

Masiello 'fights' through runs for GI

By Ryan Nagelhout Niagara Gazette

GRAND ISLAND — Nick Masiello isn't training for a prize fight in Siberia, but when things get tough on the track he remembers something he once heard in a movie.

The Niagara Gazette cross country runner of the year seems to never stop running, and after a successful indoor track season he takes to the outdoor loop with the same resolve he's always had in any race.

"I think it's more determination," Grand Island track coach Don Sauer said. "His endurance is as good as anybody's but I think when you get him in a race, he's so competitive that I think that's what makes a big difference with him."

Masiello runs a variety of events including the mile and two-mile, but the 3,200-meter relay was what sent the Vikings to states during the indoor season. Often running the last leg of the race, Sauer said that killer instinct is the reason the Vikings come out on top if it's close.

"I usually anchor him," Sauer said. "He's not my fastest but I anchor him because he fights. I like a fighter at the end."

A fighter, as it turns out, is what Masiello said gives him that determination. Well, at least a fighter on the big screen.

"Most of my motivation comes from Rocky IV when he fights Drago," Masiello said. "It's definitely the determination and the will never to give up."

The Vikings senior may be quoting a movie that came out well before he was born, but that doesn't make it any less inspirational to him as a runner.

"I saw it a couple of years ago and ever since then I've always had the dream of no pain and never give up," he said. "Anything's possible."

Sauer said that attitude is important in developing younger runners.

"That's why you try to have him be the example for kids," Sauer said. "Work hard, push yourself and be competitive."

"That's characteristic of all my kids."

Masiello said he hopes to see the 3,200-meter relay win again in the outdoor season, but he'd also like to be section champion in the mile as well.

“I’m hoping to be champion in the mile as well and look for a good place in the state race,” he said. “I feel pretty good. I have a little bit of competition from T.J. Hornberger in Lake Shore but other than that I feel pretty good.”

In the fall Masiello will run for St. Bonaventure’s cross country program in the 8K and 10K events. The senior said a growing program that’s looking to expand is the perfect opportunity for him moving forward.

“I heard they were trying to develop a program and I’m definitely looking for a program where I can come in and contribute right away,” Masiello said. “Getting a couple other runners besides me can turn this program around in the near future. I’m hoping to win an Atlantic 10 championship.”