



## Evans runs, jumps her way to four victories

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RALEIGH -- Southern's Jacinda Evans used to leave every track practice crying. Of course, that was when she was 10-years old, and now she just leaves her opponents in tears.

Take Saturday, for example. Evans won all four events she participated in at the Mid-East Regional track meet at Athens Drive High School.

But the path began with those tears.

"I came out for Durham Striders when I was 10, and they killed me," said Evans, who won the 100 meter dash, 200, long jump and triple jump. "I used to go home crying every single day we had practice. I'd go home and say, 'Mom, I don't want to do Durham Striders anymore.'

"I remember one day we had to run eight 400s and if you came in last, you had to run it again. I kept coming in last, and kept having to run it again. I remember we tried to all finish at the same time once, and [the coach] tricked us and made us all run it again. I dropped off crying and said, 'I can't do this no more.' I stomped up the bleachers saying I wasn't going to come back, but I came back."

Winning has a funny way of making the pain worth it.

"I decided to run in middle school, and I was winning," said Evans, who scored all 40 points for her team, which was good for a sixth-place finish. "Then I got to high school and I was still winning. Winning was the difference."

Southern coach Frank Davis -- who also coaches the Durham Striders -- has known Evans ever since those first practices.

"You know how kids are, they come out and decide the work is too hard," he said. "That's how it was early on, it was pretty tough for her. She found out later on it wasn't as bad as she thought."

"She's a good athlete and a hard worker. Hard work pays off and that's showing today. She wants to win."

Evans' hard work has earned her a scholarship to UNC next season, where she promised there would be no more tears.

"It's kind of like a dream come true because when I was like 8-years old, I wanted to go to Carolina," she said. "I used to play basketball, so I thought I would be going to Carolina to play basketball. Oh well."

Evans' first win of the day was the long jump, where her jump of 19 feet, 1 1/4-inch was nearly two feet better than Hillside's Tomoria Holmes, who finished in second with a jump of 17-3 3/4.

Then it was on to the triple jump.

"I had kind of like a bad start" Evans said. "When I was working on my run through I was on the board, but on my first jump, I was over so I had to readjust. I promise you, it was like a 40-foot jump, but I didn't get it. I had to move my mark back to get my second jump in, but I only jumped 36 feet. But my third jump I jumped 39-3, so that was pretty good, and I just passed on my other jumps because I knew it was going to be a long day."

The 39-3 jump was over three feet longer than Holmes, who finished fourth in the event with a jump of 35-5.

Not too shabby a finish for Evans, who didn't participate in the Triple Jump for part of the season.

"She's jumped 40 feet with the Durham Striders, but she hasn't worked too much on it this year," said Davis. "She just started practicing it in the last couple weeks."

Evans ran a personal best 24.49 in the 200 prelims and bettered that mark in the finals with a 24.41.

She was equally impressive in the 100, where a lightning-quick start helped her to a 11.97 finish. Ran 11.80 in finals.

"I knew I could break 12 seconds if I got my start, I got my start and I won," Evans said.

The next Evans?

Person's Brittany Burton is just a sophomore and won the high jump with a jump of 5-4.

"I thought it was going to be hard at first because everyone was taller than me and stuff like that," said Burton. "When I got up there, I found out they weren't as good as I thought they were. I ended up doing fine."

A more direct comparison between Burton and Evans came in the 100, where Burton finished in fourth with a time of 12.41.

"It's all about the technique," said Evans, who also ran anchor on Person's 400 and 800 relay teams. "You start low at first and just come up with it and just go all the way through."

Suffice to say, the future is bright for the youngster.

"It's hard [to compete against older athletes], but at the same time, look where I'm at now," Burton said. "I'm keeping up with them now, so imagine where I'll be at senior year."

Boys day at Southern

Southern's boys finished its day with 68 points, which was good for third place in the team competition.

New Bern won the event with 121 points and Wakefield -- led by sprint star T.J. Graham, who made a run at the state record of 10.40 in the 100 Dash with a 10.45 -- finished second with 75 points.

"They worked hard and did a good job," Southern coach Adrian Taylor said. "They exceeded my expectations

because the teams that finished in front of us did a great job and are extremely well-coached. I'm proud of my guys. Coming off last year where we finished a little bit lower, moving up to third is a great job."

The Spartans' Steven Hall won the 300 hurdles with a time of 39.14.

"I knew I was going to come back," said the senior. "If I ran my hardest, I knew I was going to win because I was the fastest in prelims. There was a Wakefield dude in front of me, but I knew I was going to get him at the end. I think I got him with about 50 meters to go."

Hall also ran the anchor leg of Southern's second-place 1,600 relay team.

"He's my iron man," said Taylor. "Any event I ask him to do, he does. I'm very proud of him because he made a big improvement from last year to this year."

Southern's other regional champion was James Reese, who won the shot put with a throw of 49-1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, which was just a 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-inch longer than Northern's Adam Curry. Reese finished fifth in the discus.

In addition to the second-place finish in the 1,600 relay, Southern's boys finished second in the 800 relay with a time of 1:28.85.

#### Girls day at Jordan

Jordan's girls team was the area's top placing team with a fourth-place showing and 47 points.

Apex won the event with 73 points, Leesville Road came in second with 57 points and Millbrook was third with 53 points.

Jordan was paced by sophomore sprinter Zakiya Tyson's second-place finish in the 100 (12.12) and third-place finish in the 200 (24.96). She also was a part of Jordan's regional champion 400 relay team that ran a 49.61 and beat Hillside's time of 49.95.

Michelle Lutz finished second in the 1,600 run with a time of 5:20.33, which was just ahead of East Chapel Hill's Elsbeth Grant.

"I thought we did exceptionally well," said Jordan coach Winter Bingham, who was the PAC-6 coach of the year. "My relays did really well, and my sprinter did a good job. But we lost our long distance runner who wasn't feeling very well today. But overall, it's been a pretty good day and we did about what I thought we'd do."

Kimberly Hunter chipped in with a second-place finish in the 100 hurdles with a time of 15.47.

#### Speaking of Chapel Hill

In addition to Grant, East Chapel Hill's Jane Williams finished fourth in the 800 and Clara Martin finished fourth in the discus.

On the boy's side, East Chapel Hill's Garrett Hollingsworth jumped 12-00 in the pole vault which was good for fourth

place Ben Jones ran the 1,600 in 2:24.87 which was good for second place.

Jones ran one place ahead of Chapel Hill's Jack Marshall.

Chapel Hill's top performer was Taylor Gilliland who took home a regional championship with a time of 9:36.85.

The Tigers' girls team was paced by Champagne Bell, who won the 400 with a time of 58.17. Her teammate, Grace Krafte, finished third in the 800 with a time of 2:25.54.

Notes -- Jordan junior George Rhodes won the Triple Jump with a jump of 45-04. He also finished second in the Long Jump with a leap of 22-00. \* Hillside's Erin Neal finished third in the High Jump, clearing 5-0. \* Hillside's girls 400 Relay team was second with a time of 49.95 which was less than a second better than Northern's fourth-place team. \* Northern's Vaughn Holland was third in the High Jump, clearing 6-2.

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