

Kearsley coach happy to discuss discus throwers

By BRUCE JOHNS

Kearsley track Coach Don Marsh has found himself in a unique but enjoyable situation: possessing three quality discus throwers.

While most high schools struggle to find one individual who can toss the 3.9-pound saucer-shape disc 150 feet, Marsh has three in junior Dave Duchene and seniors Jim Vondrasek and Tim Diener.

"We're the only school in the state with three kids over 150 feet," said Marsh, who has assembled another track powerhouse on the east side. "And we're the only school in the Flint area who has anyone over 150 feet except for Central's Kelly Lamson."

LAMSON TOPS the Flint area track honor roll with a heave of 158-6 while Duchene is a close second with 157-8. Vondrasek's best is 154-10 while Diener has a top toss of 150-2.

Duchene, a 3.6 student in the classroom, was fourth in last year's Class A state championship with a heave of 152 and has a personal best of 164 during a summer meet.

"He's been throwing it consistently 156-157 in the last three or four meets," Marsh said. "I look for Dave to do well in the state this year because he always throws well at Northwestern (Guy V. Houston Stadium, host for the meet)."

Duchene was voted the county-wide most outstanding performer two years ago in the Flint Olympian Games and has spent a considerable amount of time attending clinics on the art of throwing the discus.

"**THERE'S A** tremendous amount of technique and agility required," Marsh said. "There's some strength involved but it's really not that much of a factor."

Duchene, whose idol is Mac Wilkens, winner of the event in the 1976 Olympics in Montreal, has also tossed the shot put 52-0½ to rank fourth on the area honor roll.

Diener, more compact at 5-foot-9, 175 pounds to Duchene's 5-10, 185, has also spent extra hours during the summer working on the discus. He's a 3.8 student.

"Tim and Dave have attended a lot of summer meets and have put in a lot of work," Marsh said. "They're like coaches out there because they continually help each other."

VONDRASEK, 5-10, 170, perhaps has the most potential since he only began throwing the discus last year and is consistently giving heaves of 148-150.

"Jim is basically a one-year thrower," said Marsh. "He's a good all-around athlete. He leads our team in scoring and also competes in the long jump and hurdles."

Marsh said that there are a few secrets behind a successful discus thrower but nothing tops hard work.

"They'll all stay out there practicing until dark," he said. "The discus is a tough event in Michigan because there's no indoor work during the winter. Shot putters can always use a gym but the discus thrower doesn't have any facility."

ANOTHER FACTOR, which is usually apparent in the state during the spring months, is the wind.

"It's a big factor," Marsh said. "Going into the wind is most desirable because if the wind is behind you it changes the plane of the discus."

During the Mott Relays, Diener and Duchene combined for a meet record of 299-10, 12 feet better than the previous standard. In the East Lansing Kiwanis Relays the trio joined forces for an output of 466-11, eclipsing the



—Journal Photo by ROBERT PARKS

UFO's, KEARSLEY STYLE — Those unidentified flying objects detected at Big Nine Conference track meets are the saucer-shape discuses soaring 150-feet or better. Tossing the ovals are a trio of Kearsley track performers, from left, Tim Diener, Dave Duchene and Jim Vondrasek. Each ranks in the top 10 in the state with heaves of 150-feet or better.

former record by 22 feet.

"I could see all three of them scoring in the state on a good day," Marsh said. "All are capable of throwing it 160 feet and the state record is 161."

Could Kearsley possibly have three individuals eclipse the same record?

It might not be as unusual as a school having three discus performers all tossing it better than 150 feet shortly after the track season started.

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