

FROM SCHOOLBOY TO OFFICIAL

Track Starter Calls On 36 Years of Experience

By HARVEY BARCUS

Man and boy, Leighton Boyd has had a track career that has continued for 36 years and is likely to go on for many more. It has encompassed all phases of the sport.

He was a champion sprinter in high school and college, coached championship teams and now officiates in championship meets.

"There wasn't much interest in track at Southeastern High when I enrolled there in 1921," said Boyd who is serving as starter in the Metro League's preliminaries at Mackenzie today. "The school had no one who knew much about the sport.

"The league had indoor and outdoor meets in those days and some of us at Southeastern wanted to run. Walter Draper, then the basketball coach, helped get us organized but the basketball team took up almost all his time and we were left pretty much to ourselves.

WATCHED OTHERS

"I didn't even know how to get off my marks in the first meet, which I think was either in 1922 or 1923. I learned by watching the boys from other schools."

Boyd was an apt pupil, for he was the league 100, and 220-yard dash champion before getting his diploma in January, 1925. He was caught several times in 10-seconds flat for the 100 in dual meets when the city record was only a tenth of a second slower.

"I guess football was my favorite sport then," the youthful looking 53-year-old official remarked. "I was an end two years and a halfback in my last two seasons. I was chosen on 'The Detroit News' All-City team in my final year."

Boyd went on to Michigan Normal College (now Eastern Michigan) at where he played four years of football and ran four years of track. The school

did not lose a dual meet during those years. He was the MIAA 100 and 220 champion and an all-conference back.

BECOMES COACH

After graduating in 1929, Boyd was assigned to Northeastern as assistant coach in football and track and it was there that he began officiating.

"There were no paid officials for track and the rival coaches did all the work," Boyd recollected. "I did the starting in our meets, getting the experience that led to my being selected as an official starter and referee in later years."

Boyd returned to Southeastern as track and football coach in 1932. Two years later he dropped football to concentrate on track and was one of the most successful coaches in the league when he quit coaching

in 1934 to become a student counselor.

SEVEN STRAIGHT

His teams swept seven successive East Side outdoor titles; won three league championships (one indoor and two outdoor); and took four cross country crowns. Southeastern also was first in the Wayne Relays two years in a row.

"I've had many thrills as a competitor and coach but the most unforgettable came in two dual meets," Boyd remarked. "My boys won every place in every event, blanking Miller, 96-0, in 1936 and Highland Park, 85-0, three years later.

"I consider track the best of the sports to show individual perseverance," Boyd added. "It takes a lot of training and persistence to be a top man."



LEIGHTON BOYD READIES TRACKMEN
Sends Off Prep Runners With a Knowing Eye

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