

Piche leads Metro parade to Drake Relays

Written by Jim Ecker

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Linn-Mar senior Amanda Piche has regained her confidence, just in time for the 2011 Drake Relays.

Piche has struggled in the discus this spring, but she uncorked a winning throw of 140 feet, 8 inches at the West Delaware Invitational on Thursday and is ready to defend her title at Drake.

"Yeah, it did boost my confidence," she said Saturday. "I'm also kind of relieved that I finally threw it, because I knew I should have thrown that far. I've been disappointed in the past couple of meets before that with my performances. I'm glad I finally hit 140."

Piche won the discus title at the Drake Relays last year with a toss of 136 feet, 9 inches. Her personal best is 143-5, thrown last year, so she's almost regained the form that made her one of the top throwers in the state in 2010.

Piche tops the list of Metro girls and boys who have qualified for the 2011 Drake Relays. Linn-Mar, Washington, Prairie, Jefferson, Xavier and Kennedy all will be represented in the prestigious meet in Des Moines April 28-30. The [official entry list](#) was released Saturday.

Piche's brother, Ryan, placed sixth in the discus and shot put at the Drake Relays last year as a senior for Linn-Mar. He's now a freshman at Loras College and won the discus title at a college meet this past Wednesday.

Piche said her brother has been a big help in her discus career.

"He's been a really good supporter," she said. "He knows what it's like to compete, so he offers me really good advice. He can watch my throws and tell me basically what I'm doing wrong."

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"He was at my West Delaware meet, so he helped me out at that meet as well. I'm really lucky to have him."

Piche has signed to compete in track next year at DePaul University, which is a member of the Big East Conference. She plans to become an orthodontist. "I'm really excited," she said.

Metro girls will be competing in a variety of events at Drake on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Carolyn Newhouse of Linn-Mar qualified in the 1500 and 3000 meter runs for Linn-Mar and the Lions also qualified their 4x400 relay.

The Washington girls will have Layloni Beard in the 100 hurdles, Brooke Foreman in the 400 hurdles and Callie Stone in the long jump. The Warriors also qualified in the 4x100, 4x200, sprint medley and shuttle hurdle relays.

Rachel Broghammer of Jefferson made Drake in the 100 meter dash and the J-Hawks also qualified in the 4x100, 4x200, 4x400 and sprint medley.

Kristen Huebsch of Kennedy qualified in the high jump and the Cougars also qualified in the 4x200 and 4x400 relays.

Xavier qualified in the 4x100, 4x200 and sprint medley relays. Prairie qualified in the 4x100 and shuttle hurdle relay.

Metro boys also will be competing in a variety of events at Drake.

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Prairie has a big contingent headed to Des Moines with Matt Stocker in the 800 and 1600, Kyle Stocker in the 1600 and 3200, and Sam Joens in the discus. The Hawks also qualified in the 4x400, 4x800 and sprint medley.

Washington will feature Robert Hogg in the 800 and long jump, Will Griffin in the 100 and Alex Carr in the 100. The Warriors also will compete in the 4x100, 4x200, sprint medley and shuttle hurdle relay.

Linn-Mar will have Brandon Ophoff in the 110 hurdles and Nick Lucas in the 400 hurdles. The Lions also will run in the 4x100, 4x400 and 4x800 relays. Kyle Dunn, the 2010 Drake Relays champion in both hurdles races, is serving a school suspension and will not compete.

Xavier will showcase Carter Valentine in the 110 hurdles and Alec Clasen in the high jump. The Saints also will run in the 4x100 and 4x200 relays.

Caleb Mere of Kennedy is entered in the long jump. The Cougars also qualified in the 4x100, 4x200, 4x400, sprint medley and shuttle hurdle relays.

Jefferson qualified in the 4x100 relay.