

Lady Bulldogs Win Gold/Set Records at State By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Track team set new school records in three events and brought home two gold medals from the State meet in Wichita over the weekend. “It was an unbelievable weekend for the girls track team,” said Coach Travis Smith. “On Friday, we had a great day in the preliminaries.”

“The 4x100 set the tone for the day as we were able to break the school record in that event,” continued Smith. “We had been trying hard all year, and had gotten close, but just couldn’t get there. I knew at State we would have a great chance.” The relay team of Brooke Stoll, Mabel Lugo, Ashley Stoll, and KayCee Miller ran the 4 x 100m relay and set a new school record of 51.27 during the Friday preliminaries. “It was great to have broken the record since we have broken our 4x4 three times already.” added Mabel Lugo. “The 4x100 ran a great race again in the finals,” added Smith, “running under 52 seconds for the second day in a row. They ran the race in 51.78 on Saturday for fourth place.

KayCee Miller, junior, set a new school record in long jump of 17’ 0” to become State Champion. “On Saturday in the finals, KayCee set the tone for the day on her very first jump going 16’ 10””, added Smith. “She won the meet on that very first jump. She was consistent on the board each and every jump eventually going 17’ and winning the state title.” Miller set a new school record in long jump of 16’ 5.25”, to break her own record set last year, at the Logan Invitational. She then extended that record to 16’ 8.25 to win regionals and qualify for state and finished at state with the 17’ 0” school record.

“I knew when I jumped 16’ 10” on my first jump that it was going to be a good day,” said KayCee, “but I didn’t think that would be enough to actually win. My jump of 17’ sealed the gold! I was so excited that I had broken my own school record again!” “It was a great feeling to get on the podium as a champ not only in a relay but also in an individual event. I have always competed well at state, but this year was the best by far.”

The 4 x 400m relay team of Brooke Stoll, KayCee Miller, Ashley Stoll, and Mabel Lugo, also brought home the gold medal. We were all excited to watch the 4x400,” said Smith. “All anyone could talk about was how great Hanover was, even though we had run faster than them all year long. The girls absolutely blew their heat out of the water setting the school record again.” They set a new school record of 4:08.35 at the Colby Invitational breaking the record set in 1999. They set another new record in the state preliminaries of 4:07.03.

“The 4x400 team has been amazing all year, and they were again in the finals,” continued Smith. “Brooke got us off to a strong start, KayCee brought us up in the second and Ashley took over from there. When Mabel got the baton there was no doubt we were going to win. She ran the fastest split of the year at 59.8 seconds.” The girls, who have placed first at every meet this season, won the state championship with a time of 4:10.09—over 5 ½ seconds ahead of second place Centralia. Hanover placed third.

“It was great to be able to win the state championship in the 4 x 4,” said Brooke Stoll. “I am so happy our hard work paid off! It was so much fun re-breaking our 4 x 4 record several times and going undefeated. It was awesome that we finally broke the 4 x 1 record too!” “I’m proud of my team,” continued Ashley Stoll. “It was very exciting to win the 4 x 4 at state and at every meet we competed in. I hope next year we can

improve and have another successful year!” “I am very proud to have finished my season with a gold medal,” added Lugo. “I am hoping to return to state again and doing it all over again!”

Each of the girls competed in individual running events in addition to the relays. Miller ran the prelims of the 200m dash on Friday in 26.65 seconds to qualify for finals. She placed fifth on Saturday with a 27.07 run. “KayCee also ran well in the 200 to qualify for the finals for the 2nd straight year,” said Smith. “In her 200 she came on in the final 30 meters to take 5th, improving on her 8th place finish from a year ago.” “What makes KayCee such a great athlete is that not only is she physically strong, but mentally strong as well,” continued Smith. “When it’s time to compete, no matter the event or the conditions, she’s going to give her absolute best.”

“The 400m was the toughest event in 1A this year at the state meet,” said Coach Smith. Ashley Stoll, freshman, qualified for finals in the 400m with a 1:00.50 run on Friday. She placed fifth in finals with a run of 1:00.41, her best time of the year. “She ran back to back personal bests in the 400,” continued Smith. “Ashley runs a very consistent race and did a great job again in the finals.”

Mabel Lugo, sophomore, ran her best time of the year of 1:00.88 in the 400m prelims on Friday, just missing out of finals by a fraction of a second. “Both Ashley and Mabel ran awesome times in the 400,” added Smith. “Unfortunately for Mabel she just got beat out for the finals. With what Mabel ran in the prelims, she would have placed just behind Ashley for 6th in the finals. To have two girls run 60-second quarters from the same small school as ours is a big deal.

“I am hoping that I can be able to break that 400 record this upcoming season,” said Lugo. “I’ll work hard and won’t stop till I do. I am very proud of my team and proud to be a Bulldog!”

On Saturday, Brooke Stoll, freshman, ran the 800m. There were no prelims for this distance race, which she ran in 2:34.78 for eighth place. “Brooke ran against a tough field in the 800,” said Smith. “It was a tight race for most of the run. She came from behind to eventually hold on for 8th and a place on the awards stand.” “It was a great ending to my first season,” added Brooke. “I can’t wait for next year!”

The girls finished the state track meet with 34 points and a three-way tie for sixth place in the state. This is the highest the Bulldogs have ever placed at the state meet and it doubled the number of state champions. Previous champions include Danielle Hickert in Discus and Rilee Spresser in Triple Jump. “It was an amazing year for the girls and they set record after record,” concluded Smith. “What is even more exciting is that we return all of them next year. I couldn’t be more proud than I am to be their coach and watch them run.”

The Bulldogs graduated one senior team member and look forward to the return of all the other girls along with a large group of incoming freshman for next season.

“I am looking forward to bringing our teams back to state next year,” continued Miller. “I want to thank Coach Smith, Coach Rush, and my teammates for pushing me all year long and believing in me. It was a great year and I hope we can keep it going into next year!”