y, Marshfield and Falmouth.

Riedel ran the 55 in 7.53 seconds and Regan had a 6.78 performance at the All-State championship Friday.



Track coach Steve Infascelli says qualifying for nationals is "quite a feat" for the trio. "Nike puts on an incredible show. [The runners] get treated as though they were Olympians."

Riedel has competed on the outdoor track team for four years and joined the indoor team when it was created three years ago.

Having set a goal to qualify for nationals, she is looking forward to putting her skills to the test against other talented runners.

"It's a really big opportunity. You get to compete against some really talented people so it gives you an idea of what you can do."

Riedel was captain this season alongside Conena, Caroline Warren and Caela Berger.

Infascelli says Riedel has improved each season she's been on the team.

"Every year she takes it up to the next level. She has certainly matured into a wonderful athlete and she's a wonderful person. She's very humble. You'd never know how fast she was or all the accolades she's achieved. She just doesn't talk about it."

He says Regan has also come a long way since his freshman year, recalling an incident during that year when Regan couldn't finish a strenuous workout.

“I think the workout was a little too much for him. I remember, as he was on his hands and knees on the side of the track puking his guts out, I remember telling him that he was going to be very successful and that he could push his body harder than the average athlete on the team.

“A lot of people get to that threshold where they think they're going to throw up so they back off. Tim doesn't do that. Tim pushes right to that line and then he goes past it.”

Infascelli coached 70 runners on the indoor track team, but since the season ended for most of them at the ACL championships Feb. 8, he has enjoyed working strictly with Regan, Conena and Riedel these past few weeks to prepare them for nationals.

“This is my favorite time of the year for sure. I certainly loved having a large team but this is the time when I get to put my focus on a few select athletes.”

Regan was surprised when he learned he had qualified and is aiming for a 6.5 to 6.6 seconds time in the nationals, a lofty goal considering his best time this season was 6.71 seconds.

“It was exciting. I didn't expect to make nationals. I was just hoping to make [the state championship]. To make nationals is a big deal.”

Infascelli wasn't surprised when Conena qualified; he's been impressed by her performance all season.

“She works extremely hard. I probably have the most fun with her in workouts. I don't think there's been a workout I've given her that she's hasn't been able to handle.”