

Eureka boys, Fortuna girls take titles

Rebecca Elston The Times-Standard
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FORTUNA -- The top local track and field athletes competed at the Humboldt-Del Norte League Big 5 track meet on Friday, and the top three competitors in each event will continue to the North Coast Sections championships in Novato on May 19.

Though the skies were cloudy and the wind was tricky, the event was packed and the excitement in the air was electric.

The Fortuna girls and Eureka boys placed first overall in the team standings, while Del Norte placed second in both the boys' and girls' brackets. Fortuna scored 101 points, Del Norte scored with 97, and Arcata was third with 69 on the girls' side.

"There were a lot of solid teams and pretty deep marks," Fortuna head coach Rod Kausen said. "The 100 hurdles and the shot put were particularly good events for us."

Fortuna's Hannah Ehret placed first in the shot put with a throw of 31 feet, 3 inches, while Amber Glen took second with a 31-footer, and Rhiannon Roper was fourth with 29-7.5.

The Eureka boys took first with 120 points and Del Norte came in second with 92 and Arcata was third with 57.

"It was a solid team effort," Eureka coach Joel Thornburgh said. "In the 3,200 we placed first through fourth, and we did well in the mile also. I knew we had a good chance to win if the kids went out there and did what they could do."

Dillon Ayers, Kyle Louv, Jonathan O'Connell and Billy Powell were the top four finishers in the 3,200 for Eureka.

Del Norte's Bryce Lund placed first in the 100, the 300 hurdles, the 200 and the high jump. Lund beat out Eureka's Tim Pratt, who was favored to win the high jump.

"Pratt also competed in the triple jump, the long jump and the 4x100 relay," Thornburgh said. "I think at sections we'll have him focus on the high jump. Dylan Ayers and Kyle Louv also have a good shot at sections. Eric Wright was first in the shot put and second in the discus."

Arcata's Yasmine White won the 3,200 and the 800, while on the boys' side, teammate Nathan Fraser placed first in the discus.

The Arcata boys went on to win the 4x400 relay and John Hunter took first in the 800.

Pole vaulter Kelsy Hintz of Del Norte set a new league record with a 10-7 vault to finish off the day's events, and achieved the only record set on the day. Hintz also won the 100 with a time of 12.5 seconds.

The Fortuna girls won the 4x400 relay, as did the Eureka boys, which turned out to be indicative of the final team scores.

Fortuna freshman Mallorie Franco took first in the long jump with a jump of 15-17.5, and Brittany Chown of McKinleyville, also a freshman, placed second with 15-6. Franco also leaped to first in the triple jump.

Thornburgh said that he was proud of his team, but he really expected no less.

"Historically Eureka has won, and last year we were fourth," he said. "In my eyes Eureka should always win. When I was in high school at Arcata, I lived for beating Eureka."