



Saginaw's Reggie Jones with coach Stan Huntsman

Good days loom ahead for Jones

BY CHRIS THORNE
News Staff Writer

Saginaw's Olympic candidate, Reggie Jones, had a bad day Saturday, but his coach Stan Huntsman says the good days are yet to come.

The University of Tennessee junior speedster failed to place in the 220-yard dash in the Southeastern Conference Championships at Athens, Georgia (University of Georgia) and took third in the 100-yard dash.

But the Volunteers won their 13th straight SEC title, topping Florida by a wide margin, 179-117.

"He just had a bad day, said Huntsman, "but he won't let it get him down. He's some kind of competitor."

Jones was unavailable for comment at the university. Huntsman is confident that the former Saginaw High star will make the Olympic team.

"Reggie has a lot of work to do to get ready for the Olympic trials, but I know he'll make it," said Huntsman.

The next test for Reggie and his teammates is Saturday at the California Relays at Modesto.

Jones will meet Steve Williams of the Florida Track Club. Williams nipped Jones twice in the Tom Black Classic earlier in the month in Knoxville.

Williams won the 100-meter dash in .10.0 while Jones was clocked at .10.1. Williams took the 200-meter dash in .20.1 while Jones finished .20.3.

Both men are considered as strong candidates by track publications to represent the United States in sprint competition in Montreal in July.

The Olympic trials will be June 19-26 at the University of Oregon in Eugene. Huntsman believes that Jones will be right on schedule for the trials.

Tennessee was to compete in the Central Collegiate Championships in Kalamazoo (Western Michigan University) on May 29, but the Vols have pulled out.

"The CCC is too close to the NCAA's," said Huntsman. "We've had a lot of meets and I think we need a good rest before the NCAA meet."

The NCAA championships are in Philadelphia on June 3-5.

The Volunteers are ranked behind Southern Cal by Track and Field News in the race for the NCAA crown.

The University of Texas-El Paso (UTEP) won the crown last year and Tennessee took sixth. In 1974, Jones who was then a freshman, won MVP honors as the Vols won the championship.

Jones is the co-holder of the 100-meter world record as he was clocked at .9.9 last July in a meet in Boston.

At the California Relays last year, Jones beat high school standout, Houston McTear, in the 100-yard dash.

Jones is the defending 220-yard NCAA champ as he raced to a .20.60 clocking. He will try to regain the 100-yard championship he won in 1974.

"We're on shaky ground at the moment," stated Huntsman about the NCAA meet. "One of our top sprinters (Lamar Preyor) has been hobbling around."

Preyor is a sophomore from Ohio who was part of the 880-yard relay team that Jones anchored to a sizzling time of 1:21.7 at the Dogwood Relays in early April.

Preyor was one of the nation's top sprinters last year and looks like he's following in Jones' footsteps.

"If we can stay healthy, we should do okay in the NCAA's," said Huntsman.

Huntsman will be one of the middle distance coaches at the Olympics. He was named to the Olympic Committee in 1974.

For Jones, the challenge is there and the pressure will be on him. So far, he's met pressure and won. Another big test comes soon.

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