

# **Byron, Carlson, Petri & Kalb Male Athletes Of The Month: Father McGivney 4x800 Relay Reaches Class 1A Finals**

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter  
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CHARLESTON — Father McGivney Catholic's boys 4x800-meter relay team advanced to the IHSA Class 1A State Track and Field finals after placing 11th in the preliminaries Thursday, May 28, 2026, in Charleston, with the team saying its main objective was to qualify for Saturday's final.

The Thursday McGivney relay team of Gus Range, Connor Schmidt, Eric Rybak, and Will Rakers posted a time of 8:17.98 to earn a spot in the finals.

Range opened the race with a 2:03.77 split in the 800 meters, followed by Schmidt in 2:06.83, Rybak in 2:04.15, and Rakers in 2:03.23.

The team said qualifying for the finals was its main goal.

"The atmosphere is awesome here in Charleston," Eric Rybak said, "especially after watching my sister, Elena, run for four years here in Charleston at the girls' state meet, and now running here myself. It is a dream come true."

The other runners said the big-time atmosphere at the boys' state track and field meet is different from any other meet during the season and makes the meet more fun.

The McGivney team said its goal in Saturday's final is to place higher than it did Thursday. The boys also said they want to possibly break or come close to the 8-minute mark overall as a group.

The runners said they did what they had to do to qualify and believe they can perform better in the final, with a sub-8-minute time and a school record among their targets.

Rybak's sister, Elena Rybak, is a previous state champion distance runner and is now on the women's track and field team at Notre Dame.