

Lady Griffins Complete Historic Season With Fourth-Place State Finish

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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GLEN CARBON - Father McGivney Catholic High School head girls track and field coach Jim Helton was very excited about the performance of his ladies in both the finals and prelims of the Illinois State High School Association IHSA Class 1A Girls State Track and Field Meet.

Helton provided a recap of the weekend:

"On Thursday, May 18 the ladies competed in the preliminaries in the IHSA State Championships at Eastern Illinois University. Mia Range qualified for the State Finals

by clearing 1.55m (5'1"). The 4x800m relay team of: Kaitlyn Hatley, Jane Cummins, Lilly Gilbertson, Elena Rybak ran 1st in their heat with a (9:51.5). Also qualifying for finals were: Hatley in the 800m (2:21.7); Gilbertson in the 400m (57.96), Rybak in the 1600m (5:12.1), and the 4x400m relay team of: Gilbertson, Hatley, Caroline Rakers, and Rybak. Jane Cummins set a personal best in the 1600m (5:32.8).

In the IHSA State Championship Finals on Saturday, 5/20/23, the Griffins finished fourth overall with 39 points. The 4x800m relay (Kaitlyn Hatley, Jane Cummins, Lilly Gilbertson, Elena Rybak) took 2nd in (9:35.35). Kaitlyn raced to second in the 800m with a personal best of 2:16.31. Lilly Gilbertson took fourth in the 400m (58.61; school record).

"Elena was the ***State Champion*** in the 1600m (5:03) for the second year in a row! The 4x400m relay team finished the State Championships racing to the third: Gilbertson, Hatley, Cummins, and Rybak (4:04.26; school record). All places were ***All-State*** performances. Caroline Rakers did a great job on Thursday helping advance the 4x400m squad to finals; she was also an alternate on the 4x800m relay. Mia Range had an unfortunate jumping day on Saturday; her 5'1" clean-heights on Thursday would have placed fourth overall in Finals. Isabella Harris was the alternate in both the 4x800m and 4x400m relays."

Coach Helton concluded: "The Lady Griffins concluded their 2023 track and field season fourth in the State of Illinois (1A), a repeat 1600m champion in Elena Rybak, and five All-State performances. Excellent conclusion to a historic season!"