

## Jenks claims 7th title at Drake

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 24 April 2015 20:09 - Last Updated Friday, 24 April 2015 20:21

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DES MOINES - As it turns out, Stephanie Jenks can run in traffic. And she's developed a strong kick for the rare occasion when she's actually challenged in a race.

The Linn-Mar junior needed both skills Friday to capture the 800 meter run at the 106th Drake Relays for her seventh career victory in America's Classic.

Jenks maneuvered her way through a tight pack of runners and sprinted down the home stretch to win the 800 in 2 minutes, 9.64 seconds in a talented field.

Jasmine Staebler of Clayton Ridge (2:11.40), Erika Lewis of Waukee (2:12.38) and Joy Ripslinger of Davenport Assumption (2:12.42) gave Jenks a good race, but the Linn-Mar junior had too much speed and too much moxie for them all.

"I really don't have to kick too often, but this is one of the things we've been working on, being able to shift gears during the race," said Jenks. "I had to have it at Kansas last weekend (when she won the 1600 at the Kansas Relays).

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"I didn't realize I had a kick," she said modestly.

Jenks captured the 3000 meter run at Drake Thursday by more than 30 seconds and usually cruises to victories in the 1500 and 3000. The 800 is not her specialty, however, and she was sitting in only fifth place after 400 meters Friday.

Jenks found room to run on the second lap and made her move. "There was a lot of surging and stopping abruptly," she said. "Once they let up, I poured myself through."

Jenks is peerless in the 1500 and 3000 in Iowa, but the 800 is a different story. "I'm getting accustomed to it, but it's not my favorite," she said.

It was congested at the start of the race and Jenks failed to get out front, forcing her to bide her time and step carefully.

"I'm not a very good person getting off the line," she said. "It's something that's really going to hurt me later on, but I'm really working on it."

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~~He finished the race in 1:00.04, a time that was not actually in the  
book of records for the 400m. The book of records for the 400m is 1:00.00, which was set by  
the American athlete, who finished the race in 1:00.00.~~