

## Mees in a hurry to lead Marion

Written by Tom Fruehling

Tuesday, 20 March 2012 23:01 - Last Updated Wednesday, 21 March 2012 15:28

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MOUNT VERNON - Lukas Mees is a young man with a plan.

A straight-A senior at Marion High School, he's narrowed his college choices to five schools that combine academics and a strong track program. He wants to go to medical school and become a psychiatrist.

In the meantime, he has his sights set on leading his Marion track team to the state tournament. His personal goal is to set five school track records along the way.

"I want to leave a legacy," he said with confidence.

That might seem like idle boastfulness considering the Wamac Conference indoor meet Tuesday at Cornell College was only his second meet in his first-ever season on the track team. But Mees has come out from the blocks blazing this spring.

At the Wartburg Invitational last week he blew away the competition by easily winning the 800 and 1600 meter runs. And at the Wamac meet he ran a blistering 1:59.5 on the first leg of the 4x800 relay to give his team a 20-meter head start.

Teammates Greg Sam, Brennen Kelly and Jordan Garthwaite extended the gap and the Indians won the race by 50 meters. The first four teams in the 4x800 relay all broke the meet

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record, but Marion shattered it by almost 20 seconds at 8:18.9.

A short while later, Mees came back to cop the 800 run by an equally impressive margin in a time of 2:04 flat. "That wasn't as quick as I wanted," he said, "but I gave it all I had left."

"Those are very good times indoors and in March," said Marion Coach Scott Immerfall. "I think we are going to be pretty competitive this year. We've got some good hurdlers, the sprinters showed me something tonight and we're very strong in the long distances."

All four of the shuttle hurdle relay members that finished fifth in the state last year are back. And Taylor Rogers, who won the 55-meter hurdles at Wartburg, repeated with a fast 7.82 Tuesday.

The 4x200 team of Derrick Williams, Isaac Smith, Cedrick Williams and Cale Cannoy captured its race by a good two seconds in 1:35.2.



The team's strength, however, is in the distance races due largely to Mees and a contingent of runners he recruited to join him on the track team this spring.

In his first three years at Marion, Mees ran cross country in the fall and played soccer in the spring. When he was a sophomore, he finished 69th in the state in cross country, improved to 16th as a junior and came in sixth last fall.

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"I decided that my future was in long distance running," Mees said. "So I dedicated myself completely to it."

With six other cross country runners, including Sam, he began a running club on his own to train throughout the winter. Immerfall said they've each put in as much as 40 miles of running a week in the off-season.

"I want to make a difference in Marion's track program," Mees said, "to set an example of passion, hard work and dedication."

He takes pride, for instance, in the fact that the cross country team finished in the top 10 in the state the past two years. Mees himself achieved academic all-state recognition.

Immerfall, in his first season back at the helm after switching places with Coach Chad Zrudsky, said Mees' accomplishments are mostly self-taught.

"Since this is his first year on the track team, I was able to show him a few techniques. But he's really done everything pretty much on his own."

Mees is hoping his own work ethic inspires the rest of the team.

"I think we have a really good chance at state," he said.

WAMAC CONFERENCE MEET  
At Cornell College

(No Team Scores Kept)

Winners

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55 meter hurdles - Taylor Rogers (Marion) 7.82.  
55 meter dash - Corey Harris (Western Dubuque) 6.51.  
1600 meter run - Dain Gerber (Anamosa) 4:39.22.  
4x200 meter relay - Marion 1:35.20.  
4x800 meter relay - Marion 8:18.90 (meet record).  
200 meter dash - Jared Ganschow (Clear Creek Amana) 22.05 (meet record).  
1600 medley relay - Center Point-Urbana 3:53.14.  
400 meter dash - Jared Ganschow (Clear Creek Amana) 50.63 (meet record).  
800 meter run - Lukas Mees (Marion) 2:04.00.  
4x400 relay - Clear Creek Amana 3:31.61 (meet record).  
High jump - Ethan Brehm (Dyersville Beckman) 6-2.  
Long jump - Ty Ramsey (Center Point-Urbana) 20-1.  
Shot put - Joe Carber (DeWitt Central) 52-0.

### Marion Placewinners (Top 8)

1st - Taylor Rogers, 55 meter hurdles, 7.82  
1st - Lukas Mees, 800 meter run, 2:04.00.  
1st - 4x200 meter relay 1:35.20.  
1st - 4x800 meter relay 8:18.90.  
3rd - Derrick Williams, 55 meter dash, 6.60.  
4th - 1600 medley relay 3:59.10.  
4th - Cole Koethe, 1600 meter run, 4:52.00.  
5th - 4x400 relay 3:41.20.  
6th - Isaac Frazier, 55 meter hurdles, 8.19.