

SLIDESHOW: Hynes captures state title



By

St. Charles East's Lizzy Hynes uses her finishing kick to secure top honors in the 3,200-meter run Saturday in Charleston.

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By Scott Schmid, sschmid@mysuburbanlife.com

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St. Charles, IL -

Heading into Saturday, the only thing missing from the illustrious running career of St. Charles East senior Lizzy Hynes was a state championship.

Not anymore.

A furious kick on the final lap of the Class 3A 3,200-meter run allowed Hynes to pass Lindsay Flanagan of Lake Park for a winning time of 10:35.02. Flanagan, the defending cross country state champ, finished runner-up in 10:42.14.

"It is amazing, I can't even believe it," Hynes said. "I've worked so hard for this. Even before high school, that was my biggest dream and now to do it is amazing.

"I've raced her (Flanagan) before and I know how she runs. She has kind of one gear, she hammers it from the start. We are both very different runners with different strengths. Mine is my speed. I knew if I could be there at the end, it would give me an advantage because I could out-kick her."

A year ago, Hynes had finished fifth in the event in 10:54.00.

"It (my career) didn't exactly play out how I wanted," she said, "but I am happy it culminated in a state championship. I would have liked to win more but I am happy I accomplished something that had been elusive for so long."

The senior later competed in the 1,600 and led for a bit toward the end before settling for third place in a time of 4:54.13, less than five seconds off the winning pace.

"I so wanted to win but judging how it went today, it wasn't in the cards," Hynes added. "I felt pretty good actually. Going into the race, I was afraid I'd die but I figured I would try as hard as I could. I executed my plan but it came down to the last lap. Either it's there or it's not there and it wasn't.

"Part of you is really content with finally achieving that (a state title) but the other part wants more. I wanted to see whether I could do it or not."

Junior teammate Maya Rittmanic added an eighth-place showing in the high jump after clearing 5 feet, 4 inches.

"There are some really good high jumpers around here," Rittmanic said. "I got out at 5-5. I thought I was over it but I barely clipped it. I love state. It is really fun and it is my favorite thing every year.

"I wanted to get a medal. I was shooting for the top three but I have to work on my form. Next year I definitely want to get up there. I want to win so badly."

Rittmanic also competed in the prelims of the long jump and triple jump on Friday, recording lengths of 16-6-1/4 and 36-00-1/2 respectively, the latter mark a quarter-inch away from advancing to the finals.

Freshman Mallory Abel ran the first section of the 3,200 and finished in 11:49.69.

Senior Allie Devor had a long throw of 36-10-3/4 in the shot put preliminaries on Friday while senior Jessica Nier clocked a time of 46.32 seconds in the 300 hurdles. Junior Danielle Kuzniewski also had a time of 26.02 in the 200.

As a team, St. Charles finished in a tie for 13th place with 19 points.

St. Charles North

Sophomore Meridith Beird was the North Stars' lone representative at the state. She competed in Friday's pole

vault prelims where she recorded a 10-0 vault. The cutoff to reach the finals was 10-6.

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