

Ecorse Half-Milers Steal Part of Relays

By DAVE MATTHEWS
State Journal Sports Writer

It takes something very special to steal the spotlight over briefly from a fellow like Flint Centra's world record-holding dashman Herb Washington.

Ecorse proved to be the team that had that something during Saturday afternoon's action in the Class A section of The State Journal-Spartan Relays... a record-setting quartet of half-milers.

Washington captivated the crowd in the preliminaries of the 60-yard dash by twice equalling his own meet record of 8.2 seconds. Ecorse won the crowd, however, with a brilliant performance in the final event on the afternoon program.

Receiving a tremendous sub-two minute anchor leg from Danny Hague, Ecorse negotiated the two-mile relay in 8 minutes, 8 seconds. The time bettered the former meet record, set by Roseville in 1965, by six-tenths of a second.

East Lansing, which saw its hopes for the two-mile title fall just short for the second straight year, could take credit for pushing Ecorse to the record.

The Trojan foursome of Jim Wrigley, Dave Grammon, Dale Arbour and Eric Bates battled Ecorse almost step for step all the way, finishing with a strong 8:11.5 clocking, easily the best they had ever run. Had Ecorse a lesser man than Hague running the anchor, East Lansing might have won.

Hague, however, may well be Michigan's finest half-miler. He ran under 1:54 last season. He was joined on the record-setting effort by Marion Pittman, James Richardson and Edgar Watkins.

The two-mile was a great race for area teams, two of them placing in addition to East Lansing. Howell was a solid third, and Everett fifth.

Howell got an 8:15.4 time from the combination of Don Jones, Jim Lobur, Ross Woodstock and Bob Anderson. Everett was timed in 8:16.7 with the swift quartet of Gary Donn, John Wheeler, Gary Wickman and Marv Lynch.

Serious misfortune befell another fine two-mile unit, Kalamazoo Loy Norrix. Norrix won the first heat of the race with what appeared to be an excellent time. But, it was discovered that a mistake by meet officials had shortened the heat by one 220-yard lap of the Jenison Fieldhouse track.

Thus, the Norrix time could not be counted.

Washington is one of those very rare athletes who simply oozes class whenever he steps onto the track.

When he made his first appearance of the afternoon, everything and everyone stopped to watch. From the moment he climbed gracefully out of his warm-up suit, Washington held their attention. He high-stepped his way to an easy win, and appeared to let up about 10 yards short of the tape.

Otherwise, he might well have bettered his record instead of tying it.

The afternoon was a good time for area schools in the only other event completed as well. Both Stu Hanley of Sexton and Bill VanSickle of Howell placed in the shot put.

Haney notched fourth, with a put of 51 feet, 8½ inches. He missed third by just two inches. VanSickle was fifth, registering a best throw of 50 feet, 9 inches.

Concern over the possibility of civil disturbances and resulting travel and curfew restrictions left its mark on the meet. Several Detroit and Detroit area schools which had been scheduled to participate did not come.

At least one other, Birmingham Brother Rice, had to leave early in order to get the members of its team to their homes before an 8 p.m. curfew.

One excellent Brother Rice athlete, Dan Kurkowski, had qualified for the finals in both hurdles. Brother Rice's shuttle hurdle relay team had posted the best qualifying time.

Thus, at the time it had to depart, Brother Rice was very much in the running for the team championship. Needless to say, both the coach and team members were very reluctant to leave. But, they had no choice. They were ordered home by their principal.

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Relays Summaries

CLASS A SUMMARY

Shot Put—1. James Elmer (Kalamazoo Central); 2. John Grayson (Southfield); 3. Tom Wood (Detroit Catholic Central); 4. Stu Hanley (Lansing Sexton); 5. Bill Vansickle (Howell). Winning Distance—54'.

Two-Mile Relay—1. Ecorse (Marion Pittman, James Richardson, Edgar Watkins, Danny Hague); 2. East Lansing (Jim Wisley, Dave Grummond, Dale Arbour, Eric Bates); 3. Howell (Don Jones, Jim Lobur, Ross Woodstock, Bob Anderson); 4. St. Clair Shores Lakeview; 5. Lansing Everett (Gary Donn, John Wheeler, Gary Wickman, Mary Lynch). Winning Time—8:08 (meet record).

Pole Vault—1. Larry Biskner (Pontiac Waterford); 2. Don DeLong (Kalamazoo Loy Norris); 3. Don Griffin (Jackson Parkside); 4. Andy Lopez (Jackson); 5. Bruce Plumley (Livonia Bentley). Winning Height—13'4".

70-Yard High Hurdles—1. Andy Johnson (Battle Creek Central); 2. John Morrison (Detroit Redford Union); 3. Chuck Mansell (St. Clair Shores South Lake); 4. Rich Wiggins (Birmingham Groves); 5. Rob Carr (Everett). Winning Time—8.7.

Spring Medley Relay—1. Ecorse (Leslie Hric, Dwight Stallworth, Cee Turner, Art Small); 2. Birmingham Groves; 3. Flint Central; 4. Grand Rapids Ottawa Hills; 5. Birmingham Seaholm. Winning Time—2:29.6 (Meet record).

40-Yard Dash—1. Herb Washington (Flint Central); 2. Glenn Walls (Ypsilanti); 3. Mel Gene Brown (Battle Creek Central); 4. Larr Dennis Johnson (Kalamazoo Central); 5. Hifs Eric George (Ecorse). Winning Time—6.1 (Meet Record).

70-Yard Low Hurdles—1. Andy Johnson (Battle Creek Central); 2. Sherlad Goude-LOCK (Mt. Clemens); 3. Steve Gates (Ann Arbor Pioneer); 4. Mike Phillips (Rochester); 5. John Ward (Grand Blanc). Winning Time—8.2.

80 Relay—1. Battle Creek Central (Gene Brown, Jessie Wright, Jerry Miller, Charlie Gudder); 2. Ypsilanti; 3. Kalamazoo Central; 4. Flint Central; 5. Gross Pointe. Winning Time—1:33.0 (Meet record).

High Jump—1. John Mann (North Farmington); 2. Russ Carsons (Flint Central); 3. Grady Walker (Jackson); 4. Ie. Phil Selby (Jackson Parkside) and Kevin Wickcliffe (Davison). Winning Height—6-4.

Mile Run—1. Jack White (Mt. Clemens); 2. Steve Danforth (Temperance Sedford); 3. Ray Eddy (Adrian); 4. Dick Randall (North Farmington); 5. Jim Bilborrow (Coldwater). Winning Time—4:27.0.

Shuttle Hurdle Relay—1. Birmingham Groves (Grae Wood, Bill McClelland, Rich Brown, Rich Wiggins); 2. Battle Creek Central; 3. Gross Pointe; 4. Grand Blanc; 5. Farmington. Winning Time—:29.1.

Long Jump—1. Dennis Johnson (Kalamazoo Central); 2. Joe Hart (Detroit University Detroit); 3. Thurmond Kirkland (Ann Arbor Pioneer); 4. Charles McMillan (Grand Ottawa Hills); 5. Dave Demos (Warren). Winning Distance—22-9-1/2.

Mile Relay—1. Ecorse (Marion Pittman, Larry Hric, Art Small, Danny Hague); 2. Birmingham Seaholm; 3. Birmingham Groves; 4. Flint Northwestern; 5. East Lansing (Jeff Arbour, Dave Grummond, Dale Arbour, Mark Graal). Winning Time—3:28.8 (Meet Record).

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