

Eddie Brown: an obscure track star

Booth News Service

SAGINAW — He's 6-foot-5, weighs 182 pounds. He's 19 years old and a freshman at Saginaw Valley State College.

He's one of the top collegiate track stars in the country, but few know that.

His name is Eddie Brown and he runs, jumps and hurdles for the SVSC track team. If Coach Doug Hansen asked him to fly, with a little practice Eddie Brown might be able to do that, too.

Who is this phenom who came out of nowhere to rank as one of the top triple jumpers and 400 meter intermediate hurdlers in the United States?

Hansen recruited Eddie and his brother Ricky in a package deal out of Lakeville High School at Otisville, a small community 10 miles northeast of Flint.

Hansen's college buddy and close friend Darryl Morten is the Class B Lakeville track coach and

athletic director. Hansen paid a visit last year to recruit Ricky. He found out that Eddie, a year older at 19, was also available. It seems the brothers wanted to stick together, attend the same college, preferably close to home.

Wham! Hansen signed both to scholarships.

"When I graduated (1979) I decided to work instead of going to college," recalled Eddie a couple of days ago as he was getting ready for Saturday's NAIA District 23 track championships in Allendale. "Michigan State, Eastern and Western and Morehead State (Ky.) recruited me, but I decided to go to work when I was offered a construction job paying \$10 an hour," he smiled.

He was ready to go back to school, though, when Hansen showed up to recruit Ricky, 18.

In high school Eddie was versatile enough to run both hurdles, the 880 and mile relays, long jump and occasionally rip off a 440 where he

clocked a 50 flat. His specialty was the low hurdles where he owns the (all classes) state record of 37.1 seconds. It still stands. He clocked a 36.4 in the summer of '79 in the Michigan-Indiana-Ohio prep stars' meet in Indiana that features the best track people from the three states.

In the short time he has been at SVSC, he has established school records in just about everything he's competed in. During the indoor season he triple jumped (hop, step and jump) 50-feet, 5½ inches in one of his very first efforts. Easy stuff? Yup, the jump ranked as the best in the country.

"He runs over his head," says Hansen. "He's an over-achiever. By that I mean that he runs better in meets than he does in practice. He's a natural."

Hansen uses the 400 intermediate hurdles as an example. "In practice he runs 53s, but in meets he runs 50s. That's the kind of competitor he is. We've tried to bring

him along slowly this first year, but because he's such a competitor he has gotten leg cramps occasionally. We've started to pick up his training because of that."

Brown can get much better, according to his coach who says he's one of the top five intermediate hurdlers in the country. He's only three seconds behind Edwin Moses, the best hurdler in the world, who runs 47s.

"Eddie can get into the 49s yet this year," Hansen says. Brown agrees and says that is his goal as SVSC heads into the big meet portion of its season the next three weeks.

"Moses is the only class intermediate hurdler who takes 13 steps between hurdles. So does Eddie (sometimes just 12, Eddie says). That's how his size helps him. Most hurdlers need a couple more steps in between," Hansen says. Eddie's best time to date is :50.45.

Besides the 400 hurdles, Brown has run the 110 meter highs in



Eddie Brown

He runs, jumps and hurdles

:14.45, long jumped 23-3, posted an outdoor triple jump of 50-4 and run a leg on mile relay team in :47.1 when SVSC clocked a 3:14.3, an exceptionally good NAIA time.

"No, I don't think the year I was away working hurt," Eddie deadpanned. "The layoff didn't hurt. I just got stronger." Eddie said he added 12 pounds to the 170 he carried in high school.

Eddie's brother Ricky is no slouch either. Built like his brother (6-4), Ricky is a 600-meter man who has clocked a 1:12.8 indoors which ranks among the top seven in the NAIA. He has also run a :48.4 split in the mile relay and can run the open quarter and sprint a 220 if needed.

Brown was outstanding Saturday in the NAIA District 23 championship when he won the triple jump in a record leap of 52.84 feet and was first in the 400 intermediate hurdles in 52.84. He was second in the 110 high hurdles in 14.54 despite tripping on the final hurdle and set a school record of 23-4 in a second place finish in the long jump.

Ron Streck's 9-under 62 earns Houston lead

HOUSTON (UPI) — Ron Streck bolted from the field to shoot a course-record 9-under-par 62 Saturday and take a three-stroke lead after three rounds of the \$350,000 Houston Open, one of the Texas tournaments he likes so well.

Streck, consistently laying his ball close to the hole with superior chips and sand shots, gave himself five birdie putts of 15 feet or less on the front nine. He followed with four birdie putts on the back as he pulled away from two-time U.S. Open champion Hale Irwin.

Streck was tied for 12th place after successive 68s. His 54-hole total was 15-under 198.

At 12-under par with 18 holes to

Streck, 26, of Tulsa, Okla., has had other good tournaments in the Lone Star State, finishing eighth at Houston last year and sixth last year at the Byron Nelson in Dallas.

Almost everyone but Streck, Irwin and Pate struggled on the gloomy day.

Second-round leader Bob Gilder managed just one birdie and maintained his 10-under-par standing. Tom Kite, who was one stroke off the lead following 36 holes, shot a 70 with back-to-back bogeys at the par-3 No. 5 hole and the par-4 No. 6.

Clampett sets course record

Hollis Stacy goes in front

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. — Defending champion Hollis Stacy outlasted second-round co-leader Debbie Austin and a rejuvenated Kathy Whitworth to snatch sole possession of the 54-hole lead in the \$125,000 Women's International tournament.

Stacy finished at par 72 for the day and 2-under-par 214 through the third round. She was one stroke ahead of Austin and two in front of Whitworth.

Stacy needed only nine putts on the back nine of the 6,200-yard Devils Elbow South course at Moss Creek Plantation, but said condi-

"After 12, I knew I had to get my concentration back, but I hit a good drive on 13 so I felt like I hadn't lost it," Austin said.

Austin, who has won only \$9,518 on the tour this year, also was troubled by the inconsistent texture of the greens.

Whitworth, 41, who has 80 tour victories in her career, is enjoying a comeback.

"I would rather win again than be the first player to win a million dollars," said the golfer who is 11th on the 1980 money list with more than \$38,000 and has career earnings of \$945,000.

"I would hate to think my whole career would be based on winning