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Will North wins Carl Roesch

St. Francis' Lynch sprints to MVP award at annual track and field meet

By **Mary Jo Monnin**
News Sports Reporter



With a nod to his late predecessor, Williamsville North track coach Brian Swatland graciously accepted the trophy after his Spartans won the Carl J. Roesch Memorial Classic.

"A lot of the success we're still having is attributed to Coach [Jack] Hartman. All these kids -- he coached," said Swatland. "It's just carrying over. He had such a passion that it was contagious, and now these seniors of his are living proof of what he did."

Mackie Gage takes the baton from Brian Dobmeier in Williamsville North's triumph in the 3,200 relay on Saturday. John Hickey / Buffalo News

Hartman, who continued to coach after he retired from teaching, died May 8, 2010, in Cheektowaga. He was 69.

Saturday's 37th annual Roesch Classic, named for the local track legend, was contested by 17 teams under sunny skies and temperatures in the mid-60s. The team title was the first for the Spartans since 2006. North tallied 81 points while St. Francis was runner-up with 67 and defending champion Clarence was third with 62 points.

North's only individual winner was senior Brian Corretore in the discus (159-8).

Two relays placed first as Charley Kenyon, Dan Teal, Colin Preston and Rubel Noel won the 400 in 43.81. Moments after finishing, Noel crumbled to the track clutching his hamstring in obvious pain. He had been battling cramps all day.

The North 3,200 relay had equal success as Zach Lipp, Nick Konotopskyj, Brian Dobmeier and Mackie Gage went 8:21.25. North also piled up points with three place finishers in the 100, two each in the 200, steeplechase and high jump.

St. Francis junior Akeel Lynch was named meet MVP after he won the 100 meters in 11.11 and the 200 in a personal record 22.5. He was presented the MVP award by Roesch's son, Carl Roesch Jr.

"I wanted to get a good time so I could get a good lane in the states," he said. "This time I actually pushed it through, and I got my best time so far. I wanted to come back from the 100 because I was trying to get under 11 [seconds], so I turned it on in the 200."

The Red Raiders also finished first in the 400 as Dominic Buccieri went 51.04 in the 400 and Arek Janiga won the 400 hurdles in 57.24.

The St. Francis school record in the 1,600 relay, which has stood since 1988, was broken when Derrick Weyrough, Thomas Green, Jahmahl Pardner and Matt Denk ran a 3:38.19. Current coach Steve Otremba was a member of that '88 relay.

The meet's 1,600 run was dedicated in the memory of Art Reimer, the popular track official who died of a heart attack on July 3, 2010. Reimer had been the starter at the Roesch for many years. He is remembered by many track athletes as the official with the handlebar mustache. Taking his place at starter was one of his closest friends, John Skubis.

Amherst's Adam Murphy won the Reimer 1,600 by a six-second margin as he crossed in a personal best 4:30.71. "I'm not a big kicker, I try to do a lot of damage during the race," said Murphy. "I was going for 66 [seconds] in the first 400, and I went through in 65, so that gave me plenty of room to die as the race went on."

Murphy also had a strong showing in the 3,200, placing second behind senior Dan Courtney of St. Joe's.

Amherst had a double-winner in junior Jailyn Twitty, who took the long and triple. He was disappointed with his 44-7 in the triple as his season best is 46-10, but he achieved his personal best with a 22-6 1/2 long jump.

In the 110 hurdles, Amherst junior Brandon Borden was second in 15.07, just .03 shy of the school record he's been chasing all season. As a team the Tigers placed fourth.

mmonnin@buffnews.com