

Sophomore level

Glenbard West sophomore Grace Rogers has a knack of rising to the occasion, no matter the level of competition.

After being a varsity regular this indoor track season, Rogers was the top seed for the 1,600 on the sophomore level at the indoor West Suburban Conference Silver Division Meet Friday, March 21, at Proviso West.

"It didn't really change the mentality at all," Rogers said. "I knew there would be good competition and I'm glad I had it."

Rogers not only won the race, but her season-best time 5:23.59 fully automatic time broke the indoor Silver Meet sophomore record of 5:24.52 from 2011 and the frosh-soph indoor school record of 5:26.63 by Maddie Nagle in 2009.

"I was really proud of that. I was aiming for low 20s. I thought I'd be really happy with that and I did it and I am happy," Rogers said.

"It was a really good race for me because I had that girl. She was good to be there to push me and really helped me do well and perform my best. I'm really happy I had someone like her to run with."

The 1,600 relay of sophomores Nicole Rogus, Sharon Murray and Emily Asselmeier and freshman Sophie Cvengros won in a sophomore school-record 4:24.25 and became the school's first indoor Silver champion in the event since the meet began in 1987. The same four also were second in the 800 relay in 1:54.44.

In her first year as a high jumper, sophomore Abby Moody won dramatically in a jump off at 4 feet-8 inches.

Murray also broke her sophomore school record with a second-place 45.27 in the 300. Sophomore Kathryn Kenwood was second in the 3,200 (season-best 11:52.64) by just .51 with sophomore Kate Dorsey third (12:03.47). The 3,200 relay of Rogers and sophomores Abby Shaver, Katie

Bassett and Maddy Burt also was third (10:17.65).

The Hilltoppers (80 points) finished fourth, just three points behind third-place Oak Park-River Forest (83). Hinsdale Central (112) won its first sophomore indoor Silver title since 2010, ending the reign of three-time defending champion Lyons Township (104). Downers Grove North (61), York (42) and Proviso West (14) were fifth through seventh.

"They were awesome. They're a pretty competitive bunch and we're excited about the opportunities to move them up to varsity meets," Glenbard West head coach Kelly Hass said.

Rogers returned to the indoor Silver Meet a much improved and seasoned competitor. In 2013, she competed on the varsity in the 1,600 and was 11th (5:44.27), a race she couldn't really remember.

Outdoors, she went on to qualify for state in the 3,200 relay. In cross country, she not only helped the Hilltoppers win their first state title but she also earned individual all-state honors by taking 21st, the last of a program-best four all-state runners in one state race.

"I'm thankful for all of the really talented people on my team who make me as good as I am," Rogers said.

Rogers added to the Glenbard West distance history Friday. Besides holding off OPRF's Hallie Voss (5:26.28) by 2.69 seconds for the title, Rogers broke the previous frosh-soph record set by Hinsdale Central's Morgan Mulhern.

Rogers regained the indoor Silver Meet sophomore mark established by Glenbard West with Nagle in 2009 with her school-record 5:26.63. Nagle still owns the sophomore indoor Silver Meet and school records in the 3,200 with an 11:26.25 from the same meet.

"We thought Grace had a shot at (the 1,600 records), and the competition brought the best out of her," Glenbard West distance coach Paul Hass said.

"Grace was just incredible. She went out a little bit too fast for my comfort zone. Then she scaled back a little bit and the second mile was a bit slower but just her dogged determination was amazing. She wouldn't let any of the girls pass her and she always find something. (Voss) tried to pass her and she had none of it. She just kept on pushing, and no one finishes like Grace Rogers."

Moody literally came a hair from winning the high jump in regulation but then came through when she got a second chance. Since she and Hinsdale Central sophomore Ann Marie Kennedy could not have their tie broken after clearing 4-6 with no misses, they returned to 4-8. Moody won on her first try in the jump off and Kennedy missed.

"It felt really good the next time. That was exciting (to win)," Moody said. "I've never even heard of (a jump off) before. I think we were all a little confused."

Moody cleared her personal best of 4-8 earlier this season. She would have won in regulation at 4-8, but her long pony tail knocked over the bar on her third and final attempt.

Does Moody plan on cutting her hair?

"Nope. Next time I'm putting it in a bun, though," Moody said. "I was kind of mad because it was something so easy to fix but it ended up being a jump off so then I had one more try."

Just trying high jump was all that Moody needed. She came out late after being part of the school's state-qualifying dance team and gave the event a try and practice along with several teammates. Moody did well enough to compete in the event the next day Feb. 22 at Downers North.

"I've always kind of wanted to try it," Moody said. "I know in middle school I did it (in seventh grade). I was definitely not good. I guess it's a lot easier when you're taller."

"I definitely did not think this was going to happen. I definitely did not think I'd be doing high jump, let alone get first so it's really exciting. At first, it was really hard to get the steps down and it was hard to get on the right foot but now I feel it's coming more naturally. (Assistant coach Mark Staron) has been helping a lot and with arching my back and stuff."

Murray and Rogus both excelled coming off both meets from both ends of the spectrum at York March 14.

Murray's 45.66 in the 300 at York broke the previous school record of 45.71 set in 2013 by current sophomore Emma Winans, who competed for the varsity Friday.

Murray ran considerably faster for another record and was second only to Hinsdale Central sophomore Megan Draddy (45.12), who will play lacrosse this spring.

"It was really satisfying. I was hoping I would get my time down a little bit more so that was good to see," Murray said. "I was actually hoping I'd drop it by a teeny bit more, but I'm still surprised I did a little bit."

Rogus took fourth in the 300 (45.58) and also achieved a season-long goal with her season-best time. If not for Murray's great race, Rogus would have the current frosh-soph record.

"My goal since pretty much the first meet indoor season was I wanted to try and beat the frosh-soph record in the 300," Rogus said. "I was really proud because I was still able to beat the (previous 45.66) fresh-soph record, which was my goal, and I'm really proud of Sharon that she got to keep that title, which was awesome."

The Hilltoppers entered the meet intent on breaking another sophomore school record in the 800 relay, but they barely missed the 1:54.1 manual mark from 2001.

For the 1,600 relay, little did the same four runners, while in a different order, know what was in store for them. While seeded first at 4:27.92, the

Hilltoppers dropped 3.67 seconds to break the school record of 4:25.8 manual from 2006. The indoor Silver Meet record is 4:19.43 by LT in 2008.

"We weren't even planning on trying to break that record. It was like, 'Run the 4-by-400 for fun, do your best and try to kick your best.' When Miss Hass told us we beat it, we were so ecstatic," Murray said.

"After we went to the team area and were ready to do our cool down, (Kelly Hass) asked if we wanted to know the good news or the good news," Rogus said. "She told us we broke the record and we were definitely super excited. We weren't expecting that and it was amazing to know we could do that at the conference meet."

Rogus led off the 1,600 relay with a personal-best 1:03 split fueled by the last time she competed at York in the event. In her varsity debut, she also ran the opening leg but another runner collided with her at the start of the second lap and Rogus leapt and tumbled with no place to avoid her. A scraped up Rogus got up and finished her leg.

"Right before we ran, (Staron) was telling us to run angry. When I was in my blocks, I just wanted to do the best I could and just get revenge for my 4-by-400 at the last meet. I came out and I felt great the whole time," Rogus said.

"I was able to do another great goal of mine, which was beat my time in the 4-by-400. It was a very exciting experience, especially since we had a big lead and everyone contributed to that."

Kenwood just missed winning the 3,200 by the closest of margins. Kenwood nearly caught OPRF's Ainsley Tran (11:52.13) at the finish but ran out of room and was second by .51.

In her last 3,200 at the Proviso West Invite March 8, Kenwood was second to Dorsey by 1.51 seconds (11:57.33 to 11:58.84).

"In the last race, Kate beat me by a second but it was OK because it was a teammate and this one's just a little harder because it was conference

and she's from a different team," Kenwood said.

"When it's that close, it's even a little harder because you're like, 'If I ran a second faster, it would be a totally different outcome and different feeling,' but it's OK. I'm still happy. I broke 12:00. It's a record for me."

This is Kenwood's first season of track after competing at state in her first season of cross country. She got a taste of her shortest track race Friday, but her sixth-place 400 (1;08.93) didn't feel any easier.

"It's not my favorite, but I'm going to try and stay positive about it," Kenwood said. "It was OK. It was hard running it. You'd think the 3,200 was harder, but the 400, it was like, 'Ahhhh.' It was rough."

Freshman Melina Thurmond took fourth in shot put (29-1) by beating her previous best of 28-2. Sophomore Bekah Dau was seventh (27-2), three inches from her season best.

Sophomore Kelsey Lentz turned in her two best times of the season to take fifth in the 55 hurdles (10.74) after a 10.46 in the prelims. Shaver was fifth in the 800 (season-best 2:35.77), sophomore Katie Goleash was sixth in high jump (4-2), and Cvengros was seventh in long jump with a season-best 13-9 3/4.

Thurmond got off to a great start with a personal record on her first throw in prelims, a 28-6. She followed that with her 29-1.

"I'm really happy about that. I wasn't really thinking about breaking 29. I was more thinking about breaking 28, which was my last PR," Thurmond said.

"Normally, when I get warmed up, I try two or three throws. Today, I threw four because I was feeling really confident. I just wanted to make sure I knew what I was doing. It's conference."

-- by Bill Stone