



Hard work, conditioning pays for Neville this season in pole vault

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville pole vaulter Blake Neville seems on a roll as the Tigers boys track and field team heads into the final leg of its season with conference, sectional and state competition ahead.

Neville won the Madison County pole vault championship this week, clearing 14-0.

The Tigers' pole vaulter narrowly missed 14-6 in the Belleville West Relays and has cleared 14-1 already this season. Neville's hopes are to keep climbing to higher heights.

Neville has set some high goals for the remainder of the season and said he would like to get to 15-feet and his ultimate hope is to clear the bar at 15-6.

"It seemed last year we worked on a lot of things, but I couldn't just get everything together right at the same time," he said. "We have been putting in a lot of work this year and everything is going together. We have been doing a lot of drills to get the vaults together."

Neville said he worked hard in the off season and it has paid off. He is also a member of the Tigers' football team, so the two sports do pair well together, he said.

"Blake had a good winter conditioning," Edwardsville head boys track and field coach Chad Lakatos said. "He worked extensively on his speed and strength in football and it has helped him. We will have to make sure he has the right poles. That is something we will have to feel out as he goes higher."

Lakatos is excited for Neville and his entire team's conclusion of the season. He said Neville is drastically improved and should be competitive throughout the remainder of the season.