



Tigers' Prenzler sets personal, meet record at Collinsville Invitational

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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COLLINSVILLE – It was a pretty big day for Edwardsville distance runner Roland Prenzler at the Collinsville Invitational track meet recently at Kahok Stadium.

Prenzler, a junior, set both a personal best as well as a meet record in winning the 3,200-meter run, with a time of 9:25.77. It helped set the tone for the Tigers as they ended up winning the meet with a total of 70.5 points.

"Yeah, it was a real exciting day," Prenzler said in a post-meet interview. "And come in, I wasn't feeling any pressure, just trying to go out there and have some fun. My coach told me 'Roland, just try to take it out in the 440, and just see where you can go from there.' Guess we took the meet record."

For Prenzler to do both on the same run, it's quite the feeling, indeed.

"Yeah, all the guys who've set meet records, I've seen them to go on to do pretty big things," Prenzler said, "and being able to do that myself is quite an accomplishment. I know that this meet record for 32 wasn't as fast before as some of the other records, but it is what it is nonetheless, so I'm still excited."

Prenzler thinks that he and his teammates are starting to hit its peak at exactly the right time, with the final meets of the season coming up.

"I think that's good to be getting (personal records) this late in the season," Prenzler said, "seeing that you can progress the right way. Of course, it was less than three seconds off what I ran back in March up at Prep Top Times in Normal. But, yeah, just a string of some bad races throughout last month. But, yeah, just finally being able to kick in gear and just tell yourself 'You know what? There's nothing to lose at this point.' I don't have the full season ahead of me, just a few more races, just this, conference and sectionals. And maybe state, you know, if we make it.

"And you know, if you get under that state time," Prenzler continued, "that tells you that it doesn't matter where I place in sectionals, I just got to get under the time and make it. And hopefully, the fast heat."

Prenzler does like his chances, but knows that the competition ahead won't be easy.

"Personally, I've been looking at the sectional rankings that they have online," Prenzler said, "and I was ranked fourth for awhile outdoors; indoors I was ranked first, I think, in our sectional. But then, it's outdoors what matters, so I was among four guys or three guys at 9:39, so that was kind of a slower race. And Andrew (O'Keefe of Granite City)

was at 9:30. So I think this time should put me atop the sectionals, and then, I don't know what we'll do about the 1,600. That should be interesting as well.

“I know that in the 1,600, you've got the talents of Granite City's Andrew O'Keefe, and Jack Pifer (his Edwardsville teammate), Tyler Dunn (of Normal West), possibly Franky (Romano, another teammate). I don't know if Coach (Chad Lakatos) is going to put him in the 4x(400) or the 1,600. Regardless, you should be really good to go for those.”

And Prenzler also gave credit to others who have helped him along his journey.

“Just all the glory to God,” Prenzler said. “I thank my parents and all my mentors for helping me believe in myself. Just tell myself that when I don't think about a race, and I just worry about the little things, like just hitting the lap paces and coming through the mile at the right time, you can put a whole race together, and achieve something people will see and congratulate you for.”

And you can expect Roland Prenzler to achieve his goals and become a key part of Edwardsville's post season success.