

Dylan Wark Sets School Record at State By Judy Rogers

Golden Plains Freshman Dylan Wark set a new school record in the 800m as he placed fourth at the state track meet in Wichita on May 27. Wark ran a 2:02.14 breaking the record set by Damon Williams in 1995. Dylan is the first male track athlete to place at the state meet since 2012 when Kalyn Weber placed sixth in the 200m and Cole Christensen placed third in high jump and eighth in Triple Jump.

“I set several school records in the middle school last year,” said Wark. “That motivated me to want to set records in high school. I was excited to accomplish this as a freshman. My goal is to get under two minutes in the 800m and to improved in all my other events.”

“I couldn’t be more proud and excited for Dylan and his family,” said Williams. “I remember breaking the record at regionals when I was a senior. Gary Withers had held that record since the early 70’s—it stood for a long time before I set it, and stood a long time until Dylan set it. I can’t say enough how proud I am after 28 years that a childhood best friend’s son not only broke it, but will keep breaking it as he’s only a freshman. I want a state title for him and a 1:55 or better. I know he’s got it in him.”

“Dylan fought back after the fall in the relay earlier in the day to run an outstanding race in the open 800,” said Smith. “He went out from the beginning determined to run a very good race and he did. I told him his goal at state should be to set a school record, and if he did he would put himself in great position to medal. For a freshman to run a 2:02 and get on the podium at the state track meet is outstanding. He has a very bright future. He has a great chance of running under two minutes next year. If he sets his mind to it, he can do just that.”

The 4 x 800m team of Dylan Wark, Owen Patmon, Iu Ribera, and Landon Meier ran on Saturday morning. They were off to a lead when the first runner fell, but he picked himself up and the boys finished the race in 9:42.0. This is the first time in remembered school history that both boys and girls 4 x 800m teams ran at state in the same year.

“The boys worked their tails off to get to state and worked hard at state to prepare for their race,” said Smith. “Unfortunately, things didn’t go our way. The 4x800 is a crazy race. The first leg is tricky, especially if you start in the first lane like we did. Dylan got tangled up with several runners, trapped inside, and eventually went to the ground. The race for the boys was over after that. I felt terrible for the boys because they had a really great chance of placing and getting on the awards stand. Owen, Landon, Iu, and Dylan had a great year, and this one meet cannot take away from that. I have had several people ask me why I didn’t protest. Proving intent in a race like that when the official didn’t raise their flag for obstruction is hard to prove. They weren’t going to allow us to rerun the race by ourselves. It really wouldn’t have done any good. I am very proud of this group of boys and expect them to be right back at state next year.”

“It was a great experience like nothing else competing against the best in the state teams,” said Patmon. “I’m really looking forward to getting back there again next year.” “Although our event didn’t go as expected,” added Ribera, “I really loved the experience. I enjoyed watching my teammates compete and win.” “We did our best throughout the season and we improved a great deal by the time we got to regionals,” continued Meier.

“I’m thankful that my teammates in the 4x800 relay worked as hard as they did to get us to state, and I congratulate everyone else who made it as well. I am hopeful that there will be more of us going next year and we can bring home more medals.”

“I hope that our success this year continues and a large number of boys compete not just in track but in all sports,” added Wark.