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GIEM COMPETING IN 600 IN INDOOR NATIONALS

by Dave Guffey
UM Sports Information Director

It took him longer than he wanted, two years longer to be exact, but University of Montana trackster Dale Giem will finally be running in his first NCAA Indoor Championships March 14-15 in Detroit.

"I should have been there two years ago," said the bearded 22-year-old from Twin Bridges, Mont. "Losing last year did a lot for me. I was too confident after my sophomore year, and I was ready to work harder this time."

Giem (pronounced Gim) will be running in the 600 (yards), a difficult race, especially considering the banked facility and the short track (11 laps to the mile, the same as UM's indoor track).

He qualified for the prestigious NAAs early in the season, and then weeks later proved he could be a top challenger in the nationals, running a 1:09.3 in the Kimmel Indoor meet in Moscow, Idaho. That time ranks him among the top collegiate runners in the nation.

The 6-2, 155-pounder received even more accolades when he was named the Big Sky Conference's Athlete of the Meet for his performance in the conference championships held in Pocatello, Idaho Feb. 22-23.

Grizzly track coach Marshall Clark said he thought Giem was instrumental in helping the two-mile relay team also qualify for the nationals.

"Dale was definitely a catalyst for us," Clark said. "He didn't even know he was going to be running a 600 that day. His time got everyone else going."

(more)

GIEM COMPETING--add one

Montana placed fourth in the Big Sky Championships with 67½ points, Giem contributing valuable points in the 600 (1st) and two-mile relay (3rd).

Giem said he was really looking forward to competing against runners from the likes of the University of Southern California, Villanova, and so on, especially on a banked track.

"The banked track will make the race faster, and lets you really hit the corners well," he said. "Running indoors is like racing cars. It's a very tactful race. I think if I can run around a 1:09.5 I should be in the final eight. The competition will be very difficult."

Giem said he will try to run his own pace, "but if I feel the race is starting too slow, I'll turn it on. I don't think that will be the case, though."

He added that prior to the season his goal was "to run as well as I possibly could. I've been out here too long (Giem is a senior) to compete on a goal basis. I just want to run to the best of my ability."

No matter what the results, Giem's two-year wait for the NCAA indoor meet will come to an end in just a few days.

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