

June 4, 2011

## It's five titles and counting for Maryvale's Pearce

*Williamsville East's Allen and Olean's Sawaya also enjoy big days at Strider*

By **Mary Jo Monnin**  
News Sports Reporter



JAMESTOWN — When it comes to the jumps, Mikayla Pearce has no equal. The Maryvale junior won the long jump and triple jumps, bringing her career total of Section VI titles to five.

Olean's Summer Sawaya (right) wins the Division II 400 hurdles event at Saturday's Section VI Championships in Jamestown. Photo by Mark Mulville / Buffalo News

The athletes endured two delays by weather at Strider Field. The start of the meet was delayed 2 hours and 25 minutes by thunder and lightning. The second delay came with three races remaining on the track and lasted 45 minutes.

Pearce takes an undefeated record in both jumps with her into what will be her third state meet. A gymnast in the fall, Pearce brings those running and jumping skills with her onto the track.

"I've definitely built up some strength from doing gymnastics over the years," she said. "When I do gymnastics, I'm able to pick up new things very quickly, and I can do the same on the track, so its very beneficial."

Junior Kala Allen of Williamsville East joined Pearce as a double winner. She took two first places and a second with victories in the 100 and 400 and was runner-up to Ashley Fields of Amherst in the 200. Allen ran her season-best in the prelims in the 100 and 400.

Allen won the 100 title in 12.68. Fields, her good friend and defending 100-meter champion, was not in the field.

"To me the 100 is completely different from the 200," said Allen, who holds the Section VI record in the 400. "I'm worse on my starts, so I usually do really bad in the first 50 and I always make it up."

Senior Kelly Truppo of Alden defended her title in the Division II pole vault, clearing 11 feet, 6 inches. Her event was delayed twice by the rain. "We had to warm up twice. The mat was like jumping into a pool," she said.

An NCAA Division I future awaits Olean's Summer Sawaya on the St. Bonaventure swimming team. Instead of laps in a pool, Sawaya did her damage running laps on the track.

She won the Division II 400 hurdles in 1:06.07 to remain undefeated. "My blocks were set wrong, but I just had to block it out and kept telling myself I had to be the first one to the first hurdle," she said. "I said 'nope, I'm not letting this get to me.'"

Emily Irish-Ryan of Amherst won the Division I 400 hurdles in 1:02.57. "The two girls I was really worried about, Sarah [Loud] of North and Brianna Colello of [West Seneca] West, they really pushed me. They are such amazing athletes."

Calling Jacquie Huben a quick study in the steeplechase could be an understatement. The Clarence junior, running in just her fourth steeplechase race, won the title in 7:24.45.

One day in practice last year she was doing drills with the hurdlers and the suggestion was made she try the steeplechase. "It's fun because it's different than other races when you're just running laps."

Williamsville South junior Kailyn Arcury ran in back-to-back races. She won the Division I 100 hurdles in 14.83 and came back to finish third in the 100.

The title in the Division I shot put continues to run through Lancaster. Freshman McKenzie Kuehlewind has picked up where Melissa Kurzdorfer (Kent State) left off. She won the title with an effort of 36 feet, 9 inches.

"She was a great mentor," said Kuehlewind. "There's a lot of technique I've picked up from her. And I learned how to focus from her and how to compete."

Lancaster also won the 400 relay with three underclassman and a senior. Sophomore Lauren Sullivan, senior Corinne McCarthy, eighth-grader Tiffany Cycon and seventh-grader Ashley Grazen ran a season-best 49.81.

Despite hitting the first hurdle, Alden freshman Alyssa Handley won the Division II 100 hurdles in 16.77.

Junior Ashley Petersen of Allegany-Limestone won the Division II high jump by a five-inch margin in 5 feet, 7 inches.

Closing ceremonies included the second annual Final Senior Lap. Many of the senior athletes ran a last lap together as a way to celebrate their athletic careers and comraderie.

[mmonnin@buffnews.com](mailto:mmonnin@buffnews.com)