

Epenesa, Tincher, Edwardsville boys roll to impressive first win in Southwestern Illinois Relays

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Edwardsville's boys track team couldn't have asked for much more than the performances they got at Friday's first major meet of the outdoor track and field season.

The Tigers got 1-2 finishes in the shot put and discus throw from A.J. Epenesa and Bruce Wachowski to highlight their first-place finish at the Southwestern Illinois Relays at Edwardsville's Winston Brown Track and Field Complex; the Tigers scored 144 points to easily outdistance St. Louis County school Rockwood Summit's 103 points. O'Fallon was third with 91 points, Belleville East fourth with 68 points and Collinsville rounded out the top five with 66 points. Alton finished sixth with 61 points and Granite City took eighth with 24 points.

“I'm pleased,” said Tiger coach Chad Lakatos. “Obviously, we still have work to do, but the field started off well; A.J. - his first meet, only practiced twice this week (after joining the team following the end of the Tiger basketball season) and had a good throw

(going 190 feet on his first competitive throw of the season in the discus throw). Bruce Wachowski had a great throw as well (taking second at 165-8) in both shot and disc.

“(DeVonte’) Tincher jumped well in the long jump and went 22-11, so we did well in that area. Blake Neville had a PR – he went 13-8 – so our field events, we’re strong in. Then we came on to the track and had some good things happen; Kendall (Abdur-Rahman) ran well in the 100 and so did Tincher (finishing second in the 100 meters); our 4x200 (relay) ran well. It was good to get outdoors, that’s the bottom line.”

Epenesa’s 190 on his first throw of the year the senior just picking up where he left off from 2016, Lakatos felt. “He’s kind of picking up where he left off and he’ll continue to get better throughout the year,” Lakatos said.

Epenesa and Wachowski’s 1-2 performance in the shot put were also good; Epenesa had a toss of 53-1 and Wachowski was right behind at 51-5; the Redbirds’ Kalen Samuelton finished third behind the duo in both events with a PR of 150-9 in the discus and a 47-5.5 in the shot put.

Edwardsville’s Roland Prenzler and Zach Walters finished 3-4 in the 1,600 meters, Prenzler turning in a time of 4:33.26 and Walters a 4:38.87. Other Tiger highlights included a first in the 440 hurdle shuttle in a time of 1:09.66 and a first in the pole vault from Blake Neville, clearing 13-8, with Jack Townsend taking second in the triple jump in 41-8, followed by Rodney Smith finishing third in 40-9 and a second in the distance medley relay in a time of 11:15.28.



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)