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Prep Star of the Week

He's Taking Hurdles in Stride Now

Among other more appropriate ailments, Mt. Clemens High track star Bob Cornwell suffered from a very tender stomach last year.

The 6-foot-2, 175-pound hurdler often got caught up with the excitement and pressure of his competition and invariably came down sick before each meet.

Cornwell made up for the



Bob Cornwell

If anything could erase

"butterflies" with resolution, a strong backbone and supple legs that eventually carried him to a third-place finish in the high hurdles at the 1972 state trials.

The 18-year-old Rather senior is a new man this season. No more nervousness. No stomach pains. And no defeats!

Bob has laid claim to the state's No. 1 ranking in hurdling, with impressive victories in the 120-yard high and 180-yard low hurdles at the Huron, Spartan and Mansfield Relays already this month.

LAST Saturday was just another typical day for the easy-going hurdler.

Cornwell set records in the lows (19.20), the highs (14.5) and took part in the winning shuttle hurdles to lead Mt. Clemens to a 114-point romp at the Waterford Relays—the greatest team total in history of the meet.

For his efforts, Cornwell has been named the Free Press Prep Star of the Week.

Compassion for his fellow man is a common Cornwell trait. The Spartan Relays proved that.

Cornwell's memories of hours in a training room for sore hamstrings, bruised knees and a tired back, Mansfield, O., was the place.

The cheers after a 14.1 clocking in the high hurdles—best of Bob's career—and a decision over defending champ Jim Fantouz of Sandusky to boot left an ecstatic feeling.

And then later, remorse.

"SURE, I felt great, but ..." Cornwell explained. "It's different. Everyone expects me to win now. I've got to reach out for more."

"I ran a 19.5 in the lows ... just leaned a guy out. I felt capable to run faster. But I lost my edge in the four hours between events. They did that for the shuttle relay. It's too much time."

"And then my team didn't win. No matter what I did. I felt bad. Mansfield? Just another victory."

Compassion for his fellow man is a common Cornwell trait. The Spartan Relays proved that.

"The kid didn't have indoor track shoes," Cornwell said. "When he came up and asked, well ... I didn't know him, but I lent him my brand new pair."

"HIS FOOT was a hair bigger than mine. That's funny. He used them in the qualifying heat of the 60-yard dash and returned them."

"You know who he was? Reggie Jones of Saginaw—the best sprinter in the state. That makes me feel good—even if the shoes have been coming loose. I just took them to a store and cemented them. Now I carry two sets of spikes with me."

Bob's soft heart shows up at home under entirely different circumstances.

"Dad is a Minister of Education at the First Methodist Church," Cornwell related with pride. "He started a Neighborhood Youth Corps to keep runaways and dropouts at home. It's a controversial program."

"In three years we've had 30 different kids living at our house with mom, dad, sis and myself. I spend a lot of time

driving kids around. I've given them money. When guys are around, I want to share."

"I had two silver dollars and a bunch of 50 cent pieces. They disappeared one day. That's the breaks."

BREAKS are rarely a factor in Bob's athletic endeavors, which include three letters in football and two more for basketball.

"I love basketball, but I'm not very good," Cornwell admitted.

"I played flanker and defensive back in football. I didn't receive many passes, but I knocked a lot down. I surprised the coach—and got a few letters from colleges asking along that line."

Cornwell expects to receive—and will accept—a scholarship in track from Western Michigan University. Grandpa would like that.

"My grandfather has a turkey farm only 30 minutes away," Cornwell cracked. "With a fine restaurant also. I've had many a good meal there." Just the proper thing for a tender stomach.

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