

Saints' Abel dominates at Scott invite

By Dave Oberhelman
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Girls track and field

Friday's conditions weren't exactly great for a test. Mallory Abel gave it a shot anyhow.

In wet and windy weather at the annual coed Gus Scott Classic at Naperville North, the St. Charles East junior won both the 1,600- and 3,200-meter races, preparing for another possible distance double down the road.

Her margin of victory was as comfortable as the conditions were iffy. Abel won the 3,200 by nearly 28 seconds at 11 minutes, 14.43 seconds, and the 1,600 by nearly 4 seconds, at 5:24.70.

"It's not the time that I wanted to get, but I'm happy overall with the day's events," Abel said after taking the 1,600 from her sprinter's start to finish.

"I just hope it gets a lot better and easier for sectionals

and state," she said. "I'm planning on maybe trying a double again sometime before the end of the season."

A year ago at the same meet, Abel also ran both events. Friday she sliced 25 seconds off her 3,200 time at the 2010 Gus Scott, and 5 seconds off her 1,600 time.

"I did it last year and I ran a lot slower, so I'm happier this year," she said. "But I'm still not that happy."

The Saints finished in third place in the girls' side of the meet, their 247 points spanning A, B and C classes trailing Cary-Grove (326) and Naperville North (261). Oak Park won the boys side with 300 points, slightly ahead of New Trier (296), with Naperville North (250) in third.

St. Charles East's 1,600 relay of Colleen Earl, Lauren

Towne, Kristin Sheehan and Rachel Rawson earned third-place, while a variety of Saints girls excelled on the B level. Kelsey Gentry won that class' 200 dash, Jordan Shead took the 400, and Gina Bartindale, Sarah Hill and hurdler Lydia Warren all placed second in their track events.

"B-level" doesn't accurately describe a quality sprinter like Gentry, who finished second on the A-level 100-meter dash. But it's hard to dislodge the Saints' Brittney Williams from the top flight of the 200 and 400 dashes.

Williams won the 400-meter dash, holding off Cary-Grove's Carly Loeffel with a time of 1:00.12. Williams returned to place second in the 200 behind another Cary-Grove runner, Sarah Ryan.

Must be something with

these Saints runners after positive outings. Like Abel, Williams wasn't the happiest camper even after her victorious 400, getting encouragement from coach Denise Hefferin.

"I'm really hard on myself," Williams said. "No matter what I do I always want to do better, so I'm kind of always disappointed. That's the kind of person I am."

Cary-Grove was led by Kathie Wollney, named the meet's most valuable female athlete. (Romeoville's Perez Ford won the male most valuable honor.)

Wollney won both the 100- and 300-meter hurdles — fending off St. Charles East's Annie Martines in the second event — and joined Trojans teammate Annie McGarrigle on both the winning girls 800 and 1,600 relays.

Along with crediting Cary-Grove hurdles coach Jack Kalivoda, Wollney also looked

forward to more fast times with that 800 relay with McGarrigle, Jenny Maki and Sarah Ryan. The four juniors set a school record in the event last outdoor season, then broke it again at the state meet.

"This year we're hoping that we can make it to state again," Wollney said. "We're a real close group, the 4x2, so we just keep pushing each other to do better, and it's a lot of fun."

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