

# Norton athletes competed in State Track Meet

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bruce Graber's Norton Community High School girls track team placed 12th, just 10 points out of sixth, and his boys finished in a three-way tie for 25th, just 10 points out of 11th, in Class 3A in the Kansas State High School Track and Field Championships at Cessna Stadium in Wichita on Friday and Saturday.

Three Lady Jays and two Blue Jay boys medaled in the largest high school track meet in the nation, with over 3,000 athletes competing.

Among other local teams, the Beloit girls were sixth, Phillipsburg girls tied for 18th and Oberlin girls tied for 29th in Class 3A. The Beloit boys won the championship, the Phillipsburg boys tied for third and the Oberlin boys placed ninth in Class 3A.

In Class 2A boys competition, Hill City placed second behind champion Minneapolis, Atwood was fifth, Ellis placed ninth, Oakley was 13th, Smith Center 15th, Stockton 18th, St. Francis, 29th, Quinter, Osborne and Hoxie, tied for 31st.

Atwood placed second behind champion Garden Plain in the Class 2A girls division and the Ellis girls finished in third place. Osborne was fifth, Plainville ninth, St. Francis tenth, Hoxie 12th, Hill City 18th, Oakley tied for 25th and Smith Center 31st.

Norton freshman Laura Lee Baird placed second in the 400 meter dash in 59.30 seconds and sixth in the 800 meter run in 2:24.50. Lady Jay freshman Hayli Bozarth was third in the discus with a personal best throw of 125'8" and seventh in the shot put with a personal record distance of 35'3".

Senior Chelle Donovan placed fourth in the pole vault with a height of 9'.

Senior Lance Roe finished sixth in the pole vault with a height of 12'6" and junior Blake VanEaton was third in the 400 meter dash with a clocking of 51.20.

Also competing for the Lady Jays were senior Lacey Roe, who had the 12th longest javelin throw with a distance of 95'; sophomore Courtney LeClair, who was just five hundredths of a second out of the points in eighth place in the 100 meter hurdles with a time of 16.30 and tenth in the 300 meter hurdles in 49.60.

The Norton boys 3200 meter relay team of junior Jared Engelbert, freshman Zach Bainter, juniors Logan Keiswetter and VanEaton was also just out of the points in eighth place with a time of 8:29.

It was Donovan's fourth appearance in the state track meet. Her previous best finish was fifth her sophomore year; she was sixth last year.

Roe competed in the state meet this junior year, when he placed fifth. He just missed state competition his sophomore year when he placed fifth in the regional meet.

VanEaton just missed competing in the state meet both his fresh-



Norton freshman Laura Lee Baird, above, led the field during the first lap of the 800 meter run at the State Track Meet last weekend in Wichita. She placed sixth in the race with an excellent time of 2:24.50 and second in the 400 meter dash in the outstanding time of 59.30. Norton junior Blake VanEaton, left, crossed the finish line in third place in the 400 meter dash in the State Track Meet last weekend in Wichita. He had a great time of 51.2. VanEaton also anchored Norton's 3200 meter relay team which finished eighth, just out of the points.

— Telegram photos by Dick Boyd

man and sophomore seasons when he placed fifth in the 800 meter run in the regional meet.

It was coach Graber's final meet as mentor of the Blue Jays. After 11 years as a very successful coach of the Norton football team and the Blue Jay track squads, he will become the head football coach and assistant track coach at El Dorado High School.

"We performed well at the state track meet considering the windy, hot conditions," said coach Graber.

"It was the first time there for all but two of our athletes. Friday was a pretty good day for us. We qualified for finals in everything but the 300 meter hurdles.

"Neither pole vault event went exactly like we wanted but both Lance and Chelle earned medals. Chelle has been vaulting hurt all season and hasn't been able to practice much.

"Lance had a great year. He wasn't beaten by another 3A vaulter until regional and state.

"Neither of our 400 meter people ran extremely well on Friday but came back strong on Saturday. Blake ran more relaxed, had a better stride pattern and calmed himself. He ran great.

"Laura Lee struggled on Friday. In the finals on Saturday, she ran very well from start to finish. She defeated the Cimarron girl who beat her in the regional and lost the gold by less than a second to Beloit's Eck, whom she had beaten earlier.

"In the 800 meters, I think it might have been a mistake for Laura Lee to take the lead early the way the wind was blowing. She ran well but it is hard to win a race leading from start to finish in the state meet.

"Kent Mann was a casualty of the sit and wait, sit and wait at the

state meet. This meet is so different in terms of mental distractions. You can't afford to lose focus. You have to be mentally tough. We want our athletes to enjoy the experience but most young men and women need to be there once to realize the difference from other meets.

"All our athletes made good efforts and conducted themselves well.

"Hayli had an unbelievable meet. She was intent and committed to doing well. Her first throw in the discus was just like last week at the regional. It broke her personal record by 11 feet. She also set a personal record in the shot put.

"Courtney competed well; she was up against some outstanding competition. She ran well in the 300s even though she didn't qualify for the finals. In the 100s, she ran better into the wind in the preliminaries than she did with the wind on Saturday but that can happen. She made progress all year and continues to work hard.

"It was great to see Lacey make the state meet in the javelin. She was overwhelmed by the competition but will have a chance to make it again next year.

"Our 3200 meter young men ran well. Relays are hard to forecast. Some relay teams run better than in the regional because they change the personnel. Considering the wind, we ran only a couple seconds over our regional time. We ran about as well as we could. Several of our guys ran a little faster and several were a little slower. If they continue to work, they'll be there next year.

"I'm proud of our athletes. They all competed to the best of their ability. You have to remember that there are no poor athletes in the state meet. You are competing against the best in the state."

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## Riverless Run/Walk is Saturday

By DICK BOYD

The annual Riverless Run/Walk sponsored by the Phillips County Health Systems will be held this Saturday, June 3 in Phillipsburg. Registration will begin at 6:45 a.m. one block south of the stoplight. The two mile run/walk will begin at 7:30 a.m. and the five mile run will begin at 8 a.m.

Trophies will be awarded to the top male and top female in each race. Medals will be awarded to the first three finishers in each age bracket in both runs.

Competition will be in men's and women's divisions in these age groups: 10 and under, 11-14, 15-19, 20-29, 30-39; 40-49, 50-59, 60-69 and 70 and older.

The awards presentation will be held following the five mile run. Each entrant will receive a t-shirt.

Entry fee is \$15.

### Norton County Weather --- May 31<sup>st</sup> - June 4<sup>th</sup>

Wed 80/54	Thu 85/56	Fri 90/58	Sat 93/60	Sun 95/59
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Normal High: 78  
Normal Low: 50

Sunrise: 6:19 to 6:20 A.M.  
Sunset: 9:05 to 9:08 P.M.

One of the driest May's on record finishes on a wet note. Rain the past couple of days will give farmers in the County a wheat harvest after all, but down the road it still looks hot and dry. By this weekend temperatures will be back into the 90's and remain through the middle of next week. Like May chances for precipitation in June will be every 7 days instead of the normal 3 days. Let's just hope we get enough to keep the fall crops and pastures hanging on until a different pattern develops.

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