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Reggie Jones Aiming At 9.2

The best sprinter in Saginaw track history thinks he is capable of doing 9.2 or 9.3 before he ends his high school career at Saginaw High.

Reggie Jones isn't being egotistical or cocky when he says that. You might say he has a dream. High hopes. A goal.

This season Jones established himself as the fastest sprinter Saginaw has ever produced. He ran a windaided 9.5 in the 100-yard dash in the Class A regional a few weeks ago in Midland and last week clocked a 21.6 over 220 yards in the state meet.

It was 35 years ago when a young Saginaw High sprinter named Bob Kolbe zipped the 100 in 9.8. Neither Kolbe nor anyone else probably thought that would stand up for 35 years.

The 6-foot-4, 180-pound Jones says it feels nice to have the records, but is quick to give credit to his coach, teammates and some stiff competition from Flint.

"I couldn't have done it without the help of others," he says. Two Flint Central runners — Duane Hill and William Chapman — gave him his best competition this spring. Reggie ran against the strong Flint duo four times, once in a dual, the regional, Valley and state meets.

OVERCOMES INJURY

The lanky, smooth-striding junior had to overcome a football injury to make it big this year. He suffered a half-torn ligament in his left knee during the second week of the football season and never really overcame the injury until shortly before the track season started.

"It's still not 100 per cent," says Saginaw High track coach Claude Marsh. "The ligaments around the injured one are much stronger and this has enabled him to do as well as he has."

Marsh calls Jones "a very coachable athlete," adaptable to instruction. I can't say if he will run 9.2 or 9.3 next year, but what I want Reggie to do is be a constant 9.7 man, let's say. If he can run that consistently then when the competition is tops and the weather is good, he may hit a 9.3 or a 9.4."

Marsh said this year he had Reggie work on his strengths. He has a good stride so we worked on that. "We never pushed him past his threshold, though. We didn't want to reinjure his knee."

Jones attributes much of his success to running overdistances in practice. "When I'm working on the 100 I'll run 150 yards and when I'm working on the 220 I'll run 300 yards. I may run five or six of these a day. It's helped build up my strength."

FASTER STARTS NEEDED

Marsh hopes to work on Jones' start next year, providing his leg is stronger. "This is the weakest part of his race. Being long and lanky he doesn't explode out of the blocks-like smaller guys," Marsh

explained. "Against top competition he's usually behind at 10 yards, even at 20 and starting to pull away at 30-when he hits stride.

Being a veteran of 25 years coaching track, Marsh knows the big meets are ones to point for. "We favored Reggie's leg the first three weeks this season," Marsh stated. "We point for the three big meets — the Valley, Regional and State. The main thing this year was not to over-fatigue Reggie. Some days he tires easily. Now, you take a big, strong guy like Calvin O'Neal and we work him hard, over-fatigue him. It works on him."

O'Neal, a fine physical specimen, going 6-foot-2 and 220 pounds, is not a bad sprinter in his own right. He has clocked a 10.3 in the 100 and runs a leg on the 440 and mile relay teams besides being a 56-foot shot putter. O'Neal is University of Michigan bound on a football scholarship where Bo Schembechler hopes to put 20 pounds on him and turn him loose as a middle guard, ala Henry Hill style.

Reggie Jones may or may not realize his hopes of being a 9.2 sprinter. He now is, however, the state's premiere sprinter, taking over where Herb Washington and Marshall Dill left off.

Both Washington and Dill are performing at Michigan State now. Washington, of course, ranks as one of the top sprinters in the country at 100 yards where he has gone 9.2. Dill is one of the best 220 men in the U.S., usually clipping off times in the 20.5 range.

It was only fitting that Reggie Jones was judged last night's outstanding performer in the Herb Korf meet by a committee of five. To do it, though, he had to beat out another Jones. The other one is Jim Jones of Arthur Hill. The Jones boys had quite a night, hauling in six firsts between them.

Reggie won the 100 in 10 flat, the 220 in 22.2 and anchored the winning 880 relay in 1:32. All three wins established Korf Meet records, although Reggie and relay team members have had better times this season.

Jimmy Jones won the half-mile in 2 minutes flat and also won the long jump and high jump. Besides that he ran the anchor leg on the Hills' mile relay team that placed third.

GOOD TEAMS, NO FANS

This has been a banner year for several teams and individuals in Saginaw County. Saginaw High and Arthur Hill enjoyed their finest track seasons in many a year. SS. Peter & Paul's, Bridgeport, Hemlock and Carrollton did very well.

It all added up to the best Herb Korf Meet in the short three-year history of the event. It's just a shame only 500 people showed up to see it.

I guess it's safe to say Saginaw isn't the greatest track town around, spectator-wise.

GENERAL MEATS FOR