

Troy's 'Wheels' rolls to two Class A titles

By Steve Stein
Tribune Sports Editor

The "Wheels" were turning Saturday in the Class A state track meet at Flint Northwestern High.

"Wheels" is Keith Wheeler's nickname. The Troy junior won two events, capturing the 400 meter dash in 47.64 and the 300 meter low hurdles in 36.73. He also was third in the 110 meter high hurdles in 14.2.

"Yep, he did the job," said Troy coach John Bancroft. "Keith handled the pressure real well. I was so nervous, but he came through.

"He didn't use the starting blocks in the 400 and when he got off to a slow start, I said, 'Oh, no.' But he really lit it up at the 200 mark."

Southfield's Torin Dorn was unable to defend his state title in the 400 because of a pulled hamstring he suffered earlier in the season and one newspaper account of

Wheeler backed into the victory because of Dorn's absence.

Bancroft said making that connection was unfair to both Wheeler and Dorn.

"There's no telling what would have happened had Dorn been there Saturday," the Troy coach said. "Keith would have gone after him and Torin would have gone after Keith."

"Keith ran a controlled race in the 400 because he knew he had to come back to run the low hurdles. He observed what he had to do and ran to win.

"I believe that in track, times do the talking and last year Dorn won the 400 in, I think, 48.2."

Clearnes Harris of Detroit Cooley was second to Wheeler in the 400 in 47.72.

About 40 minutes after competing in the 400, Wheeler went back to work in the lows.

Placed in a slower heat because

recovered to finish second and given the outside No. 9 lane, Wheeler overcame both obstacles and won the race. Millard Thomas of Belleville was second in 37.24.

In last year's state meet, Wheeler finished third in the low hurdles despite suffering from cramps in an earlier race. He served notice this spring that he was a force to be reckoned with in that event by winning the lows in the prestigious Manfield (Ohio) Relays.

Wheeler didn't win the high hurdles in Flint, but Bancroft is glad his star added that event to his repertoire this season.

"I'm glad Keith ran the highs," Bancroft said. "He can get overly competitive and the highs helped him get control of his emotions. Ware and Redmond better watch out for him next year."

The Troy coach was referring to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

Wheeler wins twice in Class A meet

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Roget Ware of Lansing Sexton and Rudy Redmond of Southfield, who finished 1-2 in the Class A meet, timed in 13.8 and 14.2. Even though he issued that warning to Redmond, Bancroft praised the Southfield hurdler for his "outstanding" performance Saturday.

Troy tied for fourth with Oakland County champion Pontiac Northern in the state meet team standings with 26 points. Sexton, which won the Class A crown, had 43, just 17 more than the Colts.

"We have some talented sophomores and juniors and they're saying if they can get some points next year and combine them with Keith, who knows?" Bancroft said. "That's the effect Keith has on the team. He's pulling the other kids along with him."

Troy captured the Southeastern Michigan Association cham-

pionship this season, sweeping all seven of its league dual meets and winning the SMA meet to end Southfield's four-year reign.

Led by Wheeler's four victories, the Colts took third in the Oakland County meet. Wheeler won the highs in 14.5; 100 in 10.7; 400 in 48.4 and lows in 37.0. The latter two were county records.

Other Daily Tribune-area athletes who placed in the Class A boys meet were:

—William Fitzpatrick of Birmingham Brother Rice, who was fourth in the discus at 156-9.

—Warren's Anthony Kawa, who was fifth in the shot put with a heave of 52-9½.

—Thomas Allen of Rice, who was eighth in the long jump at 21-2.

—Ferndale's Jon Gill, who was eighth in the 3200 meter run in 9:33.4.

—In the 400 meter relay, Troy Athens tied for seventh with Flint Powers at 43.59.

—Bloomfield Hills Andover's

3200 meter relay team was eighth in 8:03.48.

In the Class A girls meet, the shot put was the highlight event for local athletes. Ferndale's Jennifer Tenorio was fourth and Deidra Cheeks of Southfield took fifth with throws of 38-7 and 38-2, respectively.

Kathy Smith, another member of Southfield's SMA champion squad, was seventh in the 100 meter low hurdles in 15.25. The Blue Jays' 800 meter relay team was eighth in 1:45.43.

Andover star Laura Matson ended her high school career by winning two races, the 1600 meter run in 4:57.87 and the 800 meter run in 2:12.50. Last year, Matson won the 1600 in a state record 4:45.20.

Matson's two victories helped Andover finish sixth in the team standings with 24 points. Ann Arbor-Pioneer won with 85.

In the Class B boys meet at Jackson Northwest High, Scott

Ritter of Warren Fitzgerald won the 3200 meter run in 9:28.39.

Unfortunately, Ritter failed to successfully defend his title in the 1600 meter run, finishing fourth in 4:21.41. Brad Kirk of Otsego was victorious in 4:17.99.

Clawson's 1600 meter relay team was third in 3:25.86. Todd Renney of the Trojans took fifth in the 800 meter run in 1:58.59.

Madison Heights Lamphere's two stars placed. Stephen Kucharski was among seven athletes who tied for sixth in the high jump at 6-2 and Rob Fenn was seventh in the 200 meter dash in 24.27.

Flint Beecher captured the team title with 85 points. Fitzgerald had 15, Clawson 10 and Lamphere 2 2-5.

Debbie Yost was the only Tribune-area girl who placed in that Class B meet, taking eighth in the discus at 107-10. Beecher also took the girls team crown with 42 points.

A third banner day for Country Day

By The Daily Tribune Sports Staff

It's beginning to look like Boston Garden over at Detroit Country Day.

Walk into the Garden and you find yourself greeted by countless championship banners captured by both the Celtics and Bruins.

Walk into Country Day's gymnasium these days and you get bowled over by the number of state Class C girls track championship banners hanging on the wall.

No. 3 — as in three straight titles — will be posted on the wall as soon as the Yellow-jackets find enough tape to hold up the one they brought home from Bangor on Saturday.

"After you've won this many, you try not to get to the point where you're ho-hum about winning another championship," said Country Day assistant coach Joe Hansen. "You

really have to give credit to the parents because of the electricity they provided for us. It wasn't just another championship. The girls had to go out and run their hearts out."

And run they did.

Powered by a sizzling individual performance by Shirley Evans and a surprisingly strong effort in the relay events, Country Day easily outdistanced Cassopolis and Morley Stanwood for the state title. The Yellow-jackets netted 71 points, followed by Cassopolis with 39 and Stanwood with 35.

Evans won the 100 meter dash in 12.1, captured the 200 meter dash in 25.67, finished second in the 400 meter dash with a clocking of 60.06 and anchored the Yellow-jackets' 800 meter relay team which posted a second place finish.

All four of Country Day's relay teams placed among the top three in state.

Kristin Sall, Abby Warwick, Ngina Burgette and Hameera Newman combined forces to win the 3200 meter relay in 9:55.69; Karen Yuille, Natalie Greenspan, Burgette and Newman teamed up to capture the mile relay in 4:08.57; Diane Grauer, Greenspan, Marie Bridges and Evans ran a 1:45.47 to finish second in the 800 meter relay and Mary Bridges, Marie Bridges, Greenspan and Grauer were clocked in 51.72 en route to a third place finish in the 400 meter relay.

Other girls to score for Country Day were Marie Bridges, who finished fourth in the 200 meter dash; and Yuille, who placed fifth in the 100 meter hurdles.