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Saints' freshmen duo shines

Warren, Martines finish 1-2 in 100 hurdles in outdoor debuts

ST. CHARLES – St. Charles North's hurdles appeared taller to St. Charles East freshman Lydia Warren on Wednesday.

For classmate Annie Martines, it felt like there were twice as many.

Apparently, sweeping the top two spots in the 100-meter hurdles against their Upstate Eight Conference rivals was tougher for the Saints than it looked. Certainly more difficult than the way Martines broke in to East's varsity after joining track when basketball season ended.

"They tested me out at one indoor meet, and then they were like, 'OK, Annie, you're on varsity.'" Martines said.

Saints coaches are sure to feel justified in their decision as the spring progresses, especially if Wednesday's outdoor season opener was any indication. Running stride for stride with Martines – and leaping hurdle for hurdle – Warren edged her teammate to win her debut varsity event in 17.9 seconds. Martines finished in 18 seconds, with North junior Gina DeHart taking third in 19.6.

Also competing outdoors for the first time this spring, North won the meet, 92-44. Both the North Stars and Saints will return to North's track for an eight-team invitational on Saturday. Mirroring their approach for other midweek duals and triangulars, both coaches used Wednesday to prepare their athletes for that meet while trying some runners in different events.

"Meets like this are definitely our conditioning meets," North Stars coach Sarah Manwaring said. "We're just trying to keep things going and get our form down."

The 3,200 meters was not contested, and a handful of events saw junior varsity and varsity athletes competing together. Still, for Warren and Martines, hurdling was hurdling.

Besides, both had itched to run against North since their days at Wredling Middle School.

That's where Warren and Martines took up track under coach Scott Nold. They found an eagerness to want to compete in every event then, but quickly learned that wasn't the norm in high school.

"Compared to middle school, it's really team oriented and everyone's really supportive of each other and everyone's pushing each other to the limit so everyone can get better," Warren said.

East assistant Mike Kososki, who coaches hurdles, told Warren on Tuesday that she'd be running the 100 hurdles. Senior standout Jess Nier elected not to participate in the event to focus on the 300-meter hurdles, which she won in 50.7 seconds. Martines (51.8 seconds) was next.

Warren gets another chance Saturday, with Martines planning to visit family in Wisconsin for Easter. Beyond that, she remains unsure of her varsity future among a talented crop of hurdlers.

"They're a great group of girls to work with," Kososki said. "Hard-working, they're fun to hang out with. We have a good time during practice and get a lot of stuff done."

North senior Danielle Goebbert was a double winner Wednesday, taking titles in the pole vault and long jump. East senior Allie Devor won the shot put and discus.

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