

Freshman Truax Leads Pack, Qualifies In 300-Meter Hurdles, East Side Puts Three Relay Teams Through, Brown Qualifies In 2A Prelims

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CHARLESTON - Freshman sensation Gina Truax of East Alton-Wood River will race in the 300-meter hurdle finals at the IHSA Class 2A State Girls Track and Field Meet after an extraordinary prelims performance Friday at Eastern Illinois University's O'Brien Stadium.

East Alton-Wood River head girls track and field coach Russ Colona said he was really proud of Gina's efforts and she has such a bright future ahead.

"It is a fantastic way to finish the season," Truax said from Charleston, who was overjoyed to make the 300-meter finals as only a freshman. Coach Colona said Truax has so much energy and enthusiasm and is a joy to coach.

Kemora Hayes qualified for the finals in three events for Cahokia, while Janiyah Brown of East S. Louis qualified in both the long jump and triple jump at the IHSA Class 2A girls' track and field preliminaries.

East St. Louis put three of its relay teams through to the finals and Triad's Makenna Witham will be in the high jump finals.

In the 100 meters, the Comanches' Kayda Austin was the leading qualifier with a time of 11.83 seconds and also led the 200-meter qualifiers at 24.20 seconds, while Hayes went through at 24.99 seconds. East St. Louis' Sydney Jones had a time of 26.21 seconds, but did not advance. There were no local qualifiers in either the 400 meters, 800 meters or 1,600 meters, with Peyton Frey of Highland having the best local time in the 800 of 2:27.45, while Hannah Meiser of Civic Memorial had a time in the 1,600 of 5:24.58 and Triad's Kennedy Bowman had a time of 5:34.67.

In the hurdles races, Hayes went through fourth in the 100 meters at 14.82 seconds, while Truax qualified eighth in the 300 meters at 46.76 seconds. In the relay qualifying, Cahokia qualified fourth in the 4x100 meters at 48.85 seconds, while the Flyers picked up the ninth and final spot at 49.40 seconds and claimed the second spot in the 4x200 meters at 1:43.46, The Flyers also went through in sixth in the 4x400 meters at 4:04.68, while Triad had a time of 10:21.02 in the 4x800 meters, but did not advance.

In the field events, there were no local qualifiers in the shot put, with Tenesa Ferrell of Cahokia having a throw of 9.94 meters and Triad's Abby Kestering right behind at 9.75 meters. Ferrell did qualify in the discus throw, having a toss of 32.33 meters to claim the ninth and final spot, while Witham cleared 1.58 meters to qualify seventh in the high jump. There were no local qualifiers in the pole vault, with CM's Kaylee Shields going over at 2.82 meters, but failed to advance. In the long jump, Hayes qualified second with

a leap of 5.44 meters and Brown was eighth at 5.22 meters, while Brown qualified seventh in the triple jump at 10.92 meters.

The finals in all events will take place on Saturday, along with the Class 1A and 3A finals.