

Jenks wins Metro Spotlight Award

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Linn-Mar sophomore Stephanie Jenks is the winner of the Metro Spotlight Award for high school girls this week, the Metro Sports Report announced Sunday.

Jenks, a premier distance runner and triathlete, becomes the first two-time winner of the award since the Metro Spotlight series began in August.



Jenks enjoyed a remarkable string of success during a seven-day period this month.

It began when she won the PATCO North American triathlon in Sarasota, Fla., March 10 in the girls junior elite division. Two days later she won the 1500 and 3000 meter races at the Dickinson Relays in Cedar Falls. And she capped the whirlwind of activity by finishing second in the 5,000 meter run at the New Balance Indoor Nationals in New York City and setting a national sophomore record of 16 minutes, 37.5 seconds.

Jenks captured the 1500 at the 2013 Drake Relays and doubled in the 1500 and 3000 at the 2013 Class 4A state track meet.

Here is our Question-&-Answer session with Stephanie Jenks:

MSR: What do you find appealing about the triathlon? Why do you enjoy it?

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STEPHANIE: I love how training never gets boring. Alternating between swimming, biking and running makes the training fresh. I enjoy triathlon mainly because it consists of everything I enjoy doing, especially the running.

MSR: How do you feel about all the success you've had in the triathlon and distance running at such a young age?

STEPHANIE: I am ecstatic on how much I have accomplished since I started to take triathlon seriously in 6th grade and running a year or so before then. I found that running is my strongest aspect in triathlon and that really motivated me to push myself even more.

MSR: What do you think your ultimate goal in sports might be? Do you picture yourself as an NCAA champion in track or cross country some day? Do you think you might become an Olympian?

STEPHANIE: Only time will tell. I don't know what is in store for me, but I know I will be trying to accomplish all that I can.

MSR: Would you like to become a professional athlete in the triathlon or distance running? Do you think that's a possibility?

STEPHANIE: I would love to go pro in running. However, academics always come first. I will focus on my running while getting a degree in college for something to fall back on just in case running doesn't work out for me.

MSR: If you do not become a pro athlete, what profession do you think you might want to pursue?

STEPHANIE: I am not sure yet, maybe something in the medical program. But I am not going to think too much into the future right now as I still have two more years of high school left. I am

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taking classes to explore different opportunities, that's what I love about Linn-Mar's academic program.

MSR: What has it been like traveling all around the country and many parts of the world?

STEPHANIE: It has been so great! Being in other cultures and being around people who speak various languages is a different experience altogether. Trying to figure out what to eat and where things are is so much fun. I still bring some American food with me, but I like to try different things. I am not an old-fashioned kind of gal, I guess you could say. I don't have the same race strategies every time either. I am definitely paying more attention in Spanish class now that I can actually utilize the material versus just trying to get an A and calling it good. I can make new friends too, which is always good.