Newspapers by ancestry

Indiana Jumper Claims Upset Victory at Relays

By Bill Rogers

Charles Jones of Gary (Ind.) Roosevelt came to the Mansfield-Mebock Relays in search of a school record in the long jump.

He left with 1, a school record; 2, a first-place medal, and 3, the satisfaction that his stunning upset victory over the nation's finest high-school long jumper had triggered a team championship for the Gary squad.

Jones, a 6-foot-2, 175-pound senior, provided the biggest surprise at the 46th Relays when he leaped 24 feet, 1⅛ inches to snare first place in the long jump, an event supposedly "locked up" by defending champion Todd Bell of Middletown.

Bell, holder of the Relays record, 25-5, which he set in 1976, was favored to win for the second consecutive year, but the Middletown leaper had trouble with the takeoff board, losing at least 10 inches on each of his six jumps during the competition.

* * *

Jones was overcome with joy when he realized his final pop had carried him over 24 feet and into first place. "I never thought I could defeat Bell," said Jones. "I only hoped he would push me past 23-7. That was our school record, and I wanted to beat it. Never did I even dream of winning."

Going into the final round of jumps, Bell, even with all his problems, was resting in first place with a mark of 23-6. The Middie football All-Ohioan failed to improve on his distance.

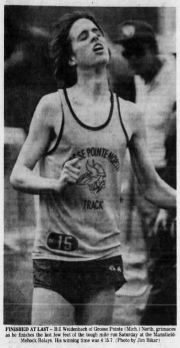
Mike Worlds of Toledo Macomber than spanned his all-time best legal jump — an eye-popping 23-7¼ — to slip into the top position. And then along came Jones with his 24-1⅛ flight.

Finishing behind Worlds and Bell were Mike Lee of Columbus Briggs (23-¼), Daryll Melnick, Mississaugua (Ont.) Lorne Park (22-9½) and Mike Schuler, Toledo Rogers (22-2¼).

* * *

Bell, truly a class athlete, had no excuses. "Jones beat me, that's all. I wish I could jump against him again, but we probably won't meet, since he is from Indiana. He looked real good today (Saturday), a super jumper. I want to thank God for helping me do as well as I did," Bell commented.

Jones, whose best previous jump was 22-11, now will be gunning for the Indiana record. Bell, who holds the Ohio record, will contunue to strive for 26 feet.



FINISHED AT LAST – Bill Weidenbach of Grosse Pointe (Mich.) North, grimaces as he finishes the last few feet of the tough mile run Saturday at the Mansfield-Mebock Relays. His winning time was 4:15.7. (Photo by Jim Bikar)

EYES BAR — Dennis Lewis of Ypsilanti, Mich., looks carefully at the high jump bar. Lewis, who has cleared 7 feet, 2 inches, sailed 6 feet, 9¾ inches Saturday for first place in the 46th Mansfield-Mebock Relays. (Photo by Charles Zickle)

Michigan Youth Lives Up to Role

By Bill Rogers

Dennis Lewis of Ypsilanti, Mich., lived up to his favorite's role by winning the high jump at the Mansfield-Mebock Relays Saturday with a leap of 6 feet, 9¾ inches.

Lewis, a 6-foot-4 senior who has cleared 7-2 indoors, had hoped to become the first "seven-footer" in Relays history, but problems with his timing and "steps" ruled out any chance of a record leap.

In fact, Lewis was lucky to stay in the competition, after failing on two jumps at the 6-8 level. Lewis put everything together on his third try, clearing the bar by a good four or five inches.

Giving the Michigan jumper plenty of competition were Tom Thomasson of Upper Arlington and Teron Laws of Gary (Ind.) Roosevelt.

Thomasson, a smooth-jumping junior, cleared 6-9¾ (same height as Lewis' winning leap) to snatch second place from Laws (6-7¾), the early leader. Thomasson made 6-9¾ on his third attempt, while Lewis needed one less try.

A second-place finisher at the Relays in 1976 when he sailed over 6-8, Lewis showed he had an abundance of raw talent by winning on muscle and strength. A number of other jumpers had better form, but Lewis had tremendous spring. With improved form, the Ypsilanti "flopper" should become a consistent seven-foot jumper.

Kevin Bryant of Bellbrook grabbed fourth place with a 6-7¾ effort, while Jim French of State College, Pa., had to settle for fifth after making the same height. Marty Myers of Hillsdale, the Ohio Class A champion, finished six (6-5¾).

There were 13 jumpers remaining in contention when the bar was raised to 6-6.

Rich Ryan of Cleveland St. Ignatius, a 6-8 jumper who was expected to push Lewis, did not show. Bill Heath of Kalamazoo (Mich.) Loy Norrix, a fourth-place finisher here last year, also was a "no-show."

Lewis is the first Michigan jumper to win the Relays high jump title since 1972. Next year should be Ohio's turn, especially with Thomasson expected to return.

Gutsy Athlete

Weidenbach Snares Mile Run

By Bob Sherwin

Bill Weidenbach, a distance runner for Grosse Pointe (Mich.) North gets the vote for the "Gutsy Athlete of the Year" at the 46th Mansfield-Mebock Relays this weekend.

The tireless senior led Grosse Pointe's charge into third place in the meet with stellar performances in three tough and grueling events. His crowning glory was the individual championship in the mile run but he also anchored the record-setting (7:26.7) medley relay Friday and, although beat and exhausted from the mile Saturday, placed fourth in the 880-yard run late in the afternoon.

He left Mansfield a tired young man. Tired but satisfied.

The mile run was a thing of beauty despite the early slow pace. The tempo picked up late in the race as Weidenbach, Andy Zeltkahns of Agincourt, Ont., Canada, and another Gross Pointe miler, Dan Beck, skipped away from the pack.

Then it was just Weidenbach and Zelkahns in the final lap. The pair was matched perfectly. Weidenbach is the Michigan Class A (big schools) mile champion while Zelkahns placed second in the 880 and 1,500-meter races in the Ontario High School Championships last year. Weidenbach had a 4:13 split time recorded while competing in a relay race while Zelkahns also had been clocked at 4:13.

The two diced back and forth through the final 440 but Weidenback always maintained the lead.

As the pair rounded the final turn and headed for the last 100 yards, Zelkahns came around Weidenbach's right shoulder and appeared to be overtaking him. Weidenbach, however, sensing the approach, turned on what little juice he could command within him and gutted out the victory by a yard. He was clocked at 4:15.7, less than two seconds shy of the record, while Zelkahns crossed the line at 4:15.8.

* * *

Beck was third at 4:17.2 followed by Ted Unold of Westland (Mich.) John Glenn, 4:18.8 in fourth; Chris Koehler of Bay Village, the best Ohio runner in fifth at 4:18.8; and Nick Flock of Wadsworth in sixth, 4:21.3.

For both Weidenbach and Beck, who has only run the mile in competition twice, their times represented career bests.

"I knew we weren't going to have a record when we had a 2:11 at the half (880 mark)," Weidenbech added. "I wanted it to be around 2:05. But what are you going to do. If the pace is 2:11 you have to go with them.

"I figured it wasn't going to be a tactical race. It was going to be the guy with the best kick would win it."

Zelkahns, who is hoping to attend the University of Oregon next year, tried to close it out in the final 100 yards.

"I came off the corner hoping to take the lead but he was just too strong," he said.

Weidenbach and Beck's 16 points from the 1-3 finish gave Grosse Point a nifty 10-point lead on the field after three events with 28 points. They had hoped that total would hold up and they wouldn't be called upon to run the 880-yard near the end of the meet. Duty called.

Both boys were in the fast heat for the 880 as Weidenbach finished fourth, 1:55.2, just 17 seconds behind the winner, Don Heughan of Toronto (Ont.) Wexford. Beck was seventh.

Cleveland Glenville Sets Relay Record

By Bill Bern

Delbert Fowler, Robert Crawford, Calvin Thomas and Mike Cook are four of the reasons Cleveland Glenville's Bob Taylor believes the Tarblooders will be contenders for the Class AAA state track championship.

"It's early and I'm not making any predictions yet," said the coach of the Tarblooders, who won Class AAA state crowns in 1973, '74 and '75 but failed to place among the leaders last year. "But with those four, we'll be in the hunt."

Fowler, Crawford, Thomas and Cook pooled efforts Saturday to win the 880-yard relay in a Mansfield-Mebock Relays record 1:28.8, erasing the old mark of 1:28.9 established by Detroit Northern in 1971.

* * *

"This is the best we've done in three years," Taylor later admitted, adding, "I feel they can go 1:26, but they'll have to train hard for it."

Gary (Ind.) Roosevelt finished second Saturday with a time of 1:28.9, matching Detroit Northern's old mark. Detroit (Mich.) St. Martin Deporres was third in 1:29, Flint (Mich.) Southwest fourth in 1:29.1, Cleveland JFK fifth in 1:30 and Dayton Roth and Ypsilanti (Mich.) tied for sixth place in 1:30.3.

Besides competing in the 880 relay, Fowler, Crawford, Thomas and Cook compete in five other events. Fowler and Cook both run the 100 and 220 and Thomas the 220 and 440. Crawford participates in the long jump and high jump.

Fowler ran Saturday's opening leg and and was clocked 22.9. Then came Crawford in 22.6, Thomas in 21.7 and anchorman Cook in 22.2.

Taylor credited Saturday's victory to stiff competition.

"I know the schools from Detroit come down here with very good teams every year," he said. "So it's not hard to go out and do the best job you can do.

"And our kids were disappointed because Crawford fouled three times in the long jump," he went on. "They got on him about it and he went out and did the job."

Glenville, competing in the 10th and final heat, grabbed the lead for keeps on the third exchange and held on to nip St. Martin Deporres at the wire.

Gary Roosevelt raced in the ninth heat Saturday. Carl Weatherspoon led off and was clocked in 22.8. Charles Jones was second and timed in 22.6, Robert Baker followed with a 21.2 and Jerry Jones ran the anchor led in 22.3.

Baker later complained, "We should have been in the same heat with them (Glenville). It would have been better for us. We would have won."

Gary Roosevelt ran a 1:28.7 just last Tuesday, Baker said.

Glenville Triumphs

By Chet Bryant

Cleveland Glenville High School held one Mansfield Mebock Relays record prior to Saturday's running of the 46th annual contest. In 1976, with a time of 49.3 seconds Glenville's Derrek Harbour broke the tape with the record showing.

Now Glenville has carved another new mark into the book. Tom Grant, Robert Crawford, Don Wright and Calvin Thomas burned the all-weather track with 3:19.7 time to overshadow the mile relay performance of Cleveland John Adams, 1968. The four speedsters chopped off exactly one second to nip Gary (Ind.) Roosevelt and Cleveland John F. Kennedy high schoos for the victory in the final heat of the Relays. It was a thrilling finish to the two-day track event and the huge crowd was cheering all the way.

Earlier in the day, Glenville fractured the 880 relay record.

Grant led off the opening leg of the contest and set sail for his teammate, Robert Crawford, 440-yards away. Roosevelt sprinters and JFK were pushing for the front spot but Grant led the charge to exchange the baton, on a perfect handoff, to Crawford. (The individual times were not available.

Crawford dropped back slightly on his trip around the track but managed to keep the pace close as he entered the stretch with Dan Wright impatiently waiting at the starting line. Again the handoff was exact and Wright burst ahead on the second turn as Arthur Gousby, of Gary Roosevelt followed close behind. Akron North runners closed in but Wright continued the record pace to connect with anchor-runner, Calvin Thomas. Thomas maintained the lead by almost three yards for the entire distance and broke the tape as his teammates swarmed to greet him. It was a record and they knew it. John F. Kennedy runners had also broken the old mark with a 3:20.5 time for second-place honors and third place was snared by Gary Roosevelt with a 3:20.5 plus time.

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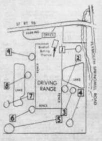

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