



Joe Vanderhoff's Prep Beat

Track Stars in Spotlight

Track followers in this section of the state will be watching the exploits of Fremont's Dave Boyer and Godwin Heights' Greg Stratton in the state Class B finals Saturday at the University of Michigan track in Ann Arbor.

The two area prepsters are among 100-plus track standouts carrying Western and Northern Michigan banners in the finals stated at three sites Class A championships are booked for Michigan State University and the combined C-D classic is scheduled at Central Michigan University at Mt. Pleasant.

All of the finalists in three classes earned the right to move into the championship round by placing in the first three spots in last week's Regionals held throughout the state.

Boyer is a pole vaulter while Stratton is the best high hurdler, according to comparative times around Greater Grand Rapids. Both are seniors and making final bids for state track stardom Saturday.

Of the two, Boyer, 19-year-old, 140-pounder, has the best chance of winning a blue ribbon. Stratton faces strong opposition from a hurdler by the name of Mike Whitfield from Kalamazoo. He's expected that the Godwin ace will place near the top in the high hurdles.

Boyer has caught the attention of prep followers with his tremendous pole-vaulting feats. He's already surpassed the existing Class B record of 13-7

set by Northville's Roland Gloetzner last year.

The Fremont ace has set a big goal for Saturday's finals—a leap of 14-6 and maybe even 14-8—and he feels he can accomplish this if conditions are right.

According to Fremont Coach Robert Rapson, Boyer, isn't daydreaming about his goal. "No sir, Dave has been above 14-6 in practice. He has the ability to attain his goal, providing everything goes all right," says Rapson. "Dave is a fierce competitor. He needs competition to push him further. He should get this Saturday."

In the established Mansfield, Ohio, Relays this year, the Fre-



DAVE BOYER



GREG STRATTON

mont vaulter cleared 14 feet and finished third. He's 13-10 and 13-11 in three different dual meets this season.

At the Ferris State College Relays, Boyer took first place with a 13-7. He also won his specialty in the tough Central Michigan Relays. Last week, he set a Class B Regional standard at Muskegon with a leap of 13-4. His 13-7 is a Seaway League record.

Saturday's competition also serves as a warmup for possible added stardom in the big Midwest Champion of Champions' meet to be held June 7 at Elmhurst, Ill. He was one of the few Michigan athletes to receive an invitation to the classic.

A kidney infection hampered Boyer's 1968 endeavors in the state "B" finals. After several attempts at East Lansing, he was forced to the sidelines.

The key to Boyer's success is hard work. "Dave practices two and three hours a day," explains Rapson. "He uses a fiber glass pole and gets a good whip. Dave is one of the hardest workers I have ever had in track. If there's a chance of setting a record at Ann Arbor Saturday, he will do it."

It was only three years ago that Fremont also had another standout vaulter, Bill Bekkering, who set a state 'B' standard with a 13-6 effort.

Stratton moved into the limelight by breaking the 15-second barrier in the 120-yard high hurdles three times in the last two weeks. He holds the Ottawa-Kent Conference record with 14.8. His 14.9 in the Wyoming Park Regionals last Monday established a new standard.

Stratton, a 6-2 senior, with good power, speed and form, also qualified for the low timbers, but is expected to excel in the high sticks Saturday.

Stratton faces a major obstacle in his quest of a blue ribbon in the high hurdles. Whitfield is recognized as one of the top hurdlers in the state. Last Saturday he was clocked in a sensational 14.2 for the highs.

The state 'B' record for the highs is 14.5, set by Nelson Graham of Mt. Morris in 1964 and duplicated by Wayne Hartwick of Erie-Mason two years ago.

Whitfield is the present holder of the state 180-yard low hurdle mark with 19.3. He did a 19.4 last Saturday in the Sturgis Regional.

This will be the second straight year that Godwin is being represented by a standout hurdler in the 'B' finals. Tim Leatherman placed fourth in the highs in 1968 with a 14.8 at East-Lansing. He finished second in the lows with 19.53.

Rain Preserves Records In O-K Champions' Meet

A steady downpour of rain Wednesday night marred the Ottawa-Kent Champion of Champions' track meet.

Some of the area's top track stars were on hand, hoping to

in eight of the 14 events. At one time, the Blue Division was ahead, 6-3, in first places, but the Red Division won the last six events.

Norm Byram of Kentwood

scoring firsts in both the high and low hurdles.

The Cool twins culminated an outstanding prep track career locally, as Rob won the mile in 4:34 and Ron took the 800 in 2:02.3.