Swede girls bring home four Class B state medals

OMAHA—As a coach, seeing a track and field athlete reach her potential brings a great deal of satisfaction.

As a dad, it adds a separate level of pride.

Steve Reeves has coached daughter Tiani through her first steps, a national youth All-American title and now a state meet gold medal.

The Gothenburg freshman took first in the Class B girls long jump on Friday with a personal best distance of 18 feet, 7.5 inches.

“Seeing what she’s done in the past, I knew she had it in her physically,” Reeves said. “And having been in this kind of high pressure competition before, I thought she was able to handle the situation very well.”

Tierra Williams of Auburn was consistently over 18 feet in the preliminary jumps, giving Tiani something to shoot for.

Hitting the 18-7.5 mark not only gave her the gold medal but it also pushed her to the top of the Swede all-time Top 10 list with a school record.

“I think experience was a definite factor,” Reeves said. “I saw the confidence in her and she handled it all very well.”

Later on the track, Tiani ran her personal best 200-meter dash time in the prelims at 25.656 seconds to qualify for the finals on Saturday.

She added to her hardware with a silver medal, finishing two-tenths of a second behind Lexington senior Lindsie Woolley in 25.83 seconds.

Tiani moves to No. 2 all-time in the 200.

To round out the state meet, Tiani ran the anchor leg of the Swede 4x400 relay, placing fourth.

“We went into that relay with the idea we were going to compete for a title,” Reeves said. “The competition was tough.”

The girls still improved their overall time, shaving a couple tenths of a second off for an all-time second best time of 4:03.737.

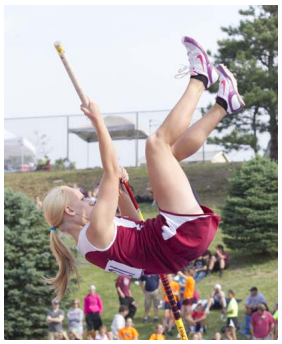
Members of the relay were Regan Geiken, Aryn Meisinger, Payton Prall and Tiani Reeves.

The other Swede girl to earn a medal at the state meet was Erica Houchin, who brought home fifth place by clearing 10-0 in the pole vault.

“The girls had a pretty strong cross wind for the pole vault,” Reeves said. “Erica cleared the first couple of heights clean but the wind didn’t do her any favors. She worked hard all season and it was great to see her finish her career with a medal at state.”

Geiken and Prall ran in the 400-meter dash in addition to the relay.

Reeves said stiff competition kept both from qualifying for the finals but they each gave great effort, as did Kersten Nelson in the shot.

Nelson finished 10th overall, just outside a medal.

“The kids all competed hard,” Reeves said. “A lot of times, kids are just happy to get to state. These kids went with more in mind.”