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COVERT REPEATS AS CLASS D TRACK CHAMPION

Covert, which didn't even figure to be in the running when the season started, survived both sickness and injury Saturday at Mount Pleasant to walk off with its second straight state Class D track and field championship.

Last year Covert scored 53 points to run away with the title. Individual entries produced 47 of these, and graduation took 38 of the individual points including triple-winner Mark Patterson.

But the Bulldogs rebuilt and squeaked past Lake City by a 38-26 margin despite failing to score in two events they had counted on for points when Greg Thomas pulled a leg muscle and Bernard Woods became sick.

Covert copped the state crown without winning an event. The Class D meet did give the area its only first-place finishes, however, and both of the winners broke meet records.

Skip Larsen of St. Joseph Catholic won the 440-yard dash in 3:31.2 seconds, while Martin's Jim Peck clicked off a 2:01.2 in the 880-yard run.

Other team champions were Kalamazoo Central in Class A at East Lansing, River Rouge in Class B at Ann Arbor and Battle Creek, St. Philip and Fowlerville tied in Class C, also at Mount Pleasant.

Covert posted four seconds with two of them, Woods' 51.8 in the 440 and the 880-yard relay team's 1:34.7, setting school records. The other two were Mario Evans in the shot put and Clarence Baber in the low hurdles.

Rounding out the scoring for the Bulldogs were Thomas with a third in the long jump and Tony Tarr with a seventh in the 100-yard dash.

Thomas was virtually assured of scoring in the 220 when he pulled a muscle about 40 yards from the finish. Woods collapsed after chasing Larsen home in the 440, was taken to the Central Michigan infirmary and thus cost the Covert mile relay team its anchor man.

The next best performance by an area school was a fourth-place finish in Class C by Fennville. John Riston led the way with a 12.8 pole vault good for fifth.

Second Rich Jordan was fourth in the high jump and sixth in the long jump, and the Black Hawk's 880 relay team was fourth.

Resides Larsen, St. Joe Catholic took third in the 880-relay and 10th in the mile relay to the wind up, ninth in the Class D team standings.

In Class A, Benton Harbor placed two performers, John Jim Giachino of Kalamazoo U-High running a 4:22.7 mile and Dale Sage of Rees hitting 1:38.9 in the 880, while Imbley City's mile relay team clocked 3:33.9.

In Class D, Ed Papas of Free soil cleared 12 feet in the pole vault, Ann Arbor U-High ran eastern's clocking of 3:22.8 in the mile relay, although Battle Creek's Arno Williams tied the 100-yard dash record of .99.8.

Class B records included a Paw Paw was the area leader in the mile and Galiert's Kent Ingles fourth in the pole vault.

Other scorers in the Class C meet included Greg Groose of Three Oaks second in the mile, Hartford's Dick Obrg fourth in the 880 and Waterford ninth in the 880 relay.

Rounding out the area's Class D pointmakers were Bloomington's Barcus Page third in the shot put, Mike Spencer of Lawrence fourth in the mile and Galiert's Kent Ingles fourth in the pole vault.

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