

ONE OF NATION'S BEST: Roxana discus thrower Jordan Hawkins is at top of high school ranks

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Roxana's Jordan Hawkins has emerged this season as one of the nation's top discus throwers.

Hawkins, a senior who will be heading to Iowa next year, has one of the nation's top throws this season in the event, uncorking a toss of 194-5 during the recent Wood River Relays meet.

Hawkins took part in Saturday's Winston Brown Invitational meet in Edwardsville won edged Quincy's Jordan Johnson by an inch, Hawkins with a throw of 184-5 to Johnson's 184-4; both are among the state's top throwers this season.

“The past two days – we had a meet (in Litchfield) yesterday and I was a little tight from that,” Hawkins said following Saturday's performance. “Getting out here early in the morning after a heavy training week, I'm pretty pleased with a 184, especially the past week throwing a 194; I'm feeling really good.

“I'll take it, especially with Johnson being the No. 2 thrower in the country – that throw's a big confidence booster. I think there's a lot more in the tank.”

Hawkins represented the Shells in last year's IHSA Class 2A state track meet in Charleston, finishing fourth in last year's discus throw with a 172-7 effort, after a 164-2 toss that gave him fourth in the 2016 state meet; his aim this year is to get back to O'Brien Field on the Eastern Illinois campus and close out his high school career with a state title in the event.

“The state championship is the goal, but like I said back in November when I signed (with Iowa), hard work is the goal, so I think being the hardest worker can get me where I want; I can see glimpses of it now (the work Hawkins has put in).”

Hawkins opened the season with tosses in the 170s - “that was a good mark to start the year off with,” he said. “We're still hitting training pretty hard, so that's going to slump in a week – I feel very, very good with my performances.”

The cold, rainy spring weather hasn't been the best for both training and meets, Hawkins said. “I'm a thrower; I throw much, much better in the heat because I'm more flexible – I've gotta have heat to loosen up my muscles and everything.

“It's been an awkward spring to have a senior year of track, but I'm taking it just meet by meet. It's senior year, I'm signed, I don't have to worry about impressing any universities – I can just have fun with my senior year.

“The support I get around (Roxana High) and the community's just outstanding. I love it.”

The Shells will be in today's Madison County Championship small-school meet at Civic Memorial in Bethalto.