

# Pontiac's Junior High Track Program Paying Off

By JOE HART

The athletes spawned in a highly organized junior high program have transformed Pontiac into a whale of a high school track power.

And like Jonah, the other Saginaw Valley League teams, including Saginaw High and Arthur Hill, are in danger of being swallowed by the newly created monster unless they develop similar junior high track programs.

Pontiac's coach, Wally Schloerke, gives generous credit for the Chiefs' sudden rise to power to the preliminary training his team members received in a recently reorganized junior high track program.

In one short season, Pontiac, a perennial also-ran, became a Class A track giant, winning both the state title and the Saginaw Valley League championship easily in an era where intense competition had pared winning team totals to few points or even a fraction of a point.

The athletes who accomplished the Pontiac "miracle" were a collection of Juniors and sophomores who received extensive training and experience in a junior high program.

Pontiac piled up 51-13/14 points in winning the state title to second-place Flint Northern's 17. The Chiefs succeeded Saginaw High as the SVL champion by amassing 69-7/10 points. Pontiac was equally impressive in winning three other major meets — the Class A regional, the Central Michigan College Relays and the Saginaw High-Arthur Hill Indoor Invitational.

The Chiefs served warning that this year's performance was no fluke by romping to the SVL non-grad title last week, piling up 98 points, while runnerup Saginaw High scored 24. The non-grad meet annually serves as an accurate barometer of where the track power will lie the following year.

Unless similar junior high programs are adopted in Saginaw, Flint and Bay City, Pontiac seems destined to dominate SVL track competition in future years.

Saginaw High and Arthur Hill are in dire need of an influx of sophomore talent if they hope to catch the Chiefs. Both coaches, Herb Korf of Saginaw High and Glen Mason of Arthur Hill, got a brief look at future prospects last week in the annual junior high meet.

Saginaw's one-day track carnival in which more than 600 boys and girls compete is better than nothing, but it can hardly be compared with Pontiac's season-long junior high program, which includes a series of dual meets as well as a league meet.

Individual talent, of course, is a big factor in track competition. And there's no denying that Pontiac has its share of talented performers.

But the Pontiac youngsters, mostly sophomores, were carefully groomed by junior high coaches primarily interested in track.

Saginaw's junior high athletic program at present includes soccer as a substitute for football, basketball, swimming and baseball. The annual track meet is more of a "field day" than an organized attempt to develop youthful track talent.

For instance, the Saginaw meet program lists only five events—three dashes, ranging from 50 to 100 yards, the high jump and the broad jump—in its one day of competition.

Pontiac in its season-long program includes all of the events staged in the Saginaw meet, but has some important additions—hurdles, relay, shot put and pole vault.

A youthful Saginaw track prospect does not begin to compete in those four events until he reaches the tenth grade—his first year in high school.

That the Pontiac program produces results is self-evident. That it will continue to be effective is proven by some of the performances of this season's crop of junior high competitors.

Jim Hawkins, a sprinter from one of the five Pontiac junior highs, has been clocked in 10.3 seconds for the 100-yard dash. The best century time in the Saginaw meet was 11.4.

Hawkins also has broad jumped 20-feet-2½. A leap of 17-feet-5½ was the top performance here. Hawkins has skimmed over the 100-yard low hurdles in 11.3 seconds, cracking the old mark of 12.2 held jointly by Willie Wilson and Jim Taylor, a pair of better than average hurdlers who compete for Pontiac High this season.

In another remarkable performance by a Pontiac junior high prospect, Gene Lawson cleared 6-feet-1½ in the high jump. The top performance here was 5-feet-3.

The best time posted in the 75-yard dash here was 8.8 seconds, while the top Pontiac mark this season was 8.4.

Additional Pontiac junior high prospects include a shot putter who has tossed 50-feet-11 (eight pound shot) and a pair of pole vaulters, who have cleared 10 feet.

Pontiac, incidentally, now has extensive football and basketball programs in operation in its junior highs.

Don't be too surprised if Pontiac, which had won only one SVL title in a major sport until this season, is a strong contender for both conference football and basketball championships during the 1955-56 school year.

Athletic competition on the high school level has become increasingly intense in recent years. No longer will Saginaw High, for instance, be able to dominate SVL and state Class A track simply by placing more emphasis on that particular sport than do most schools.

Most Class A schools in the state now are fully aware of the value and prestige that can be gained by fielding a winning track team.

In the future, it appears almost certain that it will take a combination of talented youngsters, carefully prepared in junior high athletic programs and groomed in well balanced high school programs, to be a consistent winner in any sport.

Over emphasis? It's difficult to criticize any attempt, whether on an athletic field or in a classroom, that strives for perfection.



What, No Water Wings?

... A driving rain and mushy track slowed the times in the Big Ten track meet yesterday at Columbus, Ohio. But Jim Golliday of Northwestern University (right) is shown winning the 100-yard dash in the good exceptional time

of 9.5 seconds. Harry Nash, (right) of Minnesota, was second and William Garner, also of Minnesota, (left) finished third. Michigan won the team title easily. (AP Wirephoto).

## Rain Ruins 55th Annual Meet

# Michigan Outclasses Field To Win Big Ten Track Title

COLUMBUS, Ohio, (UP) — A heavy downpour after a preliminary world record-matching feat in the 100-yard dash failed to slow Michigan's surge to a smashing triumph yesterday in the 55th Big Ten outdoor track meet.

Michigan's total of 62 1/8 points virtually doubled defending champion Illinois' second place total of 31 13/16.

In a competition swept by a wide range of weather, most of it squall-like, Northwestern's Jim Golliday ran the 100-yard semifinal in 9.5 seconds for the second time this season to match the world mark.

However, an aiding wind slightly over the accepted maximum for world records prevailed.

Golliday later streaked over a near-flooded track to a 9.5 century victory and won the 220 in 21.3, two-tenths of a second behind Jesse Owens' conference mark.

It was Michigan all the way in a meet which produced fine performances under adverse conditions. The Wolverines won six individual events and the mile relay, scoring in all but two of the 14 competitions.

Defending champion Willard Thomson of Illinois matched the 120-yard high hurdles record of 14 seconds flat. Thomson, also retaining his 220 low hurdles crown, and Golliday were the meet's only double winners.

Michigan's great show of balance in dethroning Illinois included a sweep of four field

events, Friday, the other field event, the discus, went to Minnesota's Jerry Helgeson.

The Illini had won four straight crowns.

The meet had hardly begun before an Ohio State Stadium crowd of 3,500 was sent scurrying to the protection of the stands by high winds and a downpour which spilled from scudding black clouds.

The downpour was at its height when Kevan Gosper of Michigan State dethroned Illinois champion Ralph Fessenden in the 440 with the remarkable time of :47.8, one-tenth of a second over the meet record.

Another fine performance came in the 550 as Michigan's Pete Gray outlasted favored Henry Cryer of Illinois to win in a commendable 1:54.4, two-tenths of a second slower than the Big Ten record.

Michigan's other victories came as John Moule won the mile in 4:14.5; Bob Appleman took the pole vault at 13-feet-½; Mark Booth retained his high jump crown at 6-feet-6. Dave Owen won the shot with a 54-feet-4½ loss and Junior Stielstra captured the broad jump at 23-feet-5½ inches.

When Golliday whizzed to his :09.3 clocking, the wind velocity was 4.55 miles an hour, just over the allowable record of 4.47.

In his 9.5 championship effort, the wind velocity was 2.6.

FINAL TEAM SCORING  
Michigan 62 1/8; 2—Ill.

## Pittsburgh's Sowell Nears World Record

NEW YORK (UP) — Talented Manhattan College won the ICIA track and field championship yesterday for the third time in the past four years amid a wholesale assault on meet records in the ancient carnival.

A half-dozen records were set and one tied. The best mark was turned in by diminutive Arnie Sowell of Pittsburgh who not only licked his arch-rival, Tom Courtney, in the half-mile but came within a

16 tests good for 35 points. Penn State was second with 35½. They were the only teams in the running and, at that, George Eastman's Jaspers had to pull down a record in the mile relay behind Villanova to gain the necessary points.

Joel Shankle, Duke's oneman gang and one of the two double winners, tied the 120-yard high hurdles record with a 14.1 effort. He also took the broad jump with a leap of 24 feet 8 inches.

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