

Benton Harbor Cops State Track Crown

EAST LANSING, May 26 — Hats off to Benton Harbor high school's great five-man track team—new state Class A champions of Michigan! Coach Jack Smith's handful of cinder path and field talent realized a 35-year-old dream here Saturday by capturing five first places for 30 points and the victors' trophy.

Bert Copeland was the key man to the Harbor Tigers' success. This small precision built speed merchant himself accounted for 19½ points of the Tiger total by ably defending his titles in the 100 and 220 dashes and broad jump, then anchoring the winning 880-yard relay team.

Brilliant Career For Copeland

Saturday's great performance climaxed a brilliant high school career for Copeland. Although a strong wind blocked his efforts at setting any records, he was easily the outstanding individual athlete of the 700 competing, just as he was a year ago. Even as a sophomore he won the century, placed fourth in the broad jump and sixth in the 220. It is doubtful if any athlete ever did as well.

Maurice Hofmeister, shot putter, accounted for the only other individual Benton Harbor first. Despite an injured left leg, he won the putting event with a heave of 47 feet, 9¼ inches. He did this on his

last try, however, beating out Ed Rybak of Bay City who had a mark of 47 feet, 4 inches. Hofmeister had hoped to top 50 feet, but a kneecap injury last week thwarted that.

Relay Team In Best Effort

Benton Harbor's victory was a thrilling one, and wasn't assured until the climactic relay. Here Coach Smith's quartet of Willie Moore, Harvey Akright, Ed Peppel and Copeland came through with their greatest effort of a brilliant season to take first honors and an extra trophy with a 1:32.9 race. Everyone of the four outdid himself to clinch the honors.

Going into this final event Monroe had led the Tigers by 25-24.

This track championship climaxes the greatest athletic year in Benton Harbor history. Last fall Coach Roels' football team was unbeaten, Coach Perigo's basketballers won the state title in March, and now the track team has rounded out the "big three" of high school sports. The trackmen brought back the winners' trophy, a relay trophy and eight individual medals.

To A. A. U. Next Saturday

Next Saturday Coach Smith will enter these four in a special high school relay at the Michigan A. A. U. at Ypsilanti. Bert Copeland will also be entered against college competition in the 100, 220 and broad jump.

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