

Something New for Girls in Spring: Free Press State Invitational Track

BY HAL SCHRAM
Free Press Sports Writer

Something new for the girls — that's what the Free Press has in store in 1978.

The first annual Detroit Free Press girls' state invitational track meet will be staged Saturday, June 10, at the excellent eight-lane all-weather facility at Warren Fitzgerald High.

The meet will be open to every high school girl track star in Michigan whose performance in any of the 14 events offered by the Michigan High School Athletic Association can match a specified standard of excellence three weeks prior to the meet.

Dick Snyder, athletic director at Fitzgerald and a 20-year veteran of track and field presentations, will serve as meet director.

He will work with an advisory committee of four well-known Michigan girls' track and field coaches who own a combined total of 40 years of experience. On the advisory committee are Pat Asby of Comstock High, Karyn Cribley of Grand Ledge, Elaine Steiner of Macomb County Community College and Ann Swayze of Midland High.



Dick Snyder

"We are anxious to expand our high school sports promotions and felt there was a definite need in the field of girls' athletics," said Free Press executive sports editor George Puscas.

"We explored many fields of girls' athletics before finding track and field the more feasible avenue of approach. Last season, 555 Michigan high schools sponsored girls track.

"We extend our invitation to all high school girls who are regular members of varsity track teams to point for this meet," said Puscas. "We hope to see it grow into an annual affair which will climax the big spring season."

PRELIMINARIES will be held in the morning hours with finals starting some time shortly after the lunch break.

"We decided against running the finals under the lights at night," said Snyder. "Many of these girls will be coming a long distance to compete and we want to get everyone home before it gets too late in the evening."

Competition will be held in the two mile, 880-yard run, 100, 220 and 440-yard dashes, 110-yard low hurdles, mile run, discus, high jump, long jump, shot put and 440, 880 and mile relays.

Tentative qualifying standards have already been set. A girl who runs the mile, for instance, must have a time of 5 minutes 40 seconds or better. A shot putter must have thrown the ball at least 35 feet.

Coaches may get a set of these standards by

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sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Snyder at Warren Fitzgerald High, Warren, Mich., 48091. The meet will be run under the rules established for such meets by the MHSAA.

Coaches are urged to set aside one competitive date in their schedule for the Free Press Invitational. The girls will enjoy the competition and the awards. The Free Press is going all out to give the best possible medals. There'll be medals for eight places in all events.

SNYDER WILL BE assisted by a trained and experienced group of 40 high school track officials and promises that his meet will run on schedule.

There will be seating for 2,000 spectators, lockers, clean restrooms and even a concession stand. An experienced trainer will be on hand to assist with any possible injuries.

Set aside the day of Saturday, June 10, for something new and special in Michigan girls' track and field.