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INDOOR TRACK

Tiebreaker decides a friendly rivalry

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2/25/2007

FREDONIA - If it weren't for Greg Craft of JFK, Lancaster's Ryan Pericozzi probably would not have been such a gracious runner-up Saturday at the Section VI Indoor Track and Field Championships.

The two pole vaulters have developed a friendship because of all the time they spend training together during the season. Even though both are vying for the right to be No. 1, that doesn't stop one from encouraging the other and vice versa.

So when a tiebreaker decided which of the two would earn his first sectional title before an estimated 500 at Fredonia State, Pericozzi took solace in knowing he not only cleared a personal-best height but also advanced to Saturday's state championships at Cornell with his friend.

Both cleared 13 feet, 6 inches, but Craft won because he had fewer misses in the competition.

"I'm glad I lost the title to Greg because we just train so hard together," said Pericozzi. said. "We just push each other to perform at your best."

Both tried to break the tie head-to-head but failed to clear 13-9.

"I was close," said Craft of his attempts to clear 13-9, prompting Pericozzi to interject, "I was closer."

The top two in each individual event along with third-place finishers who have hit the qualifying standard advance to states.

Lancaster freshman Melissa Kurzdorfer defended her shot put title and broke a 14-year-old sectional record by unleashing a throw of 45-5¹/₂, eclipsing the 45-1 set by Jackie Sedgwick of Sweet Home. Was Kurzdorfer, who won the title last year with a toss of 39-7, satisfied with her efforts?

"I'm not content . . . I was trying to break the freshman national record [45-7¹/₄]," said Kurzdorfer. "[Not doing so] gives me more motivation to do better at states."

North Tonawanda's Casey Green and West Seneca West's Morgan Billi each qualified for states in three events.

Green won the 55-meter dash in a school-record time of 7.37, finished second in the 300 and aided the winning efforts of the 1,600 relay team featuring Val Rosart, Bridget Montesanti and Jackie Burns, who also won the 600. The 1,600 crew has a chance to go for the sectional mark of 4:07.3 on the same Cornell track where it posted a 4:07.9 in January.

"This year the 55 hasn't been my strongest event . . . I didn't really expect to win," Green said.

Billi, a state meet veteran, won the triple jump, helped West's 800 relay team win and qualified in the long jump.

West Seneca West's girls won a meet-high six events and qualified nine for states. WSW sophomore Nicole Castilloux earned the season-long MVP award before the meet, won the long jump and was a member of the 800 relay team.

Andrew Pfeiffer was the boys' MVP and won the 3,200 before helping Clarence's 3,200 relay

team reach victory lane.

Williamsville North senior twins Matt and Greg Losi finished 1-2 in the triple jump to earn their first trips to states.

Tim Predergast, Jon Ramsey, Taylor Kensy and Spencer Evans of Holland, a first-year indoor program, won the 800 relay - an impressive feat considering it's the smallest school in the section.

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