

Rambadt heads list of qualifiers for state track meet at Sturgis

COMSTOCK — The Class B regional track meet here Saturday was really tough. How tough was it?

It was so tough that Sturgis 13 season-best performances and only four earned a place among the top six. It was so tough that the Sturgis boys' team, one of the pre-meet favorites, finished in a tie for sixth place with 35 points. It was so tough that the girls took 15th in the 16 team field with 18½ points.

It wasn't one of the happiest days Coach Jack Grant has ever experienced, but he did witness a number of good performance from his Trojans.

The biggest Sturgis highlight was the fine showing by senior distance runner Mitch Rambadt. He qualified for the May 30 Class B state meet in Sturgis with a second-place finish in the 1,600-meter run and a third-place time in the 800.

Rambadt had season-best times in both events as he was clocked in two minutes, one second in the 800 and 4:25.7 in the mile.

"I thought we didn't perform very well as a team," said Grant. "We didn't have the peak performances we needed. I was hoping to have more kids do like Mitch did."

Sophomore sprinter Karen Brown eclipsed a school record and finished second in the 200 meters with a 26.8 clocking. She earned a spot in the state meet with that performance in the 200. Brown also qualified in the 100

with a 12.6, one-tenth off the school record.

Another Sturgis state qualifier was sophomore Scott Frohriep, who went 13 feet, 0 inches in the pole vault to take third. High jumper Kelly Stewart earned the final state-meet berth for the Trojans' by leaping 4-11, which was good enough for third and also her best effort of the spring.

There were other Sturgis athletes who were not so fortunate.

Tod Nestor just missed a trip to state by finished fourth in the shot put with a 46-11 throw. Jeff Ash took fourth in the 3,200 run with a 10:07.7 clocking.

Jon Palmer, despite a leg injury, blazed to a 52.0 clocking in the 400 meters, which gave him fifth in the event. Palmer also anchored the 1,600 relay team to a good 3:31.4 time, by far the best clocking of the season for the Sturgis. However, they could manage only a eighth-place finish.

Dave Kolb and Jim Hickman tied for fifth in the high jump with efforts of 6-1. Rob Warnement was fifth in the 800 with a 2:02.7 and Keith Keyser captured fifth in the 1,600 with a 4:36.9. Keyser, who has been slowed by sickness, turned in a gallant effort in the 1,600.

Del David and Matt Dettman turned in their best times in the 300 low hurdles but didn't place. David ran a 41.5 while Dettman was clocked in 42.9.

The only other girls' placewinner

was Sue Myers, who tied for sixth in the 400 meters with a 62.5.

Debbie Ritter, Cosy Fiebelkorn, Amy McConnell and Cathy Penner all had season-best times. McConnell bettered her previous times in the 100 and 200 low hurdles while Fiebelkorn also lowered her time in the 200 hurdles. Penner and Ritter has bests in the 1,600 and 800, respectively.

Dowagiac copped a double victory at the Comstock regional, winning both the boys and girls championships. The girls' edged Plainwell, 53-48, while the boys outdistance Three Rivers by 20 points, 76-56.

In the boys' meet, the order of finish was Dowagiac, 76; Three Rivers, 56; St. Joseph, 53; Otsego, 50; Plainwell, 48½; Sturgis and Vicksburg, 35; Comstock, 29; South Haven, 25; Allegan, 22; Gull Lake, 21; Delton, 11½; Paw Paw, 11; Coloma, 10; Lakeshore, 8 and Wayland, 5.

In the girls' meet, the order of finish was Dowagiac, 53; Plainwell, 48; Allegan, 47; South Haven, 32; St. Joseph 31; Otsego and Lakeshore, 30; Wayland, 27; Vicksburg, 26; Paw Paw, 25; Three Rivers, 24½; Gull Lake, 22; Coloma, 21; Comstock, 20; Sturgis, 18½ and Delton, 3.

The Sturgis boys' will battle for the Twin Valley Conference championship Thursday when it travels to Hillsdale for the meet while the girls head to the league meet Wednesday at Jackson Northwest. Both meets begin at 4:30 p.m.



STATE QUALIFIER — Sturgis distance runner Mitch Rambadt speeds around the turn during the second lap of the 800-meter run at the Class B regional in Comstock Saturday. Rambadt went on to finish

third in that event and second in the 1,600 run. He will be joined by four other Sturgis competitors at the Class B state track meet May 30 in Sturgis. (Journal photo by Doug Bean)