



Saints 2nd, Stars 5th while Waubonsie wins 4th straight

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Waubonsie Valley senior Shakeia Pinnick put another astonishing display only days after winning a national pentathlon competition in Boston.

The Arizona State-bound standout won four individual races to power Waubonsie Valley to its fourth consecutive Upstate Eight Conference girls indoor track and field championship Thursday night in St. Charles.

The Warriors' 138 points produced a landslide victory, but St. Charles East made important headways in more ways than one.

The Saints scored nearly 100 points to turn back Neuqua Valley for second place, and St. Charles North was fifth overall with 38 points.

"People say the same thing about Pinnick during track that they say about (Lake Park state champion Lindsay) Flanagan during cross country season," St. Charles East coach Denise Hefferin said.

"They say, 'It's not fair.' Yes, it is. Waubonsie obviously has more than just Pinnick. We don't have anyone with a national presence like Pinnick, but we have some all-conference studs."

Flanagan was fourth at the Nike Invitational last weekend in Boston, and the Lancers' star skipped her specialty event - fourth in the nation in the 3,200 - to stare down St. Charles East fellow all-stater Lizzy Hynes in the 1,600 meters.

But the dream mile turned into a stroll in the park for Hynes, who took command midway through the race to win in slightly over 5 minutes and 3 seconds.

"I was preparing myself for (Flanagan) going out mega fast," Hynes said. "I was intimidated by her and waited until halfway through the race to make my move."

Hynes, headed to Boston College to run cross country and track, also ran the third leg of the Saints' victorious 1,600 relay.

Arielle Parker anchored the Saints' mile relay to victory for the second straight year.

"Two years in a row, and it feels great," said Parker, who also placed in the loaded 800 field that Pinnick made the second of her four running triumphs. "The last time running on this track. We really worked hard tonight."

Rachel Rowson led off the Saints' relay, and senior Jess Nier provided Hynes' breathing room that turned into a rout.

"It's fun to be a part of it for the team," Hynes said. "It's not such a short distance because I'm a distance runner. It's a fun race to run."

The Saints' senior jump specialist Maya Rittmanic fell tantalizing short of the high-jump crown to Lake Park junior Amanda Rifidia.

The two failed to clear 5-feet-5 inches, but Rifidia was declared the winner on fewer misses.

Rittmanic also placed in the long and triple jump.

The Saints also unveiled another champion in freshman Mallory Abel, who claimed the 3,200 run.

"My coach (Hefferin) wanted me to start off slow and conserve myself," Abel said. "It was only my second time running

it, so I was happy with my time."

Ninth-grader Meredith Beird was the lone champion on the night for St. Charles North after her surprising victory in the pole vault.

"We had some stellar performances all the way around," St. Charles North coach Sarah Manwaring said. "That's the spirit we want to see."