



Individual state champions for Oak Park were Rick Horston (left), Michele Morris and Ken Mitchell.

(Photos by Bill Pugliano)

Oak Park a track power

by STEVE STEIN
Sports Editor

Detroit Lutheran West made history this past weekend by becoming the first Michigan high school to win both boys and girls track state championships in the same season.

Oak Park nearly duplicated that feat.

Coach Bernard Wells' girls team tied Mount Clemens L'Anse Creuse for the Class B crown and coach Norm Krawczak's boys squad finished second to Flint Ainsworth.

Senior Michele Morris led the Redskins to their title share by winning the 220 in 24.7, finishing second in the 440 in 57.3 and anchoring the winning 880-relay team, which was timed in 1:44.8. Genia Redfern, LaVada Perry and Veroncia Daffin joined Morris on the relay squad.

IN THE BOYS MEET, Oak Park's Ken Mitchell captured the 440 in a state-record 48 seconds and Rick Horston won the 880 in 1:54.3. Both are seniors.

All three individual champs were undefeated in those events during the season.

Morris, a two-time regional winner in the 220, is headed to Louisiana State University, where she'll be a pre-med major.

A fourth-place finish by the mile relay team in the meet's final event gave the Oak Park girls their half of the crown.

"**WE KNEW** we had to finish at least fourth and the girls went out and ran their best time of the year (4:08.2)," Wells said. The quartet of Redfern, Wanda Pettway, Tresbien Williams and Morris ran in the first heat and then had to sweat out two more heats before achieving their goal.

Wells' squad, which fell only to Lutheran West and Dearborn in dual meets this season, also notched its third straight Metro West League championship.

Krawczak, who guided Oak Park to a state crown in 1972, was pleasantly surprised by his team, which lost several outstanding performers to graduation. Ainsworth captured the state title with 45 points, the Redskins had 33 and Ypsilanti Willow Run 32.

OAK PARK was 6-1 in dual meets (losing only a five-point verdict to Willow Run) and captured its sixth Metro West title in seven years.

Mitchell's 48-second clocking in the 440 broke the old state record of 48.8 set last year by Ecorse's Jamie Weathers and gave him a whopping 1.2-second (or 12-yard) edge over runnerup Mark Veal of Ecorse.

Horston, who broke the Oak Park school record in the 880 the first time he ran it last year, is a two-time Oakland

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ahead of runnerup Robert Fisher of Flint Beecher.

Both Mitchell and Horston also were on the second-place mile relay (3:21.6) and third-place 440-relay squads.

Other outstanding performances turned in by local boys and girls included:

JAMIE ELLIOTT (Royal Oak Dondero) — Elliott, who won the Class A state cross country title last fall, captured the 3200-meter run in 9:21.5, becoming the first Dondero or Royal Oak Kimball athlete to become a state champ in two sports in the same year. Like Mitchell and Horston, he'll compete in this weekend's Tri-State Meet of Champions in Ft. Wayne, Ind.

DAVE KRAFSUR (Southfield Lathrup) finished second to Elliott in the 3200, crossing the tape in 9:24.3.

KARYN FINUCAN (Birmingham-Seaholm) placed second in the high jump (5-5) at the Class A meet.

KIM WILSON (Clawson) was runnerup in the high jump (5-6) at the Class B meet.

PAULA BUCKHAULTER (Avondale) was second to Morris in the 220 in 25.7, a school record. She also ran a leg on the Yellowjackets' third-place 880-relay squad (1:45.6).

DEREK WOODMORE (Avondale), a University of Michigan football recruit, was third in the 100 (10.1) and fourth in the 220 (22.4).

DAN DURANT (Warren Fitzgerald) won the Class B high jump (6-8).

KRISTI JACKSON and **ANN VEREEN** (Detroit Country Day) finished 1-2 in the 100-low hurdles at the Class C meet, clocking times of 14.94 and 14.99.

DAMON JONES (Country Day) was second in the long