

'... shock the world'

Bears finish 3rd in 400 relay; Hilbig finishes 4th in 100

BY MICHAEL ADAMS
Sports Editor

SAN ANTONIO — Opposing coaches may want to think twice before they underestimate the Bastrop Bears in the future.

The Bears might just prove them wrong.

The 400 meter relay team shocked everyone in San Antonio with a third place finish in the event after not even having one of the top eight times going into the Region IV-5A Championships Saturday.

"I said we were going to shock the world," said Bernard Blake, a member of the 400 and 800 meter relay teams.

Bastrop might have not shocked the world, but they did surprise the other athletes, coaches and fans in San Antonio, along with themselves.

The relay team of Blake, Jeremy Ross, Heath Hilbig and Mustafa Akbar placed higher than anyone in their district, including district champion Pflugerville Connally and district runner up Austin High.

Connally and Austin didn't even make the finals.

Track and field head

coach Stephen Mayberry said it all came down to Bastrop wanting it.

"I am so proud of these kids," Mayberry said. "They proved that hard work overcomes raw talent. These guys worked harder than they did all year. They had upset of the mind."

With their third place finish, the Bears are alternate for the UIL state track and field meet on June 5-6 at Mike A. Myers Stadium in Austin.

That wasn't the only shocker from Bastrop at the regional championships.

Hilbig, who already amazed the field in the 100 meter dash at the District 28 5A Championships with a third place finish, astonished the field one more time with a fourth place finish in the event.

Hilbig was also not expected to make the final and barely placed eighth Friday in the preliminary heats.

The senior sprinter had the eighth best time in the preliminary heats. Mayberry said Hilbig was considering scratching the finals to concentrate on the 800 relay.

"I told him it's going to be his decision," Mayberry said.

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File photo by Michael Adams
Bastrop's Bernard Blake, left, and Heath Hilbig, seen in this photo from the Texas Relays, finished third as part of the Bears 400 meter relay team at the Region IV-5A Championships Saturday in San Antonio. See page B2 for complete results of the regional championships.

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"He came back in the finals and ran his best race."

Hilbig finished the event with a time of 10.99 seconds and beat out district champion Anthony Bryant, of Connally, by two-hundredths of a second.

The 800 relay team also placed higher than anyone from District 25-5A at regionals.

The team of Ross,

Hilbig, Akbar and Blake finished fifth with a time of 1:31.53, beating out district champion Bowie, which didn't qualify for the finals in the event.

"We are feeling pretty good," Akbar said. "We didn't really listen to anyone who said we weren't going to do well. We worked hard and that's what got us there."

Robert Solis finished fourth in the discus with a toss of 148 feet, 8.5 inches.