

Kids Fitness Challenge registration under way for Massachusetts students

By Anonymous
May 05, 2010

The Massachusetts Amateur Sports Foundation has opened registration for the 2010 spring edition of the Kids Fitness Challenge. to be held June 1-4.

Cash grants will be awarded to selected participating schools.

In November, more 22,000 students from schools across Massachusetts took part in the fall Kids Fitness Challenge. Since its beginning in 2006, hundreds of schools and nearly 100,000 elementary and middle school kids from Provincetown to Williamstown have participated in the program.

The program is presented by the Bay State Games, with financial support from the Boston Bruins Foundation, is a free program for elementary and middle school students. Students engage in a 30 minutes of physical activity from June 1-4.

Schools can also use an existing program or event, such as a field day. Following the event, a teacher or principal needs only to contact the Bay State Games office to report that the Challenge has been completed, and the school will be entered into a drawing to win one of four \$500 grants for health and physical education programs.

To register online, to receive a brochure or for more general information about the Kids Fitness Challenge, please visit baystategames.org, call the Bay State Games office at 781-932-6555 or e-mail Peter Cohenno at peter@baystategames.org.



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR THE SPRING EDITION OF THE KIDS FITNESS CHALLENGE

Sign up and take part to win \$500 for your school's health and physical education departments

The Massachusetts Amateur Sports Foundation has opened registration for the 2010 spring edition of the Kids Fitness Challenge held June 1-4. Principals, physical education and health teachers at elementary and middle schools across the commonwealth are encouraged to sign up to take part in the Challenge as valuable cash grants will be awarded to selected participating schools.

"We understand the obstacles that physical education and health departments face today as a result of budget limitations and cutbacks," said Peter Cohenno, program director. "While spreading the message of good health and the positive benefits of physical activities remains the focus of the Kids Fitness Challenge, the subsequent grants are an added benefit that can go a long way to enhance the athletic experiences of the students at the winning schools."

In November, in excess of 22,000 kids from schools across Massachusetts took part in the fall edition of the Kids Fitness Challenge. Since its inception in the fall of 2006, hundreds of schools and nearly 100,000 elementary and middle school kids from Provincetown to Williamstown have participated in the program, making it a true state-wide event with more than \$12,000 in grants having been distributed.

The Kids Fitness Challenge, presented by the Bay State Games with contributing funds from the Boston Bruins Foundation, is a free program designed exclusively for Massachusetts elementary and middle school students. Participating schools and students engage in a 30 minute segment of physical activity from June 1-4. Schools can also use an existing program or event, such as a field day, that is scheduled to be held in the weeks preceding or proceeding the dates of the Challenge. The only constraints are that the students must be aware that they are participating in the Kids Fitness Challenge, must meet the 30 minute activity requirement, and have 100 percent student participation. Following the event, a teacher or principal needs only to contact the Bay State Games office to report that the Challenge has been completed, and the school will then be entered into a drawing to win one of four \$500 grants. The grant is awarded to the winning school to support health and physical education programs.

To register online, to receive a brochure or for more general information about the Kids Fitness Challenge, please visit baystategames.org, call the Bay State Games office at (781) 932-6555 or e-mail Peter Cohenno at peter@baystategames.org.



Providence bound Drury's Andrews will run for Providence next year

**By Matthew Sprague, Berkshire Eagle Staff
Friday May 7, 2010**

NORTH ADAMS -- Drury's top runner will go from Berkshire County to the Big East Conference.

Nik Andrews will run for Providence's track and field team next year. He confirmed at April's Berkshire Relays that his deposit has been sent to the school.

Andrews won't have a scholarship, but will be a part of the Providence roster. He chose the school from a list of five to six schools that were "seriously recruiting" him, as well as about 20 more that contacted him.

"I liked pretty much everything about it," Andrews said Wednesday. "It's small, but still has great Division I and Big East athletics. A good sense of community, too. Everything I want in a school."

Providence assistant coach Stephen Walsh, who recruited Andrews, said the Drury senior will start his career for the Friars in the 400 meters -- working his way up to adding the 800.

"He's definitely going to be someone who is a good addition to the team next year," Walsh said. "We'll have a couple coming in next year. We've got a good group of 400 and 800 runners right now. We're looking forward to adding Nik to the roster and improving on that group."

Andrews is currently on this year's Eagle Track and Field Honor Roll in three events -- the 200 meters (22.8 seconds), the 400 (50.6) and the triple jump (37-5). He ran the fastest 200 and 400 in the county last year.

Andrews was also one of only two Berkshire County boys to qualify for the 2009 MIAA All-State Track and Field Outdoor Championships in Fitchburg. Running the 400, Andrews finished sixth in 50.15 seconds.

He also competed in the Bay State Summer Games last summer, defending his 400-meter championship. Andrews has been named to three separate All-Eagle teams (basketball, soccer and track and field) in the last year.

For the last week, Drury athletic director John Franzoni has been trying to think of the last Blue Devil to play an NCAA Division I sport.

"The last one I can think of is Kevin Chenail, who was drafted and played baseball for Notre Dame," Franzoni said.

The AD added that he believes Chenail graduated from Drury in 1984.

Andrews' success doesn't surprise Franzoni. The AD lauded the senior's preparation on the fields of play and the classroom.

"Whatever he does, he's preparing himself to be the best," Franzoni said. "He's a good student. He's a good leader in school.

"Track's not exactly a sport you work at before you get to high school. He's fairly new, but he's such a hard worker that to get to New England's is a tremendous accomplishment."

Andrews' goals for the rest of the season seem rather easy for an athlete of his stature to accomplish.

"I want to keep getting my times down, staying in shape for a good summer of training," he said, "so I can go right into Providence and [be in] good shape to compete there."



Freeman may be BU-bound Newburyport hockey standout being recruited by Terriers

**By Dan Guttenplan Sports Editor
May 28, 2010**

NEWBURYPORT — Newburyport senior Derek Freeman received a phone call from Boston University assistant hockey coach Mike Davis on the day after the Clippers fell to Canton in the Division 2 state championship game at the TD Garden.

Davis' message: "I saw everything."

That doesn't appear to be bad news for Freeman, who is currently in the process of being courted by coaches from one of the top Division 1 college hockey programs in the nation. Davis has invited Freeman to the Boston University campus in three weeks for an official visit. He has not specified whether BU head coach Jack Parker will also attend the meeting. Parker has won more than 700 games as BU's hockey coach — more than any other Division 1 hockey coach at one school — including two NCAA Division 1 titles, a record 17 Beanpots, five Hockey East titles and four ECAC titles.

"I've been talking to them for the past four months," Freeman said yesterday. "They haven't said anything about a scholarship or anything like that. They just said they like how I've been playing, and they've been watching."

Freeman initially appeared on the BU coaching staff's radar when he attended the Boston University Showcase in August. Davis told Freeman that at least one representative from the hockey team's staff attended each of Newburyport's five tournament games.

Freeman gave a strong representation of himself in those games, tallying a total of eight goals and 10 points. In a 3-2 loss to Canton at the Garden, Freeman notched his fourth two-goal effort in a span of five tourney games.

Freeman finished his high school career ranked 12th in Newburyport program history with 116 points. The Clippers posted a cumulative record of 36-9-6 during his junior and senior seasons and won the lone state championship in program history in 2009. That year, Freeman scored the game-winning goal against Canton in overtime of the state championship game.

"I have never had a kid who worked any harder than Derek," Newburyport coach Paul Yameen said. "The physical aspect of the game, he's there right now. He's a big, strong skater. He's the prototypical BU player — big, strong, athletic and a great skater. If you've watched BU over the last four or five years, that's the type of kid they put out."

Freeman, who also played football at Newburyport, has been told by BU coaches that, at 6-foot-3 and 215 pounds, he already has the size and speed for Division 1 hockey. They have identified his stick-handling and shot as potential areas of improvement.

The BU coaching staff appears content with providing Freeman time to improve those facets of his game before welcoming him into the program. Davis recently arranged a tryout for Freeman with the Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Rough Riders in the United States Hockey League, which is considered to be the top junior hockey league in the country. The tryout is scheduled for June 3 to 6, which is graduation weekend for Newburyport seniors, so Freeman will likely decline the invitation. Davis has committed to securing two other tryouts with USHL teams.

Freeman, who won't turn 18 until July 7, believes the BU coaches would prefer he play one or two seasons of junior hockey before making the leap to Division 1.

"I'm really excited," Freeman said. "This will be a whole new opportunity to play with kids out West. I'm only 17, and college coaches seem to like 19- and 20-year-old freshmen."

The Newburyport hockey program appears to be disproving the widely accepted theory that it is impossible for players from public school teams to receive enough attention from Division 1 recruiters to earn invitations to play at the highest collegiate level. Many in the hockey community feel that the only paths for Division prospects at public schools is either transferring to a private school or playing junior hockey.

Newburyport alumnus Derek McCoy (Class of 2008), who played four years for the Clippers, committed to playing hockey at UMass Lowell in January. Following his graduation, he played in the Empire Hockey League and Eastern Junior Hockey League for two years. Freeman could be the second in recent memory to play four years at Newburyport before eventually playing Division 1 college hockey.

"Over the past four years, more people are coming out to watch us as far as scouts," Yameen said. "When you do as well as we have, that's going to happen."

In addition to the BU Showcase, Freeman also played in the Bay State Games last summer. Yameen feels those offseason tournaments added to Freeman's ability to showcase his skills.

"There are plenty of opportunities to get looked at," Yameen said. "Derek had plenty of exposure in his four years here. Some people think that a Division 2 public school player can't get the exposure he needs. I disagree, but they're entitled to their opinions."

Freeman will graduate with a 3.3 GPA. He captained the football and hockey teams as a senior.

"He's an outstanding student and a well-rounded kid," Yameen said. "He's active in a lot of other things besides sports. The top programs in the nation want well-rounded kids. He's worked hard to put himself in this situation. He'll do fine coming out of Newburyport."



Berkshire County strong in 400 meters

Two boys and one girl from the Berkshires could run themselves to titles.

**By Matthew Sprague, Berkshire Eagle Staff
Saturday May 29, 2010**

Nik Andrews could easily run another event or two in today's MIAA Western Mass. individual track and field meet.

The Drury senior, headed for Providence in the fall, has the county's fastest times in the 100 meters and the 200. When he steps on the track at Westfield State College today, though, Andrews will only run the event he cares about the most.

"The 400 is my race," he said Friday. "I've been running that since sophomore year. I've been able to cut my time down since last year and I'm sticking with that race."

Taconic's Harmony Edwards-Persip has high hopes in the girls' 400 in today's meet, which begins at 9:30 a.m.

Andrews' recent history suggests that the 400 is the event to choose.

He was sixth in the 2009 MIAA All-State Track and Field Outdoor Championships in Fitchburg, qualifying for the New England meet. He's the two-time defending Bay State Games champion in the 400.

After finishing second in the event in last year's meet, Andrews expects nothing less than a championship this time around -- and he's pretty sure he can get it by improving his personal-best time of 49.73 seconds.

"Adrenaline-wise, I'll be ready for it," he said. "I've got to give it my all for that 400 meters. I could use [the time] for state seeding if I can make it that far."

As it turns out, one county runner has a faster seed time than Andrews -- Monument Mountain's Devin Lamke, at 45.44 seconds. Lamke is one of

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three Berkshire boys with top seeds, joining Pittsfield discus thrower Mickey Dayton (142 feet, 9 inches) and Lenox hurdler Nate Bruno (56.04 in the 400 hurdles).

Bruno will run the hurdle event and the first leg of the Millionaires' 1,600 relay today. He's taken a more scientific approach to his running this season, counting his steps between each hurdle instead of just running.

He'll take 15 steps between each of the first three hurdles, then add a step between hurdles from there.

"The second point, you start to get tired," Bruno said. "You start to lose the adrenaline, which makes it impossible to do 15 steps."

Other hopes for high boys' finishes include Hoosac Valley's Andrew Harmon in the mile (third seed); Mount Greylock's Tyler Grees in the high jump (third seed) and St. Joseph's Mason Durant in the shot put (fourth seed).

Girls

Taconic coach Joe Racicot hasn't seen Edwards-Persip run this hard all season.

The sophomore is likely the county's best hope for a Western Mass. title in the 400. She's seeded third at 59.94 seconds, but has run as fast as 59.76 in the county this season. Racicot expects her to be even faster today.

"Harmony has worked harder the last two weeks than she's ever worked in her life," he said. "I think we're going to see some great results."

"The high jump has been secondary, because we've really been focusing on her fitness for the 400. There's some good times out there. She's run a 59, but I think she can go high 57s and definitely 58, no problem."

Edwards-Persip is also seeded third in the high jump with a leap of 5-2 -- another mark Racicot expects she'll outdo today.

Taconic has two other three seeds -- Chandler Ortega in the mile and the 1,600 relay.

Ortega is returning from a left knee injury, originally suffered against Wahconah, that flared up in the Braves' regular season-ending duel against Pittsfield. Racicot is keeping his fingers crossed that she's healthy enough to run today.

"Chandler's had a great week," the coach said. "We've had a good presence at practice, and she's worked out real well. She's a thoroughbred, and I think she's going to bounce back."

Other top-five seeds from county girls include: Lenox's Josie Marshall, fifth in the 800; Taconic's Bailey Robinson, fifth in the 100 hurdles; Lenox's 1,600 relay; Monument Mountain's 3,200 relay; and Pittsfield's Chelsea Hunt in the discus.



Globe West Sports Notebook
Arra's baseballers win league title

By Marvin Pave
May 30, 2010

Under the direction of Needham native Ray Arra, and helped by the efforts of several area players, the Westfield State College baseball team finished 30-11 overall this spring, won the Massachusetts State College Athletic Association regular season title with a 12-2 record, and received an at-large bid to the NCAA Division 3 tournament.

Among the position players, slick-fielding junior second baseman Pete Grillo of Shrewsbury batted .333 and was named to the MASCAC first team, while fleet-footed senior outfielder Mike Trachtenberg of Newton hit .281.

"Pete really matured this year and we're really looking forward to his perhaps being a captain next season," said Arra, a 1959 graduate of Needham High, where he played three sports.

Arra is a member of the Westfield State College and Massachusetts Baseball Coaches halls of fame, and he has coached the West team to three unbeaten performances in the Bay State Games.

As for the Newton South grad, Arra said, "Mike is the best centerfielder I've seen. He caught just about everything and I'd estimate he won a dozen games for us over his career with some great fielding plays."

The pitching staff for the Owls included senior cocaptain Jesse Vermeersch of Marlborough (Hudson Catholic), who was 6-2 in 11 games, nine as a starter, and had 32 strikeouts in 47.1 innings and a 2.85 earned run average; senior reliever Phil Towne of Franklin, who was 1-0 in 16 games with a 3.86 ERA and 23 Ks in 28 innings; freshman Bret Siflinger of Framingham, who led the staff with 50.2 innings, went 3-0 as a starter and reliever, and compiled a 4.26 ERA; and freshman Connor Buckley of Acton, 1-1 in six appearances, three as a starter.

"Jesse got better and stronger and had three good pitches. Phil was our closer and set a school record with eight saves and was one of the top relievers in the nation, and Bret had an outstanding season and was named our Freshman of the Year. We project Bret and Connor as a starters for next year," added Arra.

Junior Will Garner of Marlborough (Hudson Catholic), who played in nine games as a designated hitter and first baseman, missed the second half of the season because of injury.