

Later Meets Urged

By George Maskin

Now that they've split the state high school track meets and are holding the finals at three different locations, why can't the championship dates be set for later in the spring?

To many coaches in the Class A and B ranks, the rush act placed on prep track in Michigan never has made much sense.

ACTUALLY, this year's finals have come fairly late, but there have been years when the title meets were held on the third Saturday of May, which, of course, meant the regionals were staged before May 15.

The state association has insisted it can't "doodle" with the track finals after the fourth Saturday in May because:

Numerous smaller schools close for the summer vacation by the first week in June.

By delaying the track meet any later, the thinclads would be interfering with graduation and other senior activities.

The Michigan and Michigan State University tracks aren't available for the preps after approximately May 20.

The "A" and "B" coaches can't see eye to eye with all the state association objections to holding the track finals on, say, the first Saturday in June.

ONE COACH popped up:

"Why do they force us to jam our season when they allow the tennis teams to wait until the first weekend of June to stage their state championships?"

"Aren't the tennis players interfering with graduation or closing school activities, too?"

Another coach added:

"The Michigan track setup is ridiculous. We usually get a late start because of the weather and before we know it, the regionals and the state meets are with us and gone.

"When the weather gets nice we're all through with the big meets and, for that matter, our seasons, too—even though we could function for a couple of more weeks."

A third coach declared:

"IN BASKETBALL and swimming, the state meets climax the season. Not in track in Michigan.

"Many of us have to hold our league meets after the state meets, which makes the whole thing anticlimactic. We should be working up to the state meets in track, just as our prep teams do in other sports."

The splitting of the final meets over three locations this year for the first time certainly could simplify matters were the state association to permit the Class A and B schools to hold their championships later.

The "A" and "B" schools henceforth will alternate between Michigan and Michigan State, while the "C" and "D" teams this year have vied at Central Michigan and in other seasons likely also will use the facilities at Western Michigan.

With outstanding track plants available at Western, Central and Eastern Michigan, plus Michigan and Michigan State, the preps shouldn't have any trouble finding a spot or two for an early June track meet.