



# The Friar Runner

*A biannual newsletter about the Fenwick Girls' Running Program*

It is easy to look back on a season that ended with nine state qualifiers in six different events, a second place sectional finish, and five state medals with rose-tinted lenses.

However, like any great

journey, there are stories of ups and downs that make for that much sweeter of a finish:



A happy team photo after placing 2nd at the 2A sectional meet.

Senior **Margaret O'Brien** started the season with her mind set on being All-State in 2A. Although she earned accolades all season, setting a new indoor GCAC 3200 record, winning the conference 1600 both indoors and outdoors, and had PRs that placed her as the 3rd best distance runner in Fenwick history, we all remained focused on the original goal: a state medal. The sectional meet was a reminder that off days sometimes just happen, with O'Brien running a lackluster 3200 time despite winning by nearly 40 seconds. At State, Margaret took advantage of the opportunity and ran valiantly during a humid, sunny and hot race. She ran to her strengths, pushing the field that wanted a kickers' race, finishing with a 6th place State medal.

Junior **Claire Gatermann** put in a tremendous amount of time in the off season to build on her successful sophomore year of pole vaulting. Although she already broke the school record her sophomore year, she did not settle. She continued her record-setting ways all season. Much like O'Brien, Gatermann was a little off towards the end of the season. Although she cleared 10'9" in April, at the conference championship in May she could not clear beyond 9'6". Her composure showed at State, however, where she qualified for finals by clearing 11' for the first time. The highly competitive 2A for pole vaulting had Claire place 13th with that height. Along with the 10% growth in her clearance height for this

season, an intangible but clearly potent area of growth for her was her competitive poise. With one more year of high school competition left for her, she has an exciting journey ahead.

The 4x800 of juniors **Laura Durkin** and **Maggie Van Ermen**, sophomore **Marie O'Brien** and freshman **Maria Quinn** qualified for State with a 9:53, winning the sectional race. At State prelims, the team ran a disappointing 10:00.2 and nervously awaited to hear if they made it to finals. Once they did, after a sigh of relief, they worked to reset their mind on the next day. They made the most of finals running a great time of 9:42.8 to place 6th at state. With two rising seniors, a junior and a sophomore, there very well could be more fireworks from them in 2019. Like Gatermann and the older O'Brien, the 4x800 racers had a hiccup towards the end of the season, but just like the other down days above and the example this quad set, these things happen; all we can do is move forward not in fear of our past but with faith in our future.

Some of the best stories of the year provide sobering reminders of how quickly fortunes can change. On a cold, windy and wet day at the end of April, **Taylor Calcagno** pulled up with a hamstring tear on the anchor leg of a 4x100. The physical pain was evident as she was helped off the track, but the mental pain of loss after four solid years of commitment to the sport and the hopes of qualifying for state in the discuss were palpable. Taylor handled something so devastating so right. That evening, she went to prom enjoying her friends and classmates for one of the final times. Three weeks later after much rest, rehab and doctor consultation she threw the discuss at sectionals. She placed 4th, two spots short of State, but we could not be more proud of how she handled it all.

There are many other great tales from the year as well, such as **Mary Jacobs** surprising even herself with multiple 6:30 miles; **Emma Hackett** continuing the Hackett discuss legacy, placing 18th in state; watching **Ella Gatermann** jump to a new personal best because she was inspired by her sister's performance, or the incredible rainbow at sectionals.

Overall as a team Fenwick placed 29th at the 2A State meet in Charleston. They were fourth at indoor and outdoor conference and second at sectionals. The Friars were ranked as high as 9th in State rankings halfway through the season, but like any great adventure the journey is where all of the blessing lie. The challenging practices, nap-filled bus rides, unrelenting weather, a full team pool workout, and long meets together have created powerful memories. Stay tuned as the cross country team is gearing up for more of that in just a few weeks.

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### *Friar Commitment*

**Colleen Grogan** ran well in the winter prepping herself for the high school competitive season. Right before indoor conference however, the nagging injury from the 2017 season returned. Prudently, Colleen sat out for six weeks in the hopes that she would be able to race during the outdoor championship season. She did a few tune-up races in late April and early May and was able to

confidently get into the blocks at sectionals for the 300m hurdles. Lining up, she knew that it was her and two other runners that were in contention for two state-qualifying spots. The entire Fenwick contingent (fans, coaches and athletes) were trepidatiously watching in silence. We all knew her story, felt her heartache, and yearned for her to earn a State spot. As she cleared the 5th hurdle at the start of the home straight, it became clear that she was going to make it. The nervous, silent fans erupted in encouragement for her as she finished in second earning a trip to State.

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