

Jefferson girls carved names in history

Written by Jim Ecker

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DES MOINES - Their names are Lucy, Morgan, Jasmine and Abbie and they've carved their names into the history books of Iowa girls track.

"We wanted to stake our claim as the greatest relay team ever," Cedar Rapids Jefferson Coach Bill Calloway said Saturday at the state meet. "I think we've done that with two all-time bests."

Lucy Schneekloth, Morgan Meese, Jasmine Blue and Abbie Ranschau set an Iowa all-time best in the 4x200 relay Friday at the state meet, just a few weeks after tying the all-time best in the 4x100 relay at the Drake Relays.

The sleek J-Hawks, who call themselves the "Cheetah Girls," were hoping to snap the all-time best in the 4x100 relay Saturday at state but had to settle for an ordinary (for them) victory.

Ranschau stepped away from the relays Saturday and captured the 100 hurdles in 14.96 seconds, giving her three gold medals and a silver at the state meet this year.

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Schneekloth, Meese and Blue are strictly sprinters, but Ranschau is also a premier hurdler. She likes jumping over barriers and keeps getting better and better.

"My coach (Calloway) calls it being a 'tough' sprinter, because we do stuff that not a lot of other people do," she said. "Like going over things."

Ranschau's older sister, Maddie, was a premier sprinter for the J-Hawks and Abbie decided to try it as well.

"Probably because I saw how much fun she had with it," Ranschau said. "I saw how good she felt when she did well, so I wanted that feeling too."

Ranschau, a junior, wants to keep competing in track as long as possible. "I know I want to run track in college," she said. "That's the big thing. I'd like of like to keep going at it."

Schneekloth and Meese have finished their prep careers. Schneekloth plans to run at Iowa State and Meese plans to run at Coe. Blue, a junior, has the talent to compete in college as well.

It's been a special group that made its mark in the history books.

Schneekloth, Meese, Ranschau and Blue broke the meet record in the sprint medley Saturday, but the J-Hawks had to settle for second place behind Pleasant Valley.

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Senior Kaitlin Smith, junior Kayla Belward and sophomore Autumn Anderson, all of Jefferson, were part of the 4x400 relay team that won the state title in the 4x400 relay at the state meet in Portland, Ore. Smith, Belward and Anderson were part of the team that won the state title in the 4x400 relay at the state meet in Portland, Ore. Smith, Belward and Anderson were part of the team that won the state title in the 4x400 relay at the state meet in Portland, Ore.