

# Some area athletes move on in IHSA Class 2A, 3A track and field qualifying, final is today

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CHARLESTON – Friday's qualifying sessions in the 126<sup>th</sup> IHSA Class 2A and 3A Boys Track and Field Championship state meets at Eastern Illinois' O'Brien Field produced some qualifiers for area teams.

In Class 2A, Roxana's Jordan Hawkins moved into Saturday's finals in the discus throw, finishing second in his flight with a toss of 180-1 to advance; only Mount Zion's Harley Russell was better than Hawkins, winning the flight with a throw of 186-11 while Triad's Jadon Elliott moved to the final of the pole vault with an effort of 13-6.

In Class 3A, Edwardsville had four advance to Saturday's finals, Kenyon Johnson in the long jump with a leap of 22-4.5; Blake Neville in the pole vault with a height of 14-3; Amari Brooks in the discus throw with a toss of 165-5; and Franky Romano in the 800 meters with a time of 1:54.99; Roland Prenzler will be joining the four in Saturday's finals in the 3200-meter run; Granite City's Andrew O'Keefe, the Warriors' only representative at state, also advanced to the final of the 1600 run with a clocking of 4:16.68.

In addition to Prenzler running in the Class 3A 3200, McGivney Catholic's Elijah Burns will run in the Class 1A 3200 and Roxana's Cree Stumpf will be in the Class 2A 3200.

“The Mount Zion kid did some really good throws today,” said Roxana throws coach Scott Stahlhut. “I think those are two PRs (personal records) for him today, so it's a really good day to throw well. Jordan threw really well today; his form looked really great – we'll look forward to tomorrow.

“He's sitting in second place (following Friday's qualifying), so he can just trust his form and go just a bit harder and see how far he can get that disc out there. He's put in a lot of years of hard work and it's really paying off for him this year.”

Should Hawkins take to Iowa a state title, “it'd be a great accomplishment for him,” Stahlhut said.

While Jersey's entries – James Arbuthnot in the high jump and Tom Rexing in the 300 hurdles – did not advance to Saturday's final (Arbuthnot had no height in the high jump and Rexing had a time of 44.69 seconds in the 300 hurdles), Panther coach Harold Landon was happy with things went for the pair – both first-time state qualifiers.

“You have to have some experience at the state meet to do well in it,” Landon said of Arbuthnot's first time at the state meet. “It's rare for someone to go to the state meet and be successful; James got a taste of it and hopefully, he can come back here the next two years and make some noise (Arbuthnot is a sophomore). It's a lot different being at the state meet than a regular-season meet.

“Tom was also here for the first time and it was a great experience for him as well; he had a great senior year for us and I don't think he has any regrets. Making the state meet was icing on the cake for him – that he was able to cap off his career at the state meet was nice.”

Triad's other entries in the meet did not qualify for Saturday's final session; the 4x800 relay team of Jack Hansen, Zach Knopf, Luke Perry and Ben Walter turned in a time of 8:26.58; the 4x100 relay team of Josh Edison, Johnnie Caswell, Malik Curtis and Amaziah Lusk had a time of 43.69 seconds; Caswell also had a time of 11.03 seconds in the 100 and 22.93 seconds in the 200; Drake Bleier turned in a 4:44.82 in the 1600 meters; and the 4x200 relay team of Caswell, Lusk, Cody Qualls and Edison had a time of 1:32.80.

Civic Memorial's Steven Qui turned in a 16.35 in the 110 hurdles and Piasa Southwestern's Eugene Kahl had a 23.24 time in the 200 meters.

Alton had an unexpected setback when a sudden illness forced Jonathan Bumpers from the lineup right before the state meet got under way; the illness eliminated Bumpers

from the 300 hurdles. “We competed as hard as we could,” said Redbird coach Jeff White. “We've got a good group of kids here and I think we've got a lot to be proud of here; our core group will be back next season and we're looking forward to it.”

“We're pleased with what we've got going into Saturday,” said Tiger coach Chad Lakatos. “We had PRs across the board today and we're happy for the kids who have the opportunity to compete (Saturday). We certainly would like to have had a few more kids advance, but that's the nature of the state meet.”

Outside of the Tigers who advanced to the finals in their events, LaVontas Hairston had a leap of 6-1 in the high jump; Brooks had a toss of 54-5.5 in the shot put; Johnson had no distance in the triple jump; Jack Pifer had a time of 4:32.33 in the 1600 meters; and the 4x400 relay team of Dan Powell, Romano, Ben Ryan and Brandon Battle had a clocking of 3:22.22.

For the Redbirds, the 4x100 relay team of Demontra Wilson, Terrance Walker, Jaden Singleton and Deonte Mosby had a time of 42.51 seconds and the 4x200 relay team of Antonio Harrison, Walker, Wilson and Deonte McGoy had a time of 1:29.27.