

After growing up playing soccer, Glenbard West freshman Emma Winans decided to try indoor track.

In one of her first meets, Winans ran the 50-meter dash and extended her arm to keep herself from running into the padding at the end of the lanes. Her left wrist bent back and was broken.

“It’s kind of embarrassing because I played a contact sport my whole life and no broken bones and track, a non-contact sport, and I end up breaking it,” Winans said.

Fortunately for Winans, the injury hasn’t prevented her from competing. On March 15, she had her best meet so far as she and sophomore Megan Ozog had a pair of second-place finishes at the West Suburban Conference Silver Division Indoor Meet at York.

The Hilltoppers (60.5 points) finished fourth, 11.5 points behind Oak Park-River Forest (72). Lyons Township (148) won its third straight indoor title by 50 points over Hinsdale Central (98) after both teams went undefeated during the regular season.

Winans was second in the 300 (45.71 seconds fully-automatic time) to LT sophomore Sam Stuba (44.76), who won all four of her events, and second in the 200 (28.53) to LT sophomore Mayra Baeza (27.93).

Ozog was second in the 1,600 (5:28.12). Earlier, the 3,200 relay of freshmen Caitlyn Reick, Abby Shaver and Maddy Burt and Ozog received second (10:20.60) to LT (10:11.12) after race winner Downers Grove North was disqualified for stepping outside the legal zone on merge.

“I’m rally encouraged by a lot of what’s going on with the frosh-soph team,”

Glenbard West head coach Kelly Hass said. "This group of kids just really loves to compete and I think that they have a huge upside. We'll be pulling from that group as we go to some of these outdoor varsity meets. They are just so fun to watch."

Winans made huge strides at the meet since she entered the meet as the No. 4 seed in the 300 (46.34) and sharing the No. 8 seed in the 200 (30.04). Freshman teammate Jessica Michel was fifth in both races (300 in 46.45 and 200 in 28.76).

"I even said to Jessica, 'That's the first race that I feel that's as fast as I could go.' I left it all on the track," Winans said. "Especially for the 300, you have to know when to float and when to blast. That's definitely different because I used to play soccer. It used to be go, go, go and now you've got to conserve your energy for when you need it."

Because of her broken wrist, Winans competes with a purple cast over her forearm. Because of her small wrist and the fitting of the cast, she still is able to make conventional starts out of the blocks.

"My family and my friends who saw me, they were like, 'It's so weird to see you (compete),' Winans said. "Especially in the races that I do, everyone is so fast, you kind of can't tell (everyone apart), but they're like, 'I see the purple cast, and I know it's you.' I guess it's a signature charm."

In a wild finish to the 1,600, Ozog (5:28.12) was edged for the title by .71 by surging Hinsdale Central freshman Annie Zaher (5:27.41).

"I don't remember any (finishes) like that, but it was a fast finish," Ozog said. "It was dramatic. It was kind of not fun to get passed but I think I'm learning from it and more. I'll make sure to slow it down a little bit at the beginning

and have more energy to kick it out at the end faster. But second is good. I was happy.”

Zaher ran the fifth-fastest winning time in the history of the event since the sophomore level was added in 1987. Ozog cut her time dramatically from her No. 4-seeded 5:33.44, as well as Zaher, who was seeded sixth at 5:36.74.

Ozog, the anchor of the 3,200 relay, passed York (3rd, 10:23.92) en route to a personal-best 2:30.5 split. Reick opened with a team-best 2:29.7. Zaher ran the 1,600 fresh.

“There were four other girls with the same (1,600 seed) time so I was happy that I could get (second),” Ozog said. “I was told to start out a little slower and just work with the girls near me, but I always like to lead and sometimes I don’t quite have the kick at the end so I got passed.”

The 800 relay of sophomore Hannah Paterakis, freshman Amandi Bader, sophomore Jessica Johanson and Michel was third (1:57.97).

Freshman Christina Sedall was fourth in the 3,200 (12:03.43), 1.83 seconds from third place and .72 ahead of fifth. LT freshman Hannah Dutler won in a personal-best 11:53.85.

Sedall had hoped to at least break 12:00 as she did at York March 8 with a personal-best 11:56.63 as a varsity exhibition entry.

“In the fifth lap, the last mile, they started pulling away and I don’t know. I couldn’t keep up with them or what it was,” Sedall said. “I don’t know what happened. I think I was just comfortable where I was at. I didn’t go with them so I was just disappointed.”

Sedall wasn't helped by falling early in the race. She was among the lead group of five runners when she and another runner simultaneously made moves to pass.

"She was in front of me and took a step out and I tripped over her foot," Sedall said. "That was bad, but I got back up. At first, I was like, 'Oh my gosh. This is not happening,' but I knew I had to get up as fast as I could and continue on."

Freshmen Sharon Murray (1:05.25) and Ellen Daniels (1:06.30) finished fourth and fifth in the 400. The 1,600 relay of Johanson, Murray, sophomore Morgan McEnroe and Daniels was fourth (4:32.97).

In field events, freshman Bekah Dau was fourth in shot put with another personal-best 27-10 1/2 on her second attempt. Johanson tied for sixth in pole vault (6-0).

Dau again improved significantly from her previous best of 26-7 in the previous meet at York and had other throws in the 27s.

In the season opener Feb. 9, Dau's best throw was 22-6. Her outdoor goal is to reach 30 feet.

"The season started with a 20. It's a surprise when you just get that far. You don't expect it," Dau said.

"I think just having everyone there, just cheering you on (helped). It didn't feel like it was that far at all so I was surprised. I think just learning the technique and getting used to everything and getting used to the

environment of a track meet (have helped) because it's my first time doing it."

The outdoor season begins with a junior varsity meet at home against LT Tuesday, April 3. The sophomores and varsity compete at the Downers Grove South Invitational Saturday, April. 6.

Glenbard West freshmen and sophomores are permitted to compete in indoor track and then move on to other sports. Before this season, Winans never competed in track before, although she said her mother had encouraged her to try the sport.

"I think the most nervewracking part is the start because you're waiting for the gun to go off and you're like, 'Am I going to false start? Am I going to false start?' And then you don't and you go as fast as you can. With everyone cheering you on, it's just the adrenaline that keeps you going.

"I think even after the first meet, I was like, 'I'm sticking with track.' Everyone says it's completely different and I'm excited to see how I race on the outdoor track."