

Kentwood's Freeman has plenty of energy left to burn

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By Jane Bos
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East Kentwood senior Cynthia Freeman packs an abundance of power into her legs. Oh, and she uses them aplenty.

She jumps, hops.

She dances and prances.

She lifts and lunges.

She moves and she grooves.

An energized bunny, Freeman flies over the long jump pit and leaps over the hurdles for the Falcons' track team. And she does it well.

At this week's O-K Red Conference track meet at Grandville, Freeman posted a new conference-meet record in the long jump. Her 17-feet, 71/4-inch jump easily eclipsed the previous mark of 17-21/2 set in 1985 by West Ottawa's Sherrie Kloosterman.

Freeman also won the 100-meter hurdles (15.3 seconds) in spite of grazing the second hurdle. Then she placed second in the 100 dash (13.0). Of course, not even Supergirl can run these two events 10 minutes apart with a bruised ankle bone and win them both.

In her fourth event at the Red meet, the 300 intermediate hurdles, Freeman outdistanced the rest of the field and claimed the 46.2-second victory.

"I love track," Freeman said after completing her four events. "I love to run, but I am tired right now."

Don't expect Freeman to stay down for long. She'll be up and ready for the Division 1 regional at Houseman Field on Friday.

This is the girl who, during her spare time, participated in the 21st annual Grand Rapids Natural Bodybuilding Championships three weeks ago.

After competing -- and succeeding -- at the prestigious Wyoming Park Relays, Freeman hustled over to the Ford Fieldhouse and placed third in the women's fitness class.

The competition was based on strength, flexibility, gymnastics' moves and just plain energy. Freeman, who also was a member of East Kentwood's state championship gymnastics team in March, has it all.

"I watched the competition on TV, and I thought, 'I want to try that'," said Freeman, who works out of the Powerhouse Gym in Kentwood. "It was fun. I love entertaining, and the crowd really seemed to be into it. I plan to do it again."

In the rest of her spare time, Freeman likes to dance. Yes, she loved dancing at the prom, but she also does it for different performing groups. She's so good, her dancing is in demand.

She also spends a lot of time jumping rope. This passion began in the fifth grade while participating in Jump Rope for Heart. And ever since, she's been called back to do demonstrations and participate in alumni jump-roping contests.

"I like to stay busy," Freeman said. "I don't ever want to be bored."

There's nothing boring about her ability. She figures she comes by it naturally.

Her father, Jimmie Freeman, is an athlete. Her sister, Jamie, is a body builder, and her other sister, Danielle, participated in track and field at East Kentwood. And her brother, Jimmie, excelled at just about every event for the Falcons track team the last four seasons.

Cynthia currently holds school records in the 100 hurdles (14.8), 300 hurdles (45.4), the 1600 relay (4:01) and the long jump (17-73/4).

During the last three years, she's won nine Red meet championships and four regional crowns. At this weekend's regional, she most likely will compete in the two hurdle events, the long jump and the 1600 relay.

"Cynthia is one of those kid who comes along once every 20 years or so," said East Kentwood girls track coach Stephanie Stephenson. "She's an amazing athlete.

"She's a big part of the team point-wise, but also spirit-wise." Her teammates love her.

"She's my dog said fellow senior and long jumper Christa Weaver. "Above all, everyone knows that she is a gifted athlete. But the thing I like best about her is that she's so funny. That girl makes me laugh."

Says Freeman: "You've got to have fun. What's the point of doing anything otherwise? You don't want to be bored."

Freeman, the leaper. Freeman, the dancer. Freeman, the jumper. Nope, she won't be bored. Not this girl. Not ever.

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