

East Grand Rapids Reigns as State Class C Track King

(By Lendy Davis)

East Lansing—There has been considerable cause for elation among track followers of the Furniture city over the week-end, because some mighty important thin-clad laurels were returned to Grand Rapids, following the state track and field meet here Saturday.

East Grand Rapids regained its class C crown by beating Dundee, defending champion, and staving off a severe threat made by Milan High's thinclads, who captured the runnerup honors this season.

And among the contestants from 42 class A schools competing in the annual colorful meet at East Lansing, Grand Rapids Catholic Central took seventh place prize, 11 and a fraction points from first.

Flint Northern succeeded Saginaw High as class A champion, ending the 5-year monopoly the Trojans have enjoyed as kings of the upper class. Birmingham was tumbled from the class B throne, with a well-balanced Niles outfit climbing to the top rung. And in class D another western Michigan club came to the fore. Benton Harbor St. John's replaced Michigan School for the Deaf of Flint.

East's victory was a foregone con-

clusion quite some time before the meet drew to a close. The two clinchers for the Pioneers came with Tom Payette winning his heat of the 440, and Dave McLaughlin romping home an easy victor in the second of the half-mile runs. East's triumph in the 880-yard relay was merely adding insult to injury.

Coach Reed Waterman's boys were off on the right foot in the morning when Fred Newman captured the class C broad jump with a leap of 20 feet 9 1/4 inches, and Gordon Hope garnered a fourth in the high jump. But it was a nip-and-tuck battle with Milan all the way along. More than once only a single point separated the two teams as they battled it out for point honors. At one stage the two clubs were tied at 19 points, and again at 27 points each.

East grabbed another first in the medley relay as Jon Parrish, Hope, Alan Pardoe and Newman breasted the tape at 2:35.5, to break the previous state record of 2:38.1, set by Grand Rapids Lee in 1948.

Charles Webber, running despite a heavily taped leg due to a muscle injury, turned in a couple of creditable performances in the sprints.

He took fourth in the 100 and second in the 220. Frank VanSteenberg was good for a third in the 180-yard low hurdles.

Catholic Central warranted seventh place in the class A ranks by the merits of its two relay teams; Joe Host, the brilliant half-miler, and Dick Ward, a sophomore high jumper.

Ward shared a seven-way tie for second in the high jump, giving his team 2 1/7 points. Host was a disappointed youngster when he failed to equal or break the state's half-mile record of 1:59.

He was clocked in .56 flat the first quarter, but couldn't furnish the necessary sprint to best his time of last year in the state meet, which was 2:00.1. He did cop the

event, however, in 2:00.6, and right on his heels as he did so was Dick Freeman of South High, who unquestionably ran the best 880 of his young career. The track admittedly was slow.

Catholic's medley relay team placed second behind Flint Northern, and was clocked at 2:32.8, for a new school record. The team, composed of Lawrence Yeo, Pete Naimo, Lavern Wolf and Gerald Balczak, bested its previous school mark of 2:34.6 set in the regionals.

The half-mile relay team of the Cougars also found itself stepping it off in fast competition. The team gained fourth, and shattered another of the school records in doing so. Its time was 1:33.1. The previous mark of 1:33.6 was hung

up in 1944. Stanley Marcinowski, Don Kozminski, Lavern Wolf and Johnny Doran composed the 1950 team.

Union picked up six points during the meet, two of them coming from Eugene Lekenta's third place in one of the 440's. Eddie Bush, the Hawks' ace pole vaulter picked up the other four by sharing a three-way tie for second. Bush and his companions fell out at 12 feet one inch, equal of the Grand Rapids City league record.

All of Ottawa Hills' five points were picked up by versatile Bob Hendricksen. Bob took third in the broad jump and fourth in one version of the 440, a heat that was run in 50.6.

George Rolfe of Central was the

other Grand Rapids lad to score in class A circles. George settled for one-quarter of a point as he shared a four-way tie for sixth in the pole vault.

Grand Rapids Lee added another three points to the cause of the Grand Valley league when its medley relay team came in fourth behind the winning East combination.

Of interest to the 2,000 or more spectators on hand Saturday was the breaking of the high jump record, a mark that has been standing for 12 years. Bay City Central's elongated Milt Mead, who stands 6-feet 8-inches, successfully crossed the bar at 6-feet 4-inches. The old mark of 6-feet 2 1/2 inches was held by Floyd Bates of Flint Central.

