

Seaholm's Roth ranks in regional highlights

It was the first time he ran down the runway with confidence this year, said Birmingham Seaholm track coach Jim Roth. Roth was referring to his son Jim, who had just finished competing in the pole vault at the West Bloomfield Regional Saturday.

Roth's (the son) jubilation after his winning 14-7 leap signified a return to his form of the previous two years, where he ranked among the county's best.

Only in the last week has Roth, who was trying to comeback from two hamstring pulls this season, began showing signs of recovery. He leaped 13-6 at the Lahser Relays, 14-0 at a dual meet last Tuesday and bested the regional field by more than a foot Saturday.

Roth's performance was one of many highlights in a regional weekend which saw: Milford and Lakeland thrown to the wolves at the Livonia Churchill regional; Pontiac Northern's boys stumbling, but surviving at Rochester; Rochester's boys and girls taking advantage of their home field with notable team efforts; West Bloomfield's girls doing likewise; Bloomfield Hills Lahser's and Troy Athens' girls saving their bests for the homestretch and Pontiac Central's girls coming out on top once again at Rochester.

At Livonia Churchill High, one of the toughest regionals, Walled Lake Central's Kathi Harris ran a sizzling 2:16.1 800 meters to take first. Harris was forced to run that fast since Walled Lake Western's Judy Yuhn was on her heels with a runner-up 2:16.4.

Walled Lake Western's springy Paul Burke, who for much of the season stayed around 20 feet in the long jump, popped a 22-7/8 to win the regional crown.

At L'Anse Creuse North High, Troy Athens' Holly Heisterkamp qualified for state in four events with her second place in the long jump (17-4), first in the 100 meter hurdles (14.7), third in the 300 meter hurdles (30.6) and first in the 800 meter relay.

At Rochester High, Reta Robinson of Pontiac Northern ran a 10.91 100-yard dash, the fastest by an Oakland County girl since Bloomfield Hills



Marvin Goodwin

Andover's Kori Gifford's ran 10.9 last year at the state meet.

Bloomfield Hills Lahser's Rich Fromm decided in the last 100 yards to go for the mile run win instead of just qualifying in overtaking Berkley's Dennis Keane at West Bloomfield.

Unlike Fromm, Lahser's Mini Baker went for the girls' mile title with the crack of the starting pistol. She opened up a sizeable lead and hung on for the victory.

BOYS' RANKINGS — Oxford easily won its regional title, Rochester edged Pontiac Northern by a point for third place at its regional, Troy was respectable, but overpowered at L'Anse Creuse North as was Lakeland and Milford at Livonia Churchill. Brother Rice is improving and Oak Park has a good team. Such are the factors which shake up this week's boys' Oakland County rankings.

1. Pontiac Northern; 2. Oxford; 3. Oak Park; 4. Troy; 5. Milford; 6. Rochester; 7. Lakeland; 8. Brother Rice; 9. Holly; 10. West Bloomfield.

GIRLS' RANKINGS — Bloomfield Hills Lahser defeated perennial power Royal Oak Dondro in a dual meet for the first time in the school's history last week, giving coach John Hansen the perfect reason for a "hydraulic sandwich."

It was a good week for Lahser, West Bloomfield and Troy Athens as the cream of Oakland County begins to rise to the top.

1. Pontiac Central; 2. Pontiac Northern; 3. Troy Athens; 4. Milford; 5. Rochester; 6. Avondale; 7. West Bloomfield; 8. Bloomfield Hills Lahser; 9. Royal Oak Dondro; 10. Oak Park.

(Marvin Goodwin covers prep track for The Oakland Press.)