

Union Catholic Vikings Win 5, SPF's Baliatico Places 4th in 400H at Meet of Champions

ond (1:00) mark, Baliatico still has another opportunity to shave off a few tenths of a second this season.

"I am going to nationals next week, so I have a chance to bring it down there, but next year, definitely low 60, work from there and maybe break 60," she said.

Blue Devil senior Matt Luppino ran a 4:16.46 time in the 1600 at the Group 4 meet to qualify for the MOC. Competing against a very competitive field, Luppino kept at the front of the pack for the first lap but found himself pinched in by several runners after the second lap and could not shake the enclosure. He finished 16th overall in the two-heat event with a time of 4:20.23.

"The pace went out pretty slow. The one thing that Coach [Chris] Tafelski always tells me how in these races, sometimes when you run championship style, no one wants to take it. We talked about maybe me getting up there and go for the lead. I was up there the

first lap. By the time I wanted to start pushing it, I got pinched in. That's the way these races are. You have a lot of guys really competitive. They all want to win and it comes down to the last lap who wants it most," Luppino said.

Due to an early season injury, Luppino has experienced a tough going, but qualifying for the MOC has been special.

"I give a lot of credit to my coaches and my teammates. [They] Coached me the whole way through the season. I don't think I would be here at the Meet of Champions if it wasn't for all the people I had around me in the past and present, Coach [Jack] Martin and Coach Tafelski," Luppino said.

Even more special, Luppino, Frankie Pinney, Will Chandler and Nick Antonelli recorded a time of 7:58.95 to qualify for the MOC in the 4x800.

"This is the same team that we have been running all season. As the meets have been going, we



have been getting better and better. Last week we broke eight minutes. People are running PRs today. It's a great day for some of our guys to break two minutes. We are going up against the best guys in the state. Competition always brings out the best in everyone, so we have to show them what Westfield's got," Luppino said.

The Westfield foursome did indeed show them what they were made of and finished sixth in the MOC with an even better time of 7:53.84.

After placing third in the 4x100 at the Group 3 meet, Raiders Emendo Thomas (junior), Merlin Edmond (junior), Quaryee Bull (senior) and Kobe White (junior) placed eighth in the event with a personal record time of 42.84.

"I feel good about the team as a whole. We did really well. I thank the team for everything. The handoff was good. It was smooth and we ended up getting a PR," White said.

Bull's handoff from Edmond also went smoothly.

"It's always really, really good. This was my last one. He came in

real fast. I got out. It was a smooth handoff and we ran the fastest time of our whole season," Bull said.

"It was great that we did it in our last meet of our season. I wish that the handoff between

Emendo and I was a little better. It was a little shaky. It was still a PR and I am happy about that," Edmond said.

"I am happy about the season. We were running 43's in the beginning, and we dropped our time by over a second. The three of us are going to miss Quaryee. He was a big contribution to this team. He was a leader. He gave us encouragement in practices and everything. I'm sad that he's leaving, but I'm glad that next year we can look forward to a big season, seeing that we have another year left to go," Thomas said.

Viking Andrew Ghizzone took the very top spot in the pole vault with a clearance of 16-0. Animashaun was the fastest in the 110 hurdles when he crossed the finish line in 14.2. He also finished third in the 400 hurdles with a time of 53.62. Viking Sean Brennan placed third in the discus with a toss of 170-9. Leland Jones of Summit finished third in the 3,200 with a time of 9:10.57.

