

### Ramsey earns his trip to states

*Holland runner wins 400; teammate Makin doubles up*

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JAMESTOWN — Feeling that his race in the 400 meters was getting a little too close for comfort, Jon Ramsey fell back on the inspiring words his coach offered beforehand.

“He said, ‘Earn this,’ ” said Ramsey, a senior at Holland. “I heard them catching up to me near the long jump pit. From there I remembered what my coach [John Weaver] said. It motivated me. I kept pushing myself.”

Ramsey won the Division II race in a school record 48.78. It was one of many standout performances at Saturday’s Section VI Track and Field Championships at Strider Field. The meet was also a qualifier for next weekend’s New York State Championship at the University at Buffalo.

Ramsey was also a member on the Dutchmen’s 4x400 relay that qualified for states for the fourth year in a row. Weaver said he borrowed the words “earn this” from the movie “Saving Private Ryan.” “You’re always looking for something to drive on, and that was what we rallied around,” said Weaver.

Senior Bob Makin of Holland added the triple jump to his win on Friday in the long jump.

The Section VI meet was a breakout of sorts for first-year runner Josh Blango, a Sweet Home junior. Blango was a double winner taking the Division I 110 hurdles in 15:01 and the 200 meters in 22.72.

“I was proud of how I did in a lot of the trials,” said Blango. “A lot of people say what you do in trials affects the finals a lot because they give you the lanes. When you have a good lane like I had in the 200, you figure you had a good trials time, I can do it in the finals.”

Junior Joe Whelan of Hamburg was also a double winner as he added Friday’s win in the Division I 3,200 with a victory in the steeplechase. Hamburg’s 4x400 relay put together an impressive run as it won in a school record 3:24.56, carried by Will Cole’s 49.2 split. Cole also won the 400 hurdles in 53.65.

Clarence won the 4x800 in a season-best 7:59.93. Runner-up Grand Island also qualified for states by running a 8:03.03, breaking the school record by 10 seconds.



Kenmore East senior Anthony Johnson, battling a headwind, won the Division I 100 meters in 10.98, holding off Morris Taylor of Albion (11.19).

“My coach has been messing with me, joking all year that Morris Taylor was going to beat me,” said Johnson. “I wasn’t going to let that happen.”

Johnson pulled out of the 200 saying he injured his back and wanted to keep his focus on the 100. But a first-place patch did not elude Taylor as he won the 400 in 49.68. In losing to Johnson in the 100 Morris said, “That’s his race, [the 400] is mine.”

It was another hot and humid day for the runners, but that didn’t stop Grand Island junior Evan Tsembeles from running his personal best 4:20.84 in the Division I 1,600. Donald Truesdell of Wilson won the Division II 1,600 in 4:27.19. He said he was originally hoping to run a sub-4:20, but had second thoughts around the 800 point of his race because of the heat.

Both Division II hurdle races were decided by .01 of a second. Depew’s Mike Wilkowski ran a 56.90 to edge Taylor Kensey of Holland in the 400s and junior Andy Wrazen of JFK clipped the last hurdle, but still won the Division II 110s in 15.61 over Eric Lavelle of Eden.

In the Division II pentathlon, Mitch Schrecongost of Falconer pulled ahead with a strong run in the 1,500 and won with 2,893 points.

Nate Stancombe, who finished second to perennial state champion Blake Eaton of Allegany-Limestone more times than he’d like to remember, won the Division II shot put with a school record 54 feet, 7 inches on his last throw. “I remember when [Eaton] was throwing 60 [feet] and I was scratching for 50 feet,” said the Southwestern senior. “This is my year.”

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