

Second in state: Alton girls' track team celebrated

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
May 28 2016 2:18 PM



GODFREY - "To win state once is outstanding, to do it twice is unbelievable, and to do it three times is stupendous," Alton girls' track coach, **Terry Mitchell** said.

Outstanding Alton athlete **LaJarvia Brown** achieved these honors for her record-breaking triple jump performance at the girls' track state finals in **Charleston, Illinois**, last weekend. Brown, and three other young athletes were honored Saturday morning with a special ceremony in the school auditorium. Brown was joined on stage by fellow track athletes, **Katie Mans**, **Chayvon Buckingham** and **Jewel Wagner**. All four young women competed well at the state finals.

"That's the key up there," Mitchell said. "You have to have quality athletes."

Alton High School placed second in the state with a score of 37 points. **Lincoln Way East High School** in the Chicagoland area placed first with a score of 80 points. Mitchell said that school has placed first for the last four years.

To contribute to that score, Brown placed first in the long jump event, with a state-record-breaking 42 feet. measurement. Coach Mitchell said the official required the third of her jumps to be measured several times due to the unbelievable figure. Brown's former record was 41 feet, 9 inches, which she set at the **Junior Olympics** in Colombia, South America.

Brown also placed first in the 100-meter high hurdles, second in the long jump and third in 300-meter low hurdles. Mans placed seventh in the high jump. Buckingham finished 12th in shot-put, and Wagner placed 14th in shot-put.

Mitchell said the performance of his girls' team this year has not been matched since he started coaching in Alton 42 years ago, in 1974. He stressed the importance this showing has on the community, and gave one of the medals he attained at the meet to **Alton Mayor Brant Walker** to bestow upon the city. Walker also read a proclamation at the event, declaring May 28, 2016 to be **Alton High School Girls' Track Day** in Alton.

"To come in second in the State of Illinois is almost unheard of," Walker said. "What you did for your school and community uplifts the entire River Bend area."



That sentiment was shared by **Alton High School Principal Dr. Russel Teppen**. He referred to their achievements as an "outstanding representation" for the Alton area.

Alton Athletic Director Jeff Alderman said he would be excited to replace the old record plaques in the school with several new ones set this season. Brown broke several of the records, including many of her own. Mans broke a school high jump record, and Wagner broke a shot-put record with a throw of more than 41 feet.

Mitchell said he was excited for the future of the Alton girls' track team. Brown, Wagner and Buckingham graduated Friday night, but Mans is a sophomore. The Alton Middle School girls' track team placed eighth in state this year, which gives Mitchell some hope he can repeat this season's successes in the future.