

Sophs Jacobus, Evans shine at Drake Relays

Written by Jim Ecker
Thursday, 26 April 2012 18:59 -

DES MOINES - Derek Jacobus is rapidly becoming a man for all seasons at Cedar Rapids Kennedy.

Jacobus soared 22 feet, 9 inches on his final leap Thursday and placed second in the prep long jump at the 103rd Annual Drake Relays on a gorgeous day in Des Moines.

Darius Pearson, a senior from Sioux City West, won the event at 22 feet, 11 1/2 inches. Jacobus, just a sophomore, finished only 2 1/2 inches behind with the best jump of his young career.

Josh Evans, a sophomore from Linn-Mar, finished third in the 3200 meter run with a personal best time of 9 minutes, 17 seconds.

Jacobus didn't know how far he went until the scorekeeper announced it for all the contestants to hear. Jacobus broke into a big smile, pumped his fist and acknowledged the cheers from his family, coaches and teammates in the stands.

"I had no clue," he said about his impressive leap. "When they called out 22-9 it was like 'Wow!' I did not feel that at all."

Jacobus is not a big name at Kennedy yet, but he could be soon. A four-sport athlete in football, basketball, baseball and track, he could be on the verge of an outstanding career with the Cougars. He's off to a good start with a silver medal at the prestigious Drake Relays.

"If I stay healthy the whole year it would be great to be the starting shortstop, the starting point guard, the starting quarterback with a couple of state championships along the way," he said.

His older brother, Devin, is the starting third baseman for the Kennedy baseball team, so there

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could be two members of the family on the left side of the infield this season. Devin Jacobus helped the Cougars win the Class 4A state baseball title in 2010 as a sophomore.

Jacobus was remarkably consistent in the long jump Thursday. He jumped 22-0 1/4, 21-10 3/4, 22-2 3/4, 21-10 1/4 and 22-9, with all five leaps within 10 3/4 inches of each other.

He landed awkwardly on his next-to-last jump and appeared to be in pain as he left the landing pit, but shook it off. "It just seemed like my quad tightened up," he said.

He took a deep breath, relaxed and flew 22-9 a few minutes later to climb into second place. His personal record in the long jump prior to the Drake Relays was 22-0 1/2, so he topped that twice Thursday.

Jacobus enjoys staying busy and plans to participate in all four sports during his entire prep career. In an age of increasing specialization, he's a throwback who enjoys the change of seasons.

At one time he thought his desire to play multiple sports might hurt his development and hinder his chances of playing in college, but he's changed his mind about that.

"The colleges want people who stay out of trouble and are active all the time," he said. "I'll just stay with it."

Jacobus plans to compete in the shuttle hurdle relay and 4x100 relay with Kennedy on Saturday at the Drake Relays. Baseball practice starts Monday, so his next season will begin before his current season ends in late May with the state track meet.

"I'll take Sunday off and start baseball practice Monday," he said with a smile.

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EVANS RAN a strong race with his 9:17.00 clocking in the 3200 Thursday, but a couple of seniors were too tough for the sophomore from Linn-Mar. Cole Decker of West Des Moines Dowling won the 3200 in 9:08.96, edging Matt Butler of Bettendorf at the wire. Butler was timed in 9:09.30.

Evans, seeded No. 1 entering the meet, clipped three seconds off his personal best, but Decker and Butler pulled away from him early and stayed out front.

"I was looking to win today, but they went out fast," Evans said. "I didn't think they'd be able to hold it, so I stayed back a little. Even if I did try to go with them I would have died, so I ran the best race I could.

"I was right where I wanted to be, in perfect position right after the mile. And I tried to reign them in. I passed a couple of guys. It definitely worked, but I wasn't able to close enough."

Evans finished second at the state cross country meet last fall and now has a third-place medal from the Drake Relays for his young career. He was hoping to run a 9:15 Thursday, but missed his target by two seconds.

"It's not bad at all. I'm happy," he said. "That was my personal record, so I can't really complain."

Jacob Aune of Prairie placed eighth in 3200 run in 9:25.84. Lukas Mees of Marion finished ninth in 9:26.07, Mitch Pritts of Prairie was 18th in 9:36.69 and Etienne Nzoyisaba of Washington ran 19th in 9:47.33 in a race that featured five Metro runners.

Craig Murtha of Xavier placed eighth in the discus with a heave of 154 feet, 7 inches. Derek Seddon of Knoxville won the discus at 172-2.

Alex Bartz of Xavier tied for ninth in the girls high jump at 5-foot-3. Alexis Conaway of

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MOC-Floyd Valley won the event by clearing 5-foot-10.

Shannon Gorman of Washington finished 11th in the 3000 meter run in 10:27.00. Rebekah Topham, a freshman from Griswold, won the race in 9:58.39.

[Thursday's complete prep results](#)