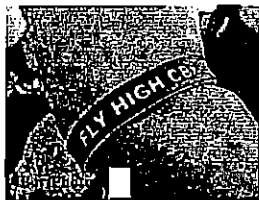


Track state finals notes: West Lafayette honors fallen teammate

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(Photo: David Woods / IndyStar)

BLOOMINGTON — Cooper Williams wanted to do the honorable thing.

He wanted to honor West Lafayette teammate Christian Burns, who died in a car crash early Tuesday morning (<http://www.ionline.com/story/news/2016/05/31/west-lafayette-teen-dies-crash/85184510/>). So in Burns' memory, he and the Red Devils wore wristbands with "Fly High CB" on one side and "One More" on the other at Saturday's boys track and field state finals.

And Williams wanted to win. Of course, he wanted to win. C.B., we got this.

"We're doing it for him. Having these is a great reminder we're doing it for him," Williams said of the wristbands. "I was just happy to execute it."

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There were multiple great performances at state — Ben Veatch's distance double (<http://www.indystar.com/videos/sports/high-school/2016/06/04/85436014/>), D'Wayne Eskridge's sprint sweep, Christian Powell's long jump and relay anchor (<http://www.indystar.com/videos/sports/high-school/2016/06/04/85436066/>), Ryan Lipe's 17-foot vault — so reflect on that.

But is there a better collage prospect in Indiana than Cooper Williams?



(Photo: Jeckle Malloy / IndyStar)

The 6-4 senior clocked 1:52.2 in a tactical anchor leg to bring West Lafayette the victory in the 3,200-meter relay. Then, in another slowish race, he ran away from defending champion Hari Sathyamurthy of Brownsburg to win the 800 meters in 1:54.03.

The fact that Williams' laps were 59.24/54.79 demonstrates he is capable of faster times. (He won the regional in 1:51.61.) If that doesn't convince you, this will:

Williams' anchor leg of the 1,600 relay — after two 800s, remember — was 47.93. Even allowing for a running start, he would have finished third in the 400 meters with that time.

Fast 800s can wait until he teams next year with Shelbyville's 6-3 Daniel Kuhn, giving Indiana University what will surely be the fastest set of tall half-milers in the NCAA.

"I'm really excited to just train with him," said Williams, who was named the Mental Attitude Award winner Saturday night. "He goes hard all the time. Hopefully, he'll shape me."

Sathyamurthy never completely regained form after a mid-April hamstring injury. He finished second, first and second at state in the 800 meters.

Brownsburg's globetrotting quarterback

Hunter Johnson didn't run any distance races, but no one covered more miles.

The Brownsburg junior, and No. 1-ranked high school senior QB, threw at the Elite 11 quarterback camp Thursday and Friday, then took a red-eye flight from Los Angeles to arrive in Indianapolis on Saturday morning. He ran a 51.3 leadoff leg Saturday night in the 1,600-meter relay, in which the Bulldogs were 10th in 3:21.44.

He conceded he was a little jet-lagged but felt "pretty good" while running. He returned to L.A. for more throwing today.

Brownsburg QB Hunter Johnson has lofty goals for senior year
(<http://www.indystar.com/story/sports/high-school/2016/05/31/brownsburg-qb-hunter-johnson-has-lofty-goals-senior-year/85154208/>)

Track loses to football

He and his track teammates were set to compete at the state finals in Bloomington on Saturday, said Coach Lane Custer, who's known Burns "since he was very little."

"He is the epitome of the all-American boy," Custer said Tuesday. "Good student, good athlete, concerned about his friends, great teammate and amazing leader."

Burns is the son of Eric Burns, West Lafayette's city attorney, a spokesperson for the mayor's office confirmed Tuesday.

He spoke to the crowd Tuesday night, imploring Christian's friends to live life like his son did, always trying to achieve a step above the maximum, with the phrase "One more" hovering above the home weight room where Christian worked out.

"The next time you do a math problem because you need to or rewrite something for the yearbook because you ought to or put in another of hard labor in a job that you do, think about one more for Christian," his father said. "If you do one more for Christian, you'll be doing it for yourselves and all of us."



Sam King
@samuelking

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Crowd ballooned to about 500 to hear friends, family and coaches of Christian Burns speak. Mixture of laughs and tears.

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I'd estimate 350-400 people at West Lafayette football field for candlelight vigil in memory of Christian Burns.

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(<http://www.jconline.com/story/sports/high-school/2016/05/26/tippecanoe-county-claims-3-regional-track-titles/84698512/?from=global&sessionKey=&autologin=>)

Hundreds gather in West Lafayette to remember Christian Burns

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