

Jeff girls sparkle in 4x100 at Drake

Written by Jim Ecker

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DES MOINES - This one's for you, Coach.

The Cedar Rapids Jefferson girls blazed to victory in the 4x100 meter relay at the Drake Relays in record time Saturday afternoon and quickly heaped credit on Coach Bill Calloway.

The J-Hawks captured the event in 47.55 seconds, tying the Iowa all-time best that was set by Des Moines Roosevelt at the Drake Relays in 2012.

"I'd really like to thank Coach Calloway, because his whole life is us," said senior Morgan Meese. "He's put his whole life into us being here and us being as strong as we are.

"I honestly can't thank him enough," she said. "He does so much for us. This is for him."

Meese's teammates heartily agreed.

"We know that we made our coach proud, and that's what it really comes down to," said Lucy Schneekloth. "He's the best coach any girls can have."

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Schmeekloth, Abbie Ranschau, Meese and Jasmine Blue turned in a flawless performance in the 4x100 relay with perfect handoffs and speed to burn.

Blue got the baton with the lead and brought it home.

"I saw the finish line," said Blue. "I knew I had to get there just that much quicker than Waukee and everybody else around us.

"We always say we don't run just for ourselves," she continued. "We run for everybody else who is involved in our program. I'm just happy."

Waukee, one of Jefferson's arch-rivals in sprint relays, finished second in 48.07 seconds. Ranschau played a major role in beating the Warriors with a swift second leg. "I wanted to catch that Waukee girl," she explained with a happy smile.

The same J-Hawk quartet set a meet record in the 4x200 relay on Friday, the first title in a relay at Drake for Jefferson girls since 1986. Now they have two in two days.

"As a senior, I wanted to leave a mark this year," said Schmeekloth. "Setting the record in the 4x2 and tying it in the 4x1, we really made our mark. It's been a great four years running for Jefferson."

Meese agreed.

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"I knew this being my senior year, we really wanted to finally step up and win one flag at least. But winning two is unbelievable," she said. "And I can see the hard work paying off."

The J-Hawks plan to run at least one-hundredth of a second faster in the 4x100 relay at the state meet at Drake Stadium and claim the all-time best all for themselves.

"Four more weeks of improvement," said Meese. "We're going to come back faster at state."

The Linn-Mar girls turned in a pair of strong performances Saturday, but could not quite crack the winner's circle on a gray, damp day in Des Moines. Hanna Saville, Maddie Saville, Payton Wensel and Amber Decker finished second in the 4x800 relay in 9:27.74 and placed third in the 4x400 relay in 3:56.7.

The Linn-Mar boys also had a good day with a pair of high finishes. Daniel Gorsich, Nick House, Gavern Dochterman and Zeal Baker finished second in the shuttle hurdle relay in 57.69. Greyson Dolezal, Joe A'Hearn, Michael Mather and Daniel Murphy placed fourth in the 4x800 relay in 7:58.00. The Lions placed sixth in the 4x100 relay in 43.46.

The Cedar Rapids Washington boys placed fifth in the 4x100 relay in 43.40. The Warriors finished sixth in the 4x400 relay in 3:25.68.

Tysen VanDraska of Prairie ran eighth in the 1600 in 4:25.27.