

Lucas Ross is a senior leader on this year's JCHS track and field squad, sets goals high

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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GRANITE CITY – On a team in any sport, whether it's high school or college, it's often the seniors who provide leadership and set examples for the younger members of the team.

And it's very much the case of Lucas Ross, a senior runner for Jersey. He, along with hurdler Tom Rexing, both set the bar for the other Panthers to follow.

Even though Ross competed in one event at Friday's Granite City Invitational meet at Memorial Stadium, the 4x400 meter relay, he gave his all for his team.

“It was the only one I had today,” Ross said shortly after competing in the race, “and it was hard to get through, but I really felt I did a good job going through. I'm one of the bigger guys on our team, so I really felt like it's my job on the team to really put the wind on my back and go through it for them.”

Whether it's practice or meets, Ross helps the younger members of the team with encouragement and advice on how to prepare. It's all part of the senior leadership.

“I always try to give the other kids, give them the best advice I can,” Ross said. “I try to set a positive example, work ethic during practice, never one to scratch an event. Some kids, 'I'm tired. I don't want to run this event.' You put your head down. I say 'I promise you that if you run that race, you'll feel a heck of a lot better when you get done than you would have if you hadn't run it.' “

And when asked about his and the team's performances at the meet, Ross put the Panthers first.

“To be honest with you, we were really trying to come as a team,” Ross said, “get a couple of top-eight performances. We exceeded our expectations, really. We saw teams out here, and what our times were going into this. It's been a bit of a downturn so far, because I think of the weather, how bad it's been able to run. But we really came together today as a team. The relays did phenomenal – 4x800, 4x100, 4x200, 4x400 all exceeded expectations by far.”

Ross has been coming off a leg injury and has worked hard to overcome the injury and will continue to do so going into the final stretch of the season coming soon.

“I'm coming off a really bad leg injury,” Ross said, “so right now, I'm just trying to get back into it. And I'm hoping and praying, practicing hard every day, trying, try to get back for conference, sectionals, be hitting times I was last year.”

And true to form, Ross gave a shout out to an injured teammate who couldn't compete.

“A big shout out to my teammates, and my teammate Kevin Hall,” Ross said. “He pulled up with a hamstring injury. We would have done a heck of a lot better today if he was here. Big shout out to him; he can't be with us today, but hope he gets better.”

Senior leadership, being a great teammate, a solid work ethic – Lucas Ross has it in abundance. And he'll be one of the reasons why Jersey's track team will enjoy success during the rest of the 2018 season.