

Press Clippings 05/03/2019

---The Daily Herald---05/03/2019

U-46 teachers ratify 4-year deal

Contract increases base salary, employees to pay more for health care

By: Rafael Guerrero

School District U46 teachers ratified a new four-year contract Tuesday that increases the new-teacher base salary by more than \$8,000, bumps up employee health care contributions from 10% to 15% and raises the hourly pay for teachers doing school work outside of class hours.

“After a lengthy bargaining process, our members have overwhelmingly voted in support of a four-year contract,” Elgin Teachers Association President Barbara Bettis said. “I believe this contract addresses issues that are very important to our members and will improve the learning environment for students and reward teachers for the work they do in and out of the classroom.”

The exact vote count was not released; the union represents 2,400 teachers who have been working without a contract since August.

The deal, scheduled to be approved by the school board Monday, is retroactive to the start of this school year and runs through August 2022.

According to the contract posted on the union’s website, the step-and-lane pay schedule — the structure under which a teacher’s salary is set based on years of experience and education attained — remains in place. That had been a sticking point with the district, which wanted it removed from the agreement.

Teachers will receive their corresponding salary increase for the 2018-19 school year, with back pay for the months in which they worked without a contract.

The base salary for entry-level teachers will increase from the \$42,805 currently paid to \$50,000 in 2018-19 and \$50,500 in 2019-20, the contract said.

Teachers will no longer have to earn a master’s degree to receive a pay bump for education attained. Under the new deal, a salary increase will be paid for every 10 graduate school credit hours a teacher earns.

Professional credits attained via professional development or professional learning committee participation or committee work will also result in salary increases.

Union members, however, are going to pay a larger share of health insurance costs under the deal. The 10% paid in 2019 will increase to 12% in 2020 and 15% in 2021 and 2022.

Teachers who receive additional pay for work they do outside of normal school hours — overseeing extracurricular programs or teaching driver’s education, for example — will be getting an hourly wage increase. The \$28.71 per hour paid this school year will escalate to \$30.25 in 2019-20 and to \$31 for the last two contract years.

The agreement also includes language holding the district more accountable for student discipline and keeping teachers safe while in school and creates a safety council to be made up of union, community and U46 administration members.

SPORTS

---Courier News---05/03/2019

Girls Softball: Pushed by a Sensor

Senior pitcher strikes out 17 as Elgin ends 56-game losing streak
By Paul Johnson



Abby Sensor pitched a three-hit shutout, striking out 17, for Elgin in its streak-busting 7-0 win April 20 over St. Edward. (Mike Mantucca/Courier-News Photos)

Elgin's Abby Sensor decided she'd had enough.

The senior pitcher was on a mission for the Maroons in their third and final game of the Larkin Slugfest on April 20 against St. Edward.

Elgin was looking to end a 56-game losing streak, and Sensor had been there for all of them.

"I was like, 'OK, this is going to be our game,' " Sensor said. "I was hoping to win really badly. We all finally got back into the groove of things and were able to play our best game.

"It's just nice to see after two years. It felt amazing."

Elgin earned a 7-0 win over the Green Wave to put the streak to bed.

Nick Bumbales wasn't the coach during the first two seasons of the skid, which began April 17, 2017, after a win over East Aurora.

He knew what was happening, however.

"I think for the kids who were around it for the whole streak, it was tough," Bumbales said. "We didn't really talk a lot about it. The seniors knew about it because they were there.

"The younger kids didn't know anything about it. We let them know when we won what was going on, but I didn't want to put a lot of added pressure on them."

Sensor dominated the Green Wave for the win, tossing a three-hit shutout. She struck out a staggering 17 and walked only one.

"It was very well deserved," Sensor said. "We've all been working really hard to get better and make fewer mistakes, and we were finally able to hit the ball and get on base.

“I was able to play left field for the first two (games of the tournament), so I knew that was going to be my game.”

Bumbales has used several pitchers this season to ease Sensor into action.

“We started her out slow,” Bumbales said. “She had a couple injuries last year, so we wanted to build her up. The past few starts she’s been spinning the ball really well.”

After a while, a streak of that magnitude can weigh on teams. Sensor felt that was the case last season.

“There were a couple close calls,” Sensor said. “It was more us just dying out at the end of the game. Our energy let up at the end of the game. We played as hard as we could the whole time.”

The good vibes derived from the win over St. Edward have carried over.

In Elgin’s next game, April 22 against East Aurora, the Maroons took a 4-1 lead in the bottom of the fourth before the game was suspended by lightning. It will be resumed May 13.

Two days later, Elgin (2-14) earned a 10-6 win over Elmwood Park.

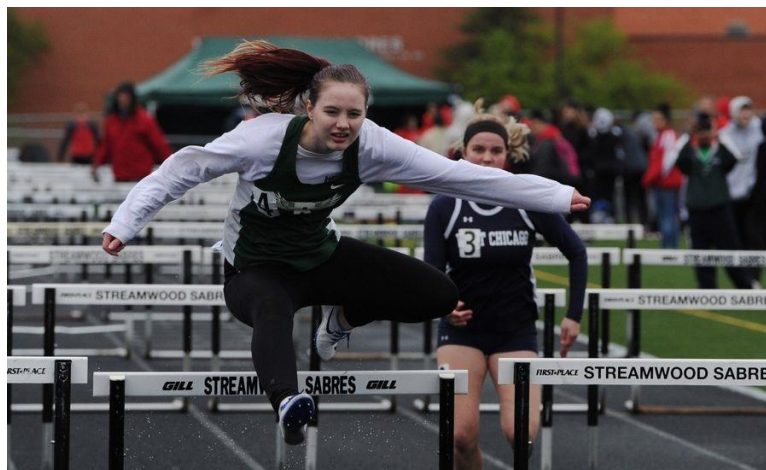
Once again, it was Sensor pitching the Maroons to victory by striking out 14.

“The confidence is skyrocketing,” Sensor said. “We’re able to just play our game, and I think that’s the best part about it. I believe we’ll have a few more wins.”

---The Daily Herald---05/03/2019

Girls Track and field: West Aurora runs away with Upstate Eight title

By Patrick Z. McGavin



The two West Aurora track stars used the Upstate Eight Conference championship meet as a platform for their versatility and athleticism in leading the Blackhawks to a dominant team performance at Streamwood Thursday night.

West Aurora won seven individual events and three relays in amassing 171 points to easily surpass runner-up Glenbard East (109 points) and **South Elgin** (108 points) for the conference title.

Miles ran uncontested in capturing wins in the 200 and 400 meters. The two-time defending Class 3A state champion in the 400-meters, Miles was eager to establish a confident and relaxed rhythm.

"I am not trying to set any records or anything," she said. "Last week was the first time I ran a sub-one minute 400, so I feel pretty good. The weather has not been that great.

"I am just trying to get a good time to see where I am going. I just want to go out and have a good time for the sectional."

Miles was not seriously threatened. Injuries have deprived her of winning multiple races at the state level the last two years. With the most important events of the year looming, Miles did not push herself.

"The times are going to decrease over time, and I am not worried," she said.

Upset at her second-place finish in the 100-meter hurdles, Spagnolo captured the 300-meter low hurdles, the long jump and ran a leg on the first place 1,600-meter relay.

Glenbard East junior Claire Biegalski upset Spagnola by running a 15.91 against the 16.33 put out by Spagnola. The sophomore specialist showed off her flexibility with the hurdles, the long jump title and the strong 400 leg.

"I wanted to come back after the 100 hurdles," Spagnola said. "In the lows, I think I did well considering how I was coming off that first race. I didn't really feel well I didn't think it was that great and I just wanted to redeem myself."

Spagnola reversed the outcome in the low hurdles with a strong 46.98 to beat Biegalski, who finished runner up with a 49.51.

In addition to Biegalski, high jumpers Emma Ludwig and Josie Andrews each went 4-11, with Ludwig declared the winner on the basis of fewer misses.

Freshman distance runner Naomi Ruff turned in a sensational performance to lead the Storm. She nearly pulled off the improbable triple after winning the 3,200 (11:18.86) and the 800 meters (2:24.99).

She led Bartlett sisters Jenna Buchanan and Camille Buchanan on the final lap of the 1,600 only for Jenna, a freshman, to overtake her down the stretch in winning with a time of 5:21.09 to edge her sister, Camille, a sophomore, who finished in 5:21.28.

Jenna and Camille Buchanan were second and third, respectively, in the 3,200 meters.

Ruff was third in 5:27.84 in the 1,600.

A former swimmer, Ruff is a relative newcomer to running. She started when she was in seventh grade. She is a quick learner, using her stride and kick to separate from the pack.

"I like to get out there and keep it fast and give everything I have going into the final 400 meters," she said. "It was tough in the 1,600 because I had those other two races. I tried to push through the final stretch.

"I prefer the long distances, like the 3,200 because there is more strategy."

---The Daily Herald---05/03/2019

Boys Track and field: Kaneland's taking momentum into postseason

By Mike Miazgo

Kaneland boys track and field coach Andy Drendel freely admits his squad did not "compete as well as we had planned" in its first foray last season in a Class 3A sectional.

As they say, that was then and this is now, and the Knights are flying high heading into Friday's Kane County Meet at West Aurora.

"This year there has been no looking back or 'what if we were in 2A' from any of the boys," Drendel continued. "These guys have been competing hard in practices and in meets all season and will be a lot of fun to watch these next four weeks."

Kaneland recently won its own 15-team Peterson Prep invitational and a week later was second at the Crystal Lake Central invite.

On the notables front, sophomore Porter Conroy hit 6-5 in the high jump at Peterson, while Austin Adams is running at a 1:59 clip in the 800. Daniel Occhipinti is down to 4:24 in the 1,600, while pole vaulters Ted Allen (a sophomore) and Nate Bermes (a junior) both cleared 13-2. Senior Drew Hahn has thrown the shot 50-11, while Drendel also is high on his 400 (43.0) and 800 (1:31.04) relay teams. Drendel also lauded senior leadership for helping push sophomore Isaiah Dallal to a 4:25 clocking in the 1,600.

Also, senior Chris Angelotti has been an unsung hero for the Knights, Drendel noted. He's a part of three sprint relays. "Chris was an alternate on our relays last year," Drendel explained. "This year, he has shown an immense amount of improvement in his speed and fitness."

Junior and track neophyte Max Gagne anchors the Kaneland 400 and 800 relays and Drendel said he also will be a cog on the 1,600 relay.

"This is Max's first year out for track," Drendel said. "He has bought into everything we are doing and though it is his first year, it's like he's always been here with the way he carries himself at practice and at meets. He practices and competes hard and I'm glad he'll be wearing our pinstripe shorts these next few weeks."

Drendel would like to see his team finish in the top five at Kane County.

"This is my favorite meet on our schedule," he said. "There is so much history and the competition is excellent."

Burlington Central update: Another team with its sights on major postseason success is Burlington Central, which recently won its own Rocket Relays and took fourth at the 13-team Crystal Lake Central invite.

Connor Wagner has been a force in the hurdles where he's gone 39.24 in the 300s and 14.97 in the 110s. Along those same lines, Adam Kries hit 1:58.9 in the 800, breaking the golden 2:00 mark.

Central's 1,600 relay team of Wagner, Kries, Tommy Zettl and Zac Schmidt posted a 3:26.27 recently, which is one of the top times in Class 2A. Jake Borman hit 49-11 in the shot.

"Connor Wagner is establishing himself as one of the better hurdlers in the state and Tommy Zettl is finally healthy and running great times in the 400 and 800," said longtime Central coach Mike Schmidt.

We'll have much more on Central's quest for continued conference and sectional success in next week's update.

Larkin update: Larkin recently placed third at the Burlington Central Rocket Relays and took fifth at the Vanderveer invite at Geneva.

Coach Nate Williams pointed out Jahari Stubbs currently is ranked in the Top 10 in Class 3A in both the 110 and 300 hurdles, while Isai Rios is tossing above 50 feet in the shot put. Larkin's 1,600 relay ran 3:30 at Lake Forest recently.

The Royals also have been boosted by the performance of Oliver Wah in the 100 and in the relays.

"I'm most excited about the potential of a couple of sprint relays and hoping to have more all-conference performances this year than last year (when Larkin had six)," Williams said.

Crystal Lake South update: The Gators were recently runners-up at Burlington Central's Rocket Relays. On the individual front, junior Dylan Law has been a key presence in the 110 hurdles where he ran a season-best 15.86 at the McHenry County invite.

Coach Nate Willhoit also has been pleased with the progress of sophomore Alex Picchi, as well as Matt Reall.

"Alex has stepped up nicely as our top distance runner," said Wilhoit. "Alex has competed consistently well this season, making a huge improvement from last year. Matt is discovering how versatile he is. It seems no matter what event he is put in he does well."

Dundee-Crown update: The Chargers put together a string of three strong invite finishes, logging seconds at Conant and Geneva and taking third at Crystal Lake Central.

At Crystal Lake Central, D-C's 400 relay team took first and broke the school record, and also won the event at Kaneland and Conant. The Chargers' 800 relay was first at Kaneland (1:30.54), Geneva and Conant. Jack Michalski took second in the high jump at Crystal Lake Central at 6-3, while Jason Miller won the 100 and 200 at Crystal Lake.

Michalski's 6-3 leap was a personal record and also equals the state-qualifying mark. He also PR'd in the 110 hurdles at Crystal Lake where he took second. Coach Matt D'Angelo feels Michalski has a chance to earn all-conference accolades in four events (high jump, triple jump and both hurdles).

Senior Dylan Becker has been the team's anchor on the 400 relay and the second leg of the 800 relay of late. He also was second in the 200 at Kaneland and won the long jump at 21-even at Crystal Lake.

"I've been excited by two things," D'Angelo began. "First is our resilience as our team has battled some adversity the last couple weeks and the kids have fought through it. Secondly, it has been refreshing to see how enthusiastic our frosh-soph guys are and how much improvement they have made in such a short time."

West Aurora update: The Blackhawks have enjoyed both team and individual riches of late. West Aurora was second at its own John Bell invite and took third at the Oswego-based Wilcox invite.

Moshe Rogers won the triple jump at Kaneland at 44-6. He's Top 10 right now in Class 3A in that event. Rogers also was second in the long jump at both Kaneland and Wilcox. He went 21-11 at Wilcox to establish a new meet benchmark.

Will Nicholas ran a PR of 2:01.44 in the 800. He was third in the event at Bell and won the Wilcox 800 crown.

Coach Cortney Lamb also is excited for the progress Jaehlen Merriweather and Seth Kunio have made this spring.

"Jaehlen has been a reliable scorer in the short springs and leads off our 4-by-100 relay," Lamb said. "Seth is only a freshman and has placed at the varsity level in both the 800 and 1,600. He will be a key component to our 4-by-800 relay."

Lamb also loves the team's balance.

"And our mix of varsity and underclassmen contributing in every meet," Lamb said. "We are able to score in a number of different events. I am excited to see what the championship part of the season brings."

Hampshire update: Coach Joe Watzlawick's Whip-Purs' squad has four invite finishes to be proud of. Hampshire won the Richmond Relays and logged a trifecta of runner-up showings at Leyden, Cary-Grove and Burlington Central.

Watzlawick is high on the 1,600 relay team of Jake Louis (or Collin Sylvain), Isai Morales, Jonah Varvara and Cameron Reedy.

"They have done very well and have won most meets," he said. "The 4-by-4 team has been doing great but there still is a lot of competition for spots on that team. Every meet kids are running PRs."

Marmion update: Coach Dan Thorpe provided a succinct update on the Cadets filled with names to keep an eye on heading deep into May. Indoor state-champion pole vaulter Andrew Saloga has gone 14-8 outside so far, while Keoni English has cracked 2:00 in the 800, posting a 1:59.28 at the Palatine Distance Night.

The Marmion quartet of Keegan Bennett, Jake Coffman, English and Anthony Zangler took eighth at Palatine in the distance medley relay (1,200-400-800-1,600).

Harvest Christian Academy update: The Lions are fresh off winning their third conference title in a row.

"Our boys collectively are doing well," said Harvest coach Steve Bland. "So far this year we have broken nine school records and I suspect another three are in jeopardy. We've also set three freshman records and another three are close to falling."

Bland lauded the efforts of senior Victor Croitoru and juniors Erik Richter and Sam Morris. "Victor is gaining the endurance needed to be a multi-event athlete at the state level," he said. "Erik has been gaining tactical race experience for the 800, his primary event. Sam is getting very strong in the 400 and 800."

Huntley update: The Red Raiders, picked by many area observers to win the FVC title, won their eighth McHenry County title in a row, while also placing first at Fox Lake Grant and taking third at a strong Minooka invite.

Junior Ian Geisler leads a gaggle of individual superlative mentions by coach Chris Maxedon. Geisler set a new school record in the 3,200 run with a 9:08.25 time at Palatine Distance. Senior Jadon Conroy ran a 4:17 in the 1,600 at Palatine, while junior Antonio Passarelli ran 10.88 in the 100 at Grant.

Senior Alex Pitrone is Huntley's only upperclassmen thrower, "and has set a good example for our younger throwers and has become much more consistent," Maxedon said.

Seniors Zach Tepper and Ronel Noll are getting healthy and have added to the team's sprint depth, Maxedon noted, while senior twin brothers Kevin and Kyle Adams have been bright spots in both hurdles races, "events they had not tried before this year," Maxedon pointed out.

St. Charles East update: The Saints were sixth at the recent Red Ribbon invite and took eighth at Red Grange. Coach Brad Kaplan noted East went 1-2 in the 3,200 run and 1-2 in the 800 at Red Ribbon, while Alek Crawford hit 6-4 in the high jump at Red Grange. He's finished no lower than second in the high jump in every meet except one.

Also of note, Charles Murphy has won the last two 800 titles at invites, while Aidan King won the 3,200 with a PR at Red Ribbon.

"Our whole distance squad has done an amazing job this season," said Kaplan.

Other seniors beyond Crawford who have stepped things up include Mitch Gansemer, Murphy, Bennett Melone and Dillon Gearhart.

"They have shown great leadership," said Kaplan.

Cary-Grove update: The Trojans were runners-up at the recent McHenry County meet where Jason Petko blasted a 180-8 in the discus to become the second-best discus thrower in program history.

"Jason is having a great season in the shot and disc," said Cary-Grove coach Layne Holter.

Maxum Caesar and Derek Warren both logged second-place distance finishes at county, while AJ Lewis also finished second at the county meet.

Holter calls Petko, Caesar, Warren and Lewis the glue of the team and great role models, while Eamon Gleason (high jump and triple jump), Shawn Atwood (long jump and sprints) and Zach Stordahl (throws) have been performing well recently.

St. Charles North update: Coach Kevin Harrington labels his North Stars team young and getting "better and better each meet," he said.

At the VanDeVeer meet, North won the frosh-soph title. Harrington pointed out the 400 and 800 relay teams currently are ahead of where those units were at one and two years ago. Both previous incarnations qualified for state.

Junior Ryan Arnold was third in the 1,600 at Red Ribbon, while sophomore Josh DiNatale has been scoring big points for North in the 100 and 200 at the bigger meets.

"We have several more guys who are on the verge of a breakthrough," said Harrington.

Streamwood update: Four Sabres have caught the eye of coach Dylan Lau in recent times. Emiliano Mendoza has been starring in the 1,600. "He's starting to put together more complete races," Lau said.

Lau noted Jose Banuelos is a new runner, "who with more experience will help the team a lot this year and in the future in the 800," he said.

Josh Morris has been a consistent presence in the 400, while Jorge Medrano continues to make progress in the discus for the Sabres.

Elgin update: The Maroons were runners-up at the West Chicago invite recently. Sophomore Noah Mack has gone 11.4 in the 100 and 22.8 in the 200 so far.

"Noah has been the fastest member of the sprint team," coach Anthony Mason said. "Noah is competing at a high level and doing everything for the team and for his coaches."

Sophomore Alex West has PR'd in the 400 at 52.19 and is getting closer to the state cut of 50. Sophomore Manny Lopez has gone as low as 4:39 in the 1,600, while sophomore Shannon Williams has gone over the 100-foot mark in the discus. Senior Eric Guo has been another bright spot in the throws.

"Alex has a great shot at state in the 400. He's a great competitor," said Mason. "Shannon is improving every meet in his discus throw."

Mason said team chemistry is through the roof heading into the home stretch.

"It's great seeing all the team support each other and cheer each other on in meets," he said. "As a sprint coach, I would focus mainly on my sprinters, but now being a head coach, it has opened me up to distance and throws and understanding the magnitude of the whole team working as one."

South Elgin update: The Storm won a pair of sprint relays at big-time events. South Elgin's Matt Jacobson, James Head, Jacob Todd and Davion Cherwin won the 800 at Red Grange, followed by Royce Robinson, Jacobson, Todd and Cherwin who won the 400 at Red Ribbon in 42.64.

"Jacob Todd is a strong leader and a past state qualifier in the 4-by-100 relay," coach Anthony LaRue pointed out. "Matt Jacobson is a senior leader and past state qualifier in the 4-by-100 relay."

LaRue also is excited about Ryan Harvey's contributions heading into the latter parts of May.

"Ryan is ready for any event from the 400 up to the 3,200 and is performing at the top levels for us," he said.