

## **Brown looking for perfection at States**

By Ryan Nagelhout Niagara Gazette

— — When Alex Brown said everything was perfect in Jamestown on Saturday, she really means it.

The Grand Island sophomore won the Section VI championship in the high jump last weekend, but everything had to be just right for her to even attempt the 5-foot-4 mark.

“I was hoping for sixth place, I didn’t even think I was going to be able to jump,” Brown said. “But everything was perfect that day.”

Brown suffers from obsessive-compulsive disorder, which not only makes her extremely shy but requires things to be just right for her to feel comfortable.

“Alex has to overcome a lot in order for her to compete the way she does,” Vikings girls track coach Craig Davis said. “If everything is not exactly right it’s really hard for her to overcome that and do well. She’s very talented athletically but with this OCD issue it’s very hard to compete.”

Brown said being away from home is one thing that puts her on edge, but with her mom and fellow high jumper Jessica Brownschidle there to support her, the sophomore hopes to replicate her success in Jamestown at the state championship meet in Caledonia this weekend.

“She’s kind of like my lucky charm,” Brown said.

Brown’s winning jump, which came on her final attempt at the Section VI championships, not only set her personal best but broke the school record.

“I’ve been training to break the record for three years now so it feels pretty good,” Brown said. “On my last attempt and I skimmed (the bar) and then I landed and I looked up and it was still there and I just screamed.”

Davis said he first saw Brown playing volleyball when she was in middle school and knew she had what it takes to jump.

“I was a teacher in the middle school and I said, ‘hey, Alex I want you to come high jump for me,’” Davis said. “The following spring she came out and high jumped. The first year she was the NFL champ in the high jump at 4-foot-10.”

Since then Brown has slowly worked her way up the ladder and is hoping her trip to

states will be another step in the right direction.

Davis said she has what it takes to get a high finish.

“She finished pretty high last year, she was in the top 10 when she went 5-foot-3,” he said. “I’m hoping for top six. If she finishes in the top six in public schools then she gets a medal, I think she can do that.”

Either way, Brown will already have bragging rights to cash in on this summer. Laura Lewis, who previously held the high jump record at Grand Island, is a friend of the family and has waited for news of Brown besting her mark.

“She asks me every time I see her and I say ‘no,’” Brown said. “Now I can say yes.”