

Tigers' Brooks takes sixth in discus throw, aiming higher for 2019

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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CHARLESTON – Edwardsville's Amari Brooks capped off his junior track season with a sixth-place finish in Saturday's discus throw final of the IHSA Class 3A Boys Track and Field Championship at Eastern Illinois' O'Brien Field.

Brooks, who won his flight of the event in Friday's qualifying session with a toss of 165-5, had a throw of 165-5 to finish sixth in Saturday's final, which was won by Quincy's Jordan Johnson with a mark of 196-9.

“I'm really happy about it,” Brooks said following the medal ceremony Saturday afternoon. “At first, it was a surprise because I was seeded 12th (for the final), but I moved up to sixth place, so I was really happy about it.”

It was Brooks' first time at the state meet; the experience of the meet was a good one for him, he felt. “It was a really good experience,” Brooks, a junior, said. “I PRed (personal record) in both the shot and disc (Brooks had a put of 54-5.5 in Friday's qualifying, just missing out on reaching the final).”

When asked how he would rate the experience of the meet, Brooks said “it was a 15 out of 10; it was amazing. I loved it; it pushes you, and I feel like everyone needs that push and that's what you get at state.

“You have everyone from various regions and they're extremely good – you don't have to necessarily be better than your region, you have to be better than all the regions in Illinois.”

As for next season, Brooks is aiming not only to get back to Charleston, he's set some goals for the season. “Next year, I want to throw a 60 in the shot put and a 180 in the discus,” Brooks said. “It was a pretty good season; I had a lot of PRs, a lot of a lot of recognition now that I'm on top.

“A.J. (Epenesa) passed the torch on to me (following his graduation last year), so I've got to carry it out.”