

SHS Indoor Track Team Setting High Marks

By Dan Crowley
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Saturday junior milers Jason Lefavor, and Stephen MacDonald traveled to Boston University for the All-Comers Meet to run in the mile and 800m races. The Sandwich runners were in two different heats, however, according to Coach Steve Infascelli, they were given the same goal and instructions of running 36.0 seconds per lap (200m lap) to finish in a state qualifying time of 4:48 (qualifying time is 4:53).

“Jason's race started out and he ran perfect for the first quarter mile in 1:12, coming through the half in 2:24 which was exactly what we were looking for,” Coach Infascelli said. “His next lap was a bit slow, so he maturely took over the lead by pushing by two or three runners to get back on the right pace. With a lap to go he feverishly kicked home and finished third in his heat with a new personal best time and state qualifying mark of 4:50.5. There wasn't much time to celebrate Jason's run as Stephen was taking his mark on the line to start his heat.

He had the same goal, same instructions, 36.0 per lap for eight laps to run 4:48 and qualify for the state meet. Stephen was in a bit of bad luck from the start running all by himself. There was a runner who got out real fast and was a good 30m ahead of him, and the rest of the pack was 30m behind him. But he was patient and just like Jason did, clicked off 36.0 per lap. He tired a bit just after the halfway point, but with a lap to go he kicked home a 33.0 last lap to finish third in his heat with a new personal best and state qualifying time of 4:49.8. Because of their success I gladly gave them the choice to scratch from the 800m and end on a great note. I believe they took a huge positive step forward in the right direction that took their running to a new level.”

Also on Saturday members of the Sandwich High Track & Field team competed at the Reggie Lewis Center in the Massachusetts State Coaches Association Boston Holiday Invitational.

Caela Berger competed in the hurdles, Caroline Warren and Emily Travers and Tim Regan ran the 200m and Warren, Emma Riedel, Travers, and Caroline Conena ran the sprint medley.

“First up was Caela Berger,” the coach said, “who didn't run as well as I had hoped. There were problems from the start; her spikes were not legal, which I'm sure caused her to panic just a bit, even though on the grand scheme of things it is a very small issue. This meet served as a way for athletes to get familiar with the same schedule as nationals, and at the same venue with similar competition. Berger was slow out of the blocks and clipped a hurdle and when all was said and done she finished 13th in a time of 9.83, her slowest time of the year. Hopefully this will be the one we get to throw away. Caela is a competitor and I know she can dig deep when the team needs her.”

Emily Travers and Caroline Warren ran the 200 meter dash for the Knights.

“They both ran well with Travers finishing 10th in 28.33 and Warren advancing to the finals in a time of 27.43. Warren failed to show for the finals.

Tim Regan matched his personal best in the 200m race running a time of 23.30 and advancing to the next days final.

The race we were all waiting for was the girls sprint medley which consists of 800m, 200m, 200m, 400m legs. The goal was to run 4:30.00 and qualify for the national championships. Caroline Conena ran the first 800m leg and ran a great 2:25 to hand off to Emily Travers in fourth place. Travers recovered well from her previous 200m race to run even with the rest of the field and hand off to Emma Riedel in fourth place. Emma blazed down the backstretch to pass a runner and ran a very fast 200m leg handing off to the Warren in third place. Warren struggled from the start and was passed by two runners in the 400m leg to finish in fifth place overall. We barely made the standard which I thought would be easy. I'd say we were at least seven seconds slower than I expected. The time will be good enough to get us in, but with this talent on this team they should be a bit disappointed and will have to work just a bit harder if they want to do more than just compete at the national championships. They ran a time of 4:29.52. Overall I'd say mission accomplished."

The second day of competition at the Reggie Lewis Center began with the trials of the 55m dash.

"Emma Riedel was a bit nervous and scared of the national competition," Infascelli explained. "Her seed time was significantly slower than her competitors but she blazed a new personal best, and school record time of 7.51. At first I thought I had stopped my watch a bit early, but shortly after the time appeared on the screen and Emma had the fastest time going into the final. The final was a bit scary as it appeared that Emma was the last girl to get out of the blocks. All the Sandwich runners watching the race gasped for breath as we all feared she wouldn't run fast. She caught every runner and with a good lean at the tape won the meet in another fast time of 7.53. We're going to go back to practice and just work on her start. She's so slow out of the blocks, and we can find two tenths of a second there. She's a 7.3 girl and I know she can do it."

Regan ran the 200m dash.

"Tim again tied his 200m personal best time with a 23.30 to finish fourth overall," the coach pointed out. "He ran a great race, that 200m is a fun race to watch. It's just all out all the time. There are no tactics, involved, its just pure speed, and he's fast."

In the 800 meter it was Caroline Conena for the Knights.

"Caroline also turned in a great time in the 800m dash running sixth the whole race until the final straight where she kicked and finished fifth with a time of 2:24," Infascelli said. "If she gets out just a little bit quicker she can run with anyone. It's still a bit early in the season for the mid to long distance runners to be sharp and running fast times, but I believe she can break 220 and make a strong run at the state meet."

The final event of the day was the boys' 4x400m relay.

"The same team which had much success last spring returned with a goal of setting a new school record, a state qualifying time, and breaking 3:40 seconds," Infascelli pointed out. "Brad Bailey split 55.4 to hand off in fourth place. Sam Ellis gained and ran a 54.6 to hand off to Greg Baldwin in third place. Baldwin's leg was complicated as there was a lot of pushing and shoving and a team from Bishop Feehan and Attleboro got tangled up, thankfully Greg avoided the mess and held his position in third running 56.2. Recovering well from his 200m final was Tim Regan who split a huge time of 52.3 to run down every other runner in front of him. SHS finished first in the slower of two heats with a new school record time of 3:49.42 all we had to do was wait to see if we could beat just one of the teams in the seeded heat to see if we placed, and they did. The SHS 4x400m relay

team placed fifth overall beating two teams in the faster section really turning some heads. I got a lot of congratulatory handshakes from other coaches, which was surprising. A lot of people were talking about that race and it really made me proud to be apart of this program. The kids are working extremely hard and there's a lot at stake this year. It's our third year in existence, and we've been to nationals twice, and hoping to make it a three for three. That's pretty exciting."