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Troy's Keith Wheeler (left) and Rudy Redmond of Southfield are two of the top prep hurdlers in the state. They'll renew their friendly rivalry

today in the Southeastern Michigan Association meet at Bloomfield Hills Andover.

# Rivals hurdle highs and lows

By Mike Jordan  
Tribune Correspondent

There are many intense rivalries in local prep sports. But one of the most intense is between two track stars in the Southeastern Michigan Association.

Troy's All-American hurdler, Keith Wheeler, and Southfield's All-State hurdler, Rudy Redmond, have been thrilling spectators for two seasons dueling each other in what they call a friendly rivalry.

"We're pretty good friends," said Wheeler. "There aren't any bitter feelings. We don't hate each other."

"We're good friends," Redmond confirmed. "At meets, we always talk before and after our races. I get mad

at him but it's just playful."

Wheeler and Redmond will renew their rivalry today in the SMA meet at Bloomfield Hills Andover.

So far this season, Wheeler holds a 2-1 lead over Redmond in the high hurdles, beating him in the Mansfield Relays and the dual meet between the schools. Redmond won at the West Bloomfield Relays.

In their lone meeting in the low hurdles, Wheeler beat Redmond at West Bloomfield. Wheeler is the defending Class A champion in the low hurdles and 400 and has the fastest time in the state this year in both events. He's also third in the highs and 100 and fifth in the 200.

In 1986, Redmond finished second

and Wheeler third in the high hurdles in the Class A state meet.

Redmond and Wheeler have a lot of respect for fellow hurdler Roget Ware of Lansing Eastern. Ware won the Class A title in the high hurdles in 1986.

"Roget's the best in the nation," said Redmond. "He's beaten me all the time.

"I know I'm going to have to run my best to stay with them (Ware and Wheeler), but it makes me stay in shape psychologically. When other people run fast, that makes me run fast."

In the regionals this past weekend, Wheeler won the lows (37.2), highs (13.76) and 400 (48.3) and anchored

Troy's winning 1600 relay team, qualifying in all four events for the state meet Saturday, May 30 at Alma College.

Redmond was second in the highs (14.39) and he won the lows (37.71).

Ware earned a chance to defend his title in the highs by winning in 13.4.

Wheeler has signed with the University of Texas and Redmond will be running for the University of Michigan next year. Both are receiving full scholarships.

This summer Redmond and Wheeler expect to get together to run a few national track meets.

"I definitely want to get together and run in some bigger meets," said Redmond.