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Top competition brings out the best in Maloy

Panama's Strickland wins high jump title

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CALEDONIA — Instead of running through the streets around Springville High School on his own, Chad Maloy found himself in pretty good company at the New York State Track and Field Boys Championship at Caledonia-Mumford.

The Canisius-bound senior placed second in the Division II 3,000-meter steeplechase (9:36.78), trimming eight seconds off of his previous best time in the event. Maloy's finish was good for seventh in the Federation for an event that he started running this year.

Springville coach Joe Marvin said at a usual team practice there is no one to keep up with Maloy and that he has to practice on his own. The competition from the best in the state was a nice change of pace that brought out the best in Maloy on Saturday.

"I knew there would be better competition if I just tried to stay with the pack and that helped pull me along," Maloy said. "It's better running at the state meets, it's tougher and better competition."

Springville's Chad Maloy ran a personal-best time in the steeplechase Saturday. Photo by James P. McCoy / Buffalo News

Maloy also took nine seconds off his 3,200 PR on Friday. He holds the school records in the 1,600, 3,200, and 3,000 steeple, and was a member of the 3,200 relay team that broke a 27-year school record by five seconds last week at sectionals. Maloy also won a Class B cross country state championship earlier this year.

"It was really nerve-racking because it's my last time at states," Maloy said of his steeplechase run. "It's my sixth overall time coming, but I pulled through and I'm just really happy to be here."

The day's only Section VI state champion came from the high jump. Panama senior John Strickland struggled getting over the 6-foot-6 mark in the event all year, but the state meet proved to be his breakthrough. He set a PR and school record with 6-8, winning a Division II state championship in the process.

Strickland was part of a four-way tie for the state championship, but was determined the winner in Division II and second place in Federation after the events tiebreaking rules were applied.

Strickland missed out on a trip to states last year after jumping 6-6 in sectionals and was ecstatic after learning of his finish from the official.

"I was talking to one of the guys before and it just sounded like he had more confidence than I did," Strickland said. "But, I just came out and it was all good."

For Cleveland Hill junior Daryl Spencer, it was another day and another medal. After a third place finish in the Division II 400 hurdles on Friday, Spencer medaled once again Saturday with another third-place finish in the 110 hurdles.

After advancing to states last year in the 400 hurdles, Spencer said his coach thought it would be a good idea to take up the 110 hurdles in hopes of improving his trail leg for his "better" event.

But the 110 hurdles is no longer just a training event for Spencer.

"I'm going to be taking two medals home to my mom," Spencer said. "I know she'll be proud of me."

In the Division I 110 hurdles, Starpoint senior Jacob Wray placed third (14.45) before finishing fourth (14.87) in the Federation race.

Other Section VI top finishers included Kenmore West junior Marcus Lobdell in the pentathlon. Lobdell finished with 3,280 points, good for third place in Federation. In the discus, Williamsville North senior Brian Corretore took fifth place in Federation with a throw of 163-05.

In the 3,200 relay, Grand Island broke a school record despite missing its usual fourth runner. Senior Matt Killian replaced junior Brendon Lutnick, who broke his femur last week in the race to qualify for Saturday's state run.

The team finished with a time of 8:02.25, good for 11th in Division I and 16th in Federation. The other runners in the relay are seniors Derek Geiger, Nick Masiello and Chris Meyer.

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