



THE RUNNING WARRIOR



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From the Editor – The track & field season has entered the championship phase and is almost over. Many notable marks and school records have already been set.

Now that the French drain on the west side of the track has been installed and the track has been patched and re-lined, NAHS will be hosting the 6A Region 7 meet on April 19th and 21st. This will be a good opportunity to come out and see some of the top athletes in the state. This is the second time that North has hosted a regional championship meet.

This issue also includes an interview with an alumni who is a former school record holder who recently graduated from college. He tells about how NAHS and the *Running Warrior* experience prepared him for college and beyond.

Track & Field Starts Full Frontal Assault on Record Book

The track and field team started one of the most prolific attacks on the school record book in many years as eight school records have already been set.

Senior Jackson Pearce got the baton rolling during the indoor season as he took down Malik Epps' ('12) six-year-old mile

school record going 4:26 at Vandy (indoors) to chop nine seconds off of the previous mark.

Sophomore Ellie Hankin was next as she took a few tenths off of Glenda Tutt's ('16) 1600 school record going 5:40 at the Patriots Early Bird on Feb. 25th. She then came back on Mar. 5th at the Milton Showcase and blasted a soft mile school record with a 5:36

Freshman Sydney Tribou broke Maegann Stafford's ('15) pole vault record of 7-0 by going 7-6 at the Patriots Early Bird on Feb. 25th.



Tribou attempting eight feet in the pole vault at the Patriots Early Bird meet.

At the Milton Showcase the boys' 4 X 800 meter relay repeated as champion (8:14) taking five seconds off of the school record that they set last year at this meet.

At the Wheeler Relays on Mar. 11, senior Majeste Hansberry broke Amon-Ray Clay's ('13) four year

old shot put record of 44-2 by six inches.



Hansberry in action at the APS Championships shot put on Mar. 25th at Lakewood.

Also at Wheeler the girls established the 4 X 1600 school record. North had never run this relay. So, the team of Abbie Armentrout, Elle Hankin, Aubrey Miller, and Rebekah Hetzel ran a very respectable 24:30 to finish fourth and establish the mark.

On Mar. 18th at the Georgia Coaches' Invitational at Lakewood Stadium, two records fell. First Ellie Hankin finished second in the Emerging Elite 1600 to chop a huge 15 seconds off of the school record she set earlier in the year going 5:25. Hankin has only run in four high school meets in her career, but has set a school record in every one!

Next, the boys' 4 X 800 relay team of (Matthew Self, Matthew

Aspinwall, Mac Bloodworth, and Jackson Pearce) took six seconds off of the mark they set at Milton earlier this year. Their time of 8:08 made the Milesplit US Elite Silver Standard. *This ranked them with the fourth best time in Georgia and scored as 35th best on the US list.*



Sophomore Matthew Aspinwall safely gets the baton to third leg sophomore Mac Bloodworth at the Coaches' Invitational at Lakewood on the school record 4 X 800 relay.

The last record so far this season came at the Rumble in the Jungle at Parkview H.S. on Mar. 31. In a meet where in two previous seasons Jackson Pearce had set personal records in the 1600, he took down Malik Epps' school record, going 4:19.33 to shave .14 off of the previous mark.

Warriors 5th at APS Champs

Both the boys' and girls' teams finished fifth at the APS Championships. For the boys, this was down from the second place finish last year. Last year the girls also placed fifth.

The girls were paced by freshman Sydney Tribou who was the high point scorer (10 points) for the girls coming in 8th in the pole vault, fifth in the 100 hurdles and fourth in the 300 hurdles in a PR 53.37.

Freshmen Dalen Saunders-Carter finished fifth in the 400 and anchored the girls 4 X 400 relay to a seventh place finish.



Freshman Alexia Todd on the 4 X 400 relay.



Freshman Dalen Saunders-Carter anchoring the 4 X 400 relay.

Senior Rebekah Hetzel finished second in the 3200 with a PR 12:45, becoming only the second girl in North history to crack the 13 minute mark.



Rebekah Hetzel overtook Emily Roth of Jackson in the final laps of the APS Champs 3200 to finish second in a PR.

Other "top five" finishes were recorded by freshmen Traniece Franklin going 4-6 in the high jump and sophomore Paige Malcom who picked up nine points for the Warriors by scoring in both hurdles (3rd in 100H and 6th in 300H).



Sophomore Paige Malcom in the 100 hurdles at the APS Champs.

On the boys side, the following boys finished in the top five: Matthew Self (4th in 800), Mac Bloodworth (3rd in 1600), Matthew Aspinwall (3rd in 3200), Alden Sweetman (4th in 3200), Toren Stafford (2nd in 300 hurdles), Deondre Ezzard (5th in long jump), and Majeste Hansberry (5th in shot put). Jackson Pearce won both the 800 and 1600 for the second consecutive year and was named the Outstanding Track Athlete of the Meet for the third consecutive year.

Interview with Running Warrior Alumni Malik Epps (NAHS '12)

By Nicolas Prada-Rey ('18)
Editor's Note: Malik Epps (NAHS '12 & Harvard '16) is one of the most prolific runners in North Atlanta history. In his freshman and sophomore year at North, he ran track (400-3200) and was also the number one singles

player on the tennis team. In his junior year, he gave up tennis to focus on track. He was the APS cross country champion his senior year and finished in the top two in the 800 and 1600 in the APS Track Championships. He was a multiple-time state meet scorer in track, taking second in the 800 his junior year and third his senior year. He also finished fifth in the 1600 his senior year. Malik was awarded the Warrior Award at graduation for being the top senior scholar athlete. He ran track for four years at Harvard and in his senior year ran a leg (PR 1:52) on the 4 X 800 meter relay that won the Ivy League title. Malik is now living in Manhattan and working in Asset Management for J. P. Morgan.

NPR: What do you like most about your job at J.P. Morgan?

Epps: At my job, I work in asset management. We, at a very high level, manage money for large institutions and individuals with large net worths. I am on a strategy team there. One thing I really like about it is that it gives me the ability to think in an analytical way about markets and apply them to various situations. It allows me to be both forward and backward in the way that I look markets.

NPR: How did NAHS academics prepare you for Harvard?

Epps: I did IB when I was at North Atlanta. I remember, in high school, annotating books was a practice that I carried forward into college. But also, it helped me have the framework for thinking about problems in a more broad sense and then applying them down to the more granular level. I carried forward that way of thinking to a lot of my school work in college.

NPR: Do you feel that NAHS put you in an advantageous position compared to other students? If so, how?

Epps: Yeah, maybe less so from an academic perspective, but from a social perspective, definitely. North Atlanta was very diverse when I was there. I was around people from all walks of life, from different ethnicities, backgrounds, and socio-economics statuses. It gave me a more broad perspective on life. A lot of my college peers had largely been around one specific type of person for the majority of their lives. I felt like I was a little more of an adult than a lot of those guys going into day one.

NPR: How did you manage to balance academic with sports at NAHS and how did it compare to time management in college?

Epps: When I was at North, a lot of my running I did before school, actually. The balancing part was just not sleeping much. I don't think that I really mastered time management until I got to college, but what I learned in high school about it is that it is important, like actually planning out your day. Making sure you'll have time to accomplish everything you want to, is an important thing to do. You need to take into account things, like how tired you are going to be and balancing that with knowing when you are going to do an assignment or write a paper.

NPR: How did NAHS track (and cross country) prepare you for Ivy League competition, specifically Sanderlin's coaching?

Epps: Sanderlin's coaching style was very similar to some of my coaches I had in college, so from a personality perspective, it was kind of similar in that end. Nothing really prepares you for college

running, other than — that's just it. Nothing can prepare you for college running. Having a strong work ethic is the only real trait to carry forward. I taught myself a lot in high school about what I could handle.

NPR: What did you learn at NAHS, through athletics or academics that you use in your everyday life?

Epps: I think a lot of what I learned at North Atlanta were a mostly the softer skills that I definitely still use on a daily basis. Since North Atlanta is such a diverse place, I learned a lot about how to interact with different kinds of people. I learned a lot about people's intentions. I don't want to go so far as to say street smarts, but a lot of that is what I carried forward to Harvard and to New York now.

NPR: What made you decide to forgo tennis your junior year and focus solely on track in the spring?

Epps: The reason the I decided to focus on track was that — when I first started, it was kind of contrarian. I had a lot of buddies who did track with me in middle school and they all quit when they got to high school. I was pretty good at it and I decided that it just made more sense that track was the bigger opportunity. I really like that there is nothing that is subjective with track. It's pretty black and white. You win, you win. You lose, you lose. It was the sport itself that drew me in.

NPR: What does it mean to you to be a *Running Warrior*?

Epps: I think of "running" as nonstop and "warrior" to mean relentless. One thing about being a *Running Warrior* to me is that you just keep running. If you're running on fumes, you just keep running. That's the biggest thing,

to have the never-let-up attitude. Endless fuel!

NPR: What was it like to get the Warrior Award at graduation as the top scholar athlete?

Epps: Oh, that was really special, actually. I still have it. I didn't think that that was something I would care about until then. I actually remember the moment being on stage and walking down to collect it. I was like, "Are you serious?," because my graduating class had a lot of good athletes. It was a moment of *extreme* pride. It wasn't necessarily engrained into the culture back then to be recognized for your actions.

NPR: What is your best experience or memory of being a Running Warrior?

Epps: I actually have two. First, all throughout high school, I had a rival that went to Grady - Zane Coburn. He was slightly better than me. We were by far the two best 800 runners in APS and the region (Ed note – and the State for that matter!). He would always just barely beat me. In one race at Grady, he went out very hard. With 200 meters to go, he had something crazy, like a five to seven second gap on me and I closed it to beat him. Then the state meet my senior year was also a great memory. I didn't win, I got third I think. But it was a really special race and I PR'd that race. It was also my last high school race. It ended up being a really good time.



Malik Epps (7) on the State Meet podium his senior year with Grady rival Zane Coburn (Georgia Tech '16 [1]).

NPR: What was the funniest occurrence that you remember of either your high school track or cross country experience?

Epps: I can't remember a specific memory, but I do remember it being a lot of fun on a day-to-day basis, just like being at practice and hanging out with the other guys on the team. I, of course, took track very seriously, but we were also out there just having fun. There were a lot of fun memories, even just on the bus on the way to and from meets.

NPR: Looking back on your high school experience, what advice would you give to the current *Running Warriors* and specifically to seniors like your sister (*Warrior Wire* Editor Summer Epps)?

Epps: Never take no for an answer and do what feels right. Saying "Follow your heart" is very cliché, but only you know what is best for you. Figure out what that direction is and go 100 miles per hour in that direction!



Malik Epps (third from R) in State 800 final his junior year (2011).

NPR: Jackson Pearce just broke your five year old 1600m school record of 4:19.47, going 4:19.33. What are your thoughts on that?

Epps: Records are made to be broken! It was a bit of a soft record in my opinion so I'm happy that it was broken. I'm also happy that it was Jackson, he's a really good

athlete and I hope that he takes it much lower if he gets a chance. I'll be happy if he runs 4:10 - I'm sure that's in the wheelhouse for him.



Epps (R) four years later running a leg on the 4 X 800 relay for Harvard in the Ivy League Championship Meet at Princeton in 2016.



Coach Sanderlin payed Epps a surprise visit at the Ivy Champs and saw his former athlete march into the Harvard record books.

Ed note: the author is a member of both the cross country and tennis teams.

Trail Day 2017

The Running Warriors spread the pile of chips further along the Warpath (trail) on March 12th.



Aubrey & Serena Miller with Ellie Hankin and Coach S. on the Warpath on Trail Day.



Warpath after spreading out the wood chips. Nice, soft footing on one of the best "short track" running trails in Metro Atlanta.

North Retires Northside High School Legacy Baton (aka 'Ole Blue')

The North Atlanta Track and Field team is retiring the Legacy Baton. Coach Sanderlin had two replacement duplicate batons made by Athletes' Dream. The Legacy Baton will be retired at the regional meet and will reside in the track trophy case (as you walk into the school on the gym side, the first trophy case).

The Legacy Baton has a rich and storied past. North Fulton and Northside high schools merged in 1991 to form North Atlanta H.S.



Original Legacy (aka 'Ole Blue' or The Legend Stick) Baton on the left and new replacement on the right.

This baton has been a factor in setting more school records at North than any coach or single item in any sport in history.

This Northside H.S. baton was used by such Northside greats as Sam Graddy, who at Northside had one of the fastest 100m times in the country his senior year. Graddy went on to become an All-American at the University of Tennessee. He ran on the 4 X 100 meter relay team for the U.S. in the 1984 Olympics and, with Carl Lewis, not only won the gold medal, but also set the world record.

This baton was also used by Stanley Blaylock of Northside who went on to become an All-American at the University of Georgia.

At North, the baton was continued to be carried by such school record holders and State champions as Kyana Elder (All- ACC at Clemson) and Porche Byrd (multiple-time All-American at the University of South Carolina).

Most recently, the baton was carried by State Champion (pole vault) John Rudd who is vaulting for Coach Dave Butler at Rice, school record holder Ashenafi Arega (All-American for Coach Steve Dudley at Mississippi State), and former school record holder Malik Epps who was an Ivy League champion at Harvard.

This year, 'Ole Blue' was used to set the boys 4 X 800 school record as they recorded one of the fastest times in the country.



On March 18 at the Coaches Invitational at Lakewood, the boys broke the 4 X 800 meter relay school record that they had set earlier in the year with the Legacy Baton going 8:08 (L to R: Pearce, Bloodworth, Aspinwall, and Self - all hands are on 'Ole Blue').

This proves that the current *Running Warriors* are truly leaving a Legacy!

Turning Snacks into a Balanced Sports Diet (from June 2015 edition of Masters News magazine)

When you are at home, a "well balanced diet" includes all four food groups and might look like this:

Wheaties + milk + banana + hard boiled eggs

Whole wheat bread + turkey + cheese + lettuce / tomato + an apple

Brown rice + chicken + broccoli + yogurt

When you are eating from the gas station / convenience store / vending machine, your balanced diet might resemble these "tasty" meals:

Orange juice + popcorn + protein bar + yogurt

Salsa + corn chips + almonds + milk

Banana + peanuts + wheat thins + cheese stick.

Fruits and vegetables are the hardest foods to find when you are on the road. Because our body stores vitamins in the liver, you can have a diet low in fruits and veggies for a week or so and you will not suffer from malnutrition. But you will want to re-stock your liver's diminished supply when you get back home. That means, choose fruit smoothies, colorful salads, and generous portions for fresh fruits and veggies whenever you get the opportunity to do so.

Super Beets

Many of you wanted information on Super Beets. [Super Beets](#) is a powder made from beet roots that can be used as a supplement to boost circulation (a distinct advantage for runners). However, not everyone can absorb nitric oxide efficiently. If you purchase three 150 gr. canisters, you get nitric oxide test strips. At the three canister price, it costs less than a \$1 for a serving. This is much less expensive than purchasing beet juice (\$4-9 for 8-16 oz. sizes). It comes in a tasty black cherry flavor.



Volunteer to Help With the 6A Region 7 Meet April 19 & 21

We need both parent and student volunteers to help manage and put on a great regional meet as host. Sign up to volunteer by going to: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b49afaf2baafc1-ga6aregion>



One of North's objectives is to put the "Oomph" back into track & field (track, cross country, field [jumps & throws], race walking, road racing and ultra-racing) – indeed a rare objective for a high school! One of the things that helped accomplish this was the DiscBot! This was a joint project between the NAHS Robotics Team and the *Running Warriors*. It was the first automatic retrieval of discuses at the high school level in the country! Click on [DiscBot](#) to see it in action at the 2016 Buckhead Invitational. **You can see the DiscBot in action at the 6A Region 7 meet at North on April 19 & 21.**

Calendar

1. **Apr. 17** – Track & Field team meeting & uniform turn in, 4:10P
2. **Apr. 17** – *Running Warrior* Booster Club Board meeting at 6:20P in the Media Center.
3. **Apr. 19** – Regional Meet at North – Field events at 1:00P & running prelims at 3:30.
4. **Apr. 21** - Regional Meet at North – Field events at 3:00P & running finals at 5:30.
5. **Apr. 28** - Penn Relays on NBCSN 5:30-6:30P
6. **Apr. 29** - Penn Relays on NBCSN 12:30-3:00P & Drake Relays 3:00-5:00P
7. **Apr. 29** – Sectional Track Meet
8. **May 11-13** – State Track Meet
9. **July 9-14** – Nike Smokey Mt. Running Camp



NAHS sports web site:

www.northatlantawarriors.org

Running Warrior web site:

www.narunningwarriors.com

NAHS Field and Track / XC

Stats Page:

<http://ga.milesplit.com/teams/NAtI>

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