

Amazing Jenks runs away with MVC title

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 04 October 2012 21:46 -

CEDAR FALLS - Stephanie Jenks likes to take naps, but she does it quickly.

That figures, because the Linn-Mar High School freshman is incredibly fast at just about everything she does.

Jenks continued to make a shambles of the high school cross country season Thursday by running away with top honors at the Mississippi Valley Conference meet at Birdsall Park in Cedar Falls.

Jenks helped the Lions win the team championship with 65 points in a tight battle with Iowa City High (75), Kennedy (77) and Iowa City West (79).

Jenks won the 4-kilometer race in 14 minutes, 10 seconds. That gave her a 10-second victory over Allison Gregg of Cedar Falls, who finished third in the state meet last year.

Jenks has been ranked No. 1 in the state for several weeks and has posted four impressive victories. She won the Cedar Rapids Invitational by 16 seconds, captured the Heartland Classic in Ames by 14 seconds, blew away the field at the Charger Classic Invitational in Aurora, Ill., by 43 seconds and now has an MVC title to her credit.

The young phenom has shown she has the talent to become a four-time state champion during her high school career, but Linn-Mar Coach Todd Goodell shied away from that idea Thursday.

"You can't look at it that way. You have to take care of business right now," he said. "Obviously she's shown she has the potential for that, but a lot of things can happen over the years."

Her performances have been extremely impressive this season, but it's even more remarkable when you consider that she's also training and competing with the Linn-Mar swimming team

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this fall. That makes for some very long days.

"I wake up at 4:45 in the morning and I have swim practice at 5:30," she said. "After that I'll come home and eat a quick breakfast and I'll go straight to school. And from school I'll go straight to cross country practice."

Her day is not done at that point, however, because the swim team practices at night as well.

"I'll go home for an hour or 45 minutes or whatever after cross country practice," she said. "Then I'll go back to school, get on the bus and go down to Coe until 10 o'clock for swim practice. And then I'll go home, snack really quick and then I'll go to bed."

And don't worry about her school work. She's doing quite well in that department, too.

"I'm doing pretty well right now," she said. "I have all A's in my classes. I'm really excited about that."

"I try to get my homework done as quick as I can. High school has really taught me to be efficient with my time and not to waste much."

Jenks is accustomed to a hectic schedule. She's one of the top female triathletes in her age group in the nation and won a national title in the 13-15 age group in Ohio this summer, capping a series of triathlons around the country.

That's where the naps came in.

"I do take a lot of naps now through the summer," she confessed. "My parents were starting to get a little worried that with the naps I was taking that I'd start falling asleep at school."

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Her mother, Deb, is her personal coach and an assistant cross country coach with the Lions.

The triathlon in her age group has consisted of a 375-meter swim, a 10-kilometer bike race and a 1 1/2-mile run. Next year, the distances will double when she begins to compete in the 16-to-19 age group so she'll have a 750-meter swim, a 20K bike race and a 5K run.

"I'm really looking forward to that," she said eagerly.

Jenks has successfully juggled cross country and swimming this fall, picking her spots and competing in as many big events as possible in both sports. She'll face a conflict on Saturday, Oct. 27 when the state cross country meet and regional swimming meet will be held on the same day.

She'll run in the state meet in Fort Dodge (assuming she qualifies in two weeks), then try to make the swimming meet that afternoon, if possible.

Jenks dominated the competition Thursday in Cedar Falls. She quickly grabbed a 30-yard lead and stretched the gap to 70 or 80 yards after the first mile, which she covered in a swift 5:22. She maintained her big lead the rest of the race and was never challenged.

"She's just a beast," said Goodell.

She's won her four races this season by 83 seconds, a whopping total in cross country.

"I never dreamed I could dominate," she said. "I never thought I'd be doing as well as I'm doing right now."

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"I just go out and I do the best I can. I try my best every day. If there's ever some pain, I'll just suck it up and I'll just go with it."

Goodell said Jenks is an incredibly hard worker. And humble, too.

"She's already great," he said, "and she's trying to get better."

Amber Decker finished fourth for Linn-Mar to help the Lions claim the MVC title. Rachel Perry was 12th, Maddie Saville 18th and Sydney Johnston 30th.

The Kennedy Cougars had won all six of their races this season and made a bid for No. 7, but their string was finally broken. They placed three runners in the top 10 with Alyssa Averhoff fifth, Allison Culver eighth and Katie Wampole ninth.

Shannon Gorman of Washington placed sixth.

Linn-Mar junior Josh Evans skipped Thursday's event while he continues to nurse leg and hip ailments. He hopes to compete again in the district meet in two weeks and qualify for state.

Evans fell from No. 1 to No. 4 in the individual Class 4A rankings this week due to his absence from competition.

Mitch Pritts of Prairie finished third in the boys race. Tanner Rathje of Linn-Mar placed sixth and Joe Berry of Washington was 10th. Etienne Nzoyisaba of Washington matched Berry's time of 16:10 but was given 11th place.

Iowa City West nipped Iowa City High for the boys title, 84-86.

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MVC SUPER MEET

Birdsall Park, Cedar Falls

GIRLS RESULTS

4K

TEAM STANDINGS

1. Linn-Mar 65, 2. Iowa City High 75, 3. Kennedy 77, 4. Iowa City West 79, 5. Cedar Falls 107, 6. Dubuque Senior 139, 7. Jefferson 256, 8. Wahlert 258, 9. Xavier 258, 10. Waterloo West 260, 11. Hempstead 289, 12. Washington 301, 13. Prairie 333, 14. Waterloo East 467

TOP 10 INDIVIDUALS

1. Stephanie Jenks, Linn-Mar	14:10
2. Allison Gregg, Cedar Falls	14:20
3. Ashlynn Yokom, IC West	14:21
4. Amber Decker, Linn-Mar	14:53
5. Alyssa Averhoff, Kennedy	14:55
6. Shannon Gorman, Washington	15:01
7. Brianna King, Cedar Falls	15:02
8. Allison Culver, Kennedy	15:08
9. Katie Wampole, Kennedy	15:15
10. Molly Leveille, IC West	15:17

LINN-MAR -- 1. Stephanie Jenks 14:10, 4. Amber Decker 14:53, 12. Rachel Perry 15:27, 18. Maddie Saville 15:41, 30. Sydney Johnston 16:02, 33. Caitlin Novak 16:05, 45. Morgan Uridil 16:22.

KENNEDY -- 5. Alyssa Averhoff 14:55, 8. Allison Culver 15:08, 9. Katie Wampole 15:15, 19. Lauren Meyer 15:45, 36. Carolyn Stone 16:13, 49. Sarah Manders 16:27, 57. Tara Mittelberg 16:45.

JEFFERSON -- 20. Michelle Zikes 15:46, 27. Meredith Koenigsfeld 15:58, 39. Sarah Hanna 16:16, 82. Megan Ely 17:34, 88. Sarah Fehlberg 18:33, 89. Makayla Kaune 18:44, 90. Anna Petersen 19:03.

XAVIER -- 28. Jenny Dickes 16:01, 40. Marinna Schroud 16:16, 59. Allison Pitz 16:48, 62. Sydney Oakley 16:50, 69. Sarah Chicchelly 17:03, 70. Eileen Fagan 17:05, 81. Lauren Smith 17:32.

WASHINGTON -- 6. Shannon Gorman 15:01, 64. Madison Stuckenschneider 16:55, 75. Morgan Stuckenschneider 17:21, 76. MJ Kamin 17:22, 80. Kristin Mackenburg 17:32, 85. Sarah Witt 17:44, 86. Megan Muller 18:00.

PRAIRIE -- 37. Madeline Rainey 16:15, 55. Katie Costigan 16:41, 78. Anna Rubsam 17:29, 84.

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Amanda Weyer 17:38, 87. Abby Rubsam 18:30, 94. Katie Ockenfels 20:23.

BOYS RESULTS

5K

TEAM STANDINGS

1. Iowa City West 84, 2. Iowa City 86, 3. Dubuque Senior 100, 4. Cedar Falls 111, 5. Linn-Mar 115, 6. Washington 145, 7. Waterloo West 158, 8. Prairie 203, 9. Hempstead 213, 10. Wahlert 267, 11. Kennedy 275, 12. Xavier 309, 13. Jefferson 363, 14. Waterloo East 465

TOP 10 INDIVIDUALS

1. Brook Price, IC High	15:37
2. Dylan Eigenberger, Dubuque Sr	15:44
3. Mitch Pritts, Prairie	15:47
4. Isaac Jensen, IC West	15:58
5. Jaime Zarate, Cedar Falls	16:05
6. Tanner Rathje, Linn-Mar	16:06
7. Jon Specht, Hempstead	16:07
8. Ryan Dorman, IC High	16:07
9. Blake Whalen, Dubuque Sr	16:07
10. Joe Berry, Washington	16:10

LINN-MAR -- 6. Tanner Rathje 16:06, 13. Chase Grabau 16:13, 25. Kyle Read 16:44, 27. Michael Mather 16:48, 44. Jay Halverson 17:13, 57. Matt Wempen 17:25, 65. Noah Decker 17:38.

WASHINGTON -- 10. Joe Berry 16:10, 11. Etienne Nzoyisaba 16:10, 33. Trevor Luebe 16:52, 42. Matt Wittman 17:10, 49. Jon Rockwell 17:16, 66. Finbar Berry 17:38, 74. Sam Eck 17:49.

PRAIRIE -- 3. Mitch Pritts 15:47, 43. Zach Waite 17:11, 46. Connor Neuhaus 17:14, 55. Ross Adams 17:24, 56. Luke Galloway 17:24, 77. Zack Fiser 17:57, 87. Haakon Wilz 18:41.

KENNEDY -- 24. Ryan Walker 16:42, 52. Matthew Stevens 17:19, 58. Addison Furry 17:27, 69. Austin Rotter 17:41, 72. Andrew Solsrud 17:44, 79. Reece Linder 18:00, 86. Tim Zange 18:25.

XAVIER -- 39. Luke Koechner 17:09, 61. Grant Hunt 17:31, 63. Jacob Schmitt 17:36, 71. Daniel Pape 17:42, 75. Steven Culpepper 17:52, 78. Evan Gradoville 18:00, 89. Zach Schowalter 19:03.

JEFFERSON -- 53. Devin Stone 17:20, 62. Jason Chung 17:36, 81. Lucas Vanous 18:08, 82. Alec Archer 18:09, 85. Ky Kramer 18:15, 88. Maverick Guyer 18:52, 90. Trey Hitchings 19:30.