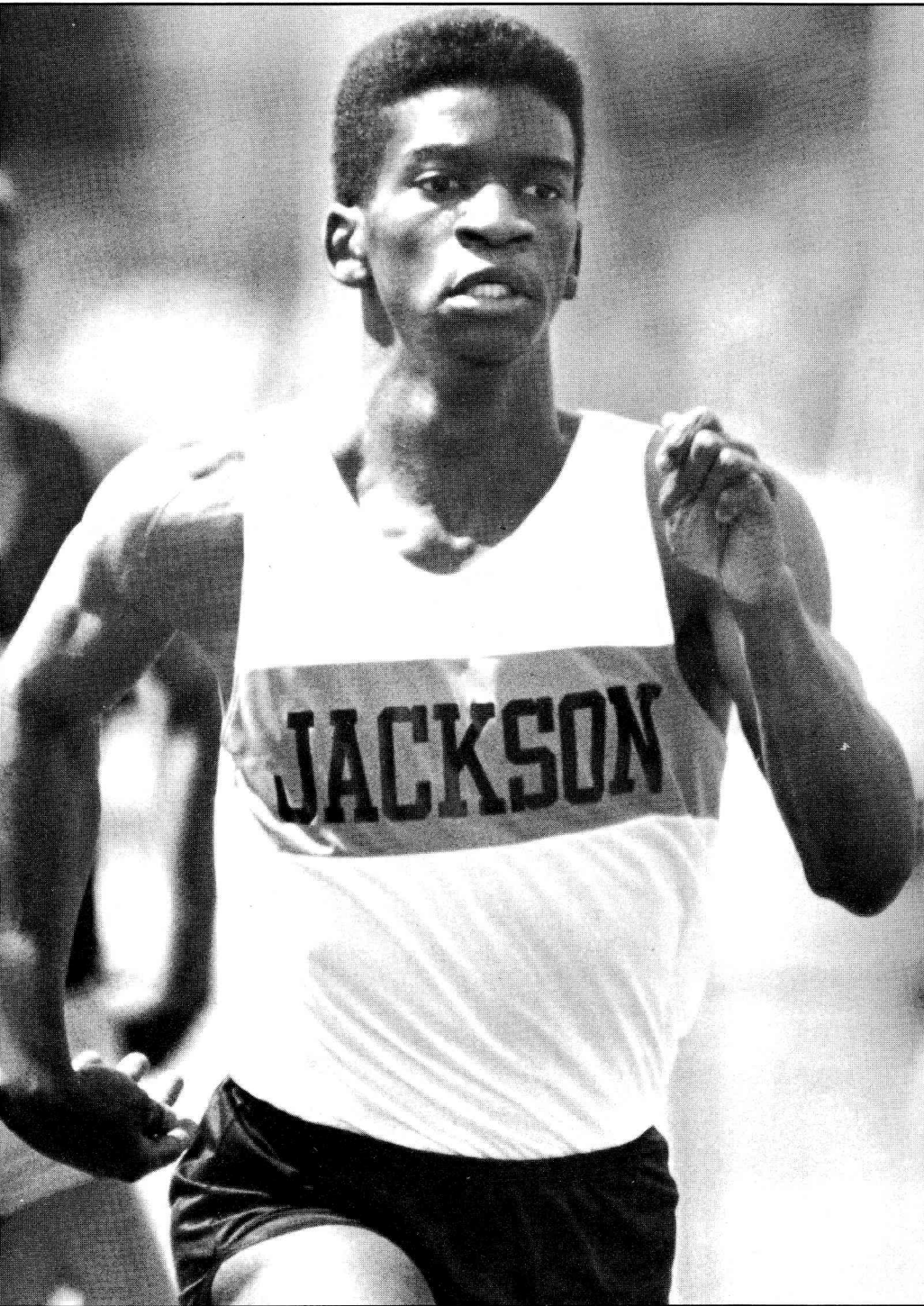


1987 L.P. Review: Worth The Wait

By Tommy Cameron, Jackson Citizen Patriot



Jackson's Corey Pryor, shown in action at the 1987 MHSAA Lower Peninsula Class A Track and Field Finals at Alma, had waited a year for the opportunity to show he was one of the best sprinters in the state. He responded with victories in the 100 and 200-meter dashes. His winning time of :10.4 in the 100 was a state meet record.

Corey Pryor had waited a year for the gun to go off.

Ever since he finished second his junior season, Pryor dreamed about the crack of the gun, exploding out of the blocks, and winning the 100-meter dash at the 1987 Michigan High School Athletic Association's Class A Lower Peninsula Track Meet.

It had been a long wait, but a good one, with 17 victories in 17 starts. All his work, however, was in preparation for this one race.

The gun finally cracked, and five meters later, the race was all his.

The Jackson High senior pulled away from the field with his first few steps. He went on not only to win the race, but to set a state meet record of :10.40.

"I wanted to win the 100; that was my goal since last year," said Pryor. "I wasn't even thinking about the record.

"I knew I had to come out fast. I was in the blocks concentrating. I was really thinking hard. I wanted to come out smooth, hard and fast, all at the same time. It was one of my best starts ever."

Pryor's time broke the former mark of :10.5 set by Terry McDaniels of Saginaw in Class A and shared by Andreas Laut of Dexter in Class B and Larry Jordan of Detroit-St. Martin dePorres in Class C. It was also the fastest time in the nation last year reported to Track & Field News.

Although Pryor had fulfilled his dream after the 100 meters, his day wasn't over. He went on to win the 200 meter dash (21.38), run a leg of the second-place 400-meter relay, and finish eighth in the long jump, an event he won the year before. His efforts helped the Jackson High team place fourth.

A week later, Pryor was named the Star of Stars in the Midwest Meet of Champions at Indianapolis as a representative of the Michigan team.

Photo courtesy of Jackson Citizen Patriot, photographer John Stewart

But if he had listened to his friends, Pryor would have never run a single race his senior year. Earlier in the season, he had signed for a full ride scholarship to play football at Michigan State University.

"My whole senior year was wonderful," said Pryor, who is now the Spartans' backup tailback. "I got all my goals, and you can't get a bigger prize than this (first place)."

The dream of winning a state championship came true for over 100 high school athletes in the Lower Peninsula competing in four classes.

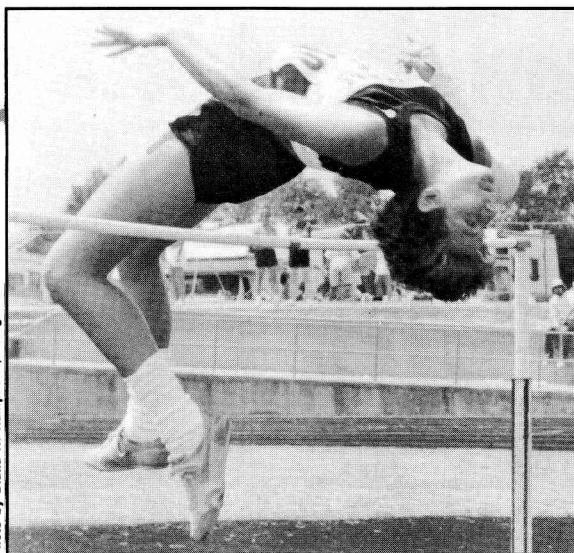
Five high school track teams went one step better — fulfilling the dream of repeating as state champs.

In Class A at Alma, Lansing-Sexton upset the Jackson High 400 relay team to win its second consecutive state title.

Meanwhile, the Ann Arbor-Pioneer girls team won its third straight Class A championship.

The trophy case at Flint-Beecher had to make room for its fifth and sixth state meet

Photo by Diana H. Kamphues, Sturgis



trophies in three years as both the boys and girls teams captured championships in Class B for the third time.

But as incredible as the Beecher streaks were, the talk of the meet at Sturgis was Amy Warner of Linden, who won the high jump despite wearing a cast which went from just under her right shoulder to her wrist.

Warner had separated her elbow in practice two days before the meet, but cleared the bar at a personal best 5-8 at the state meet. Her jump was the highest in any girls final in the state in 1987.

"I thought that was it for the year," Warner said of the injury. "But then my

coach (Pete Maas) told me not to worry. He said it would heal away."

At Bangor, Birmingham-Detroit Country Day and Coach George Prospero won the school's fourth girls state championship.

The other Lower Peninsula state champions were Detroit-Lutheran West in boys Class C, and the Detroit-East Catholic boys team and the Akron-Fairgrove girls team in Class D.

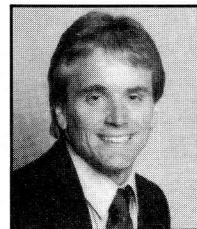
Pryor's mark in the 100 was one of six overall records set last year. Only times run at state meet competitions qualify for state records.

Cliff Dwell of Lake Orion set a record in the 1,600 meters at 4:12.9; Todd Williams of Monroe beat his own mark in the 3,200 with a 9:01.4 clocking; Cheryl Pruitt of Detroit-Henry Ford beat the previous best in the 400 with a :55.6; the Farmington 3,200-meter relay team of Ron Smedley, Brandon London, Chris Inch and Al Stebbins combined for a record of 7:48.5; and the Ann Arbor-Huron 3,200-meter team bettered the old mark by five seconds with a 9:20.4.

Photo courtesy of Lansing State Journal, photographer Rod Sanford



The 110-meter hurdles at the Lower Peninsula Class A boys finals was a battle between defending champion Roget Ware (left) of Lansing-Sexton and Troy standout Keith Wheeler. Both won hurdling titles that day — Ware in the 110 highs and Wheeler successfully defending his crown in the 300 lows.



Tommy Cameron is a sports reporter for the Jackson Citizen Patriot. He has covered high school and college sports since 1981 for publications in Dearborn, Ann Arbor and Jackson.

1987 U.P. Review: LaCosse Warms It Up

By Craig Remsburg, Marquette Mining Journal

It may have been cold and dreary last May 23 in Marquette, but Todd LaCosse took no notice.

In fact, the Escanaba High School senior absolutely sizzled on the Marquette Senior High School's rubberized track in the Michigan High School Athletic Association Upper Peninsula Track and Field Finals.

LaCosse won three sprints — setting Upper Peninsula boys' Class A-B records in the process — and ran a leg of a winning relay effort to dominate the day-long championships.

Winning times of :10.88 in the 100-meter dash, :22.18 in the 200 and :50.14 in the 400 enabled LaCosse to lead his Eskymo teammates to their second straight Peninsula team championship. Coach Jack Hirn's thinclads picked up 76 points to runner-up Gwinn's 56.

LaCosse also took part in Escanaba's 800 relay unit that placed first in a time of 1:33.24 and watched teammate Gary Gregg capture firsts in the 1,600 (4:30.28) and 3,200 (9:49.51) runs.

Not to be outdone, Escanaba's Laura Bero won four individual events in the girl's Class A-B competition to spark her squad to its eighth straight U.P. crown. The junior took the 100-meter hurdles in a record time of :16.00; the 300 hurdles in :49.25; the high jump with a 5-0 effort and the long jump with a 15-10 leap.

Teammate Tammy Cook, another junior, captured the 100 dash (:12.80), the 200 dash (:27.27) and ran a leg of Escanaba's winning 800 relay unit (1:49.80) to help Coach Gary Seehafer's squad collect 79 team points to runner-up Gwinn's 66.

In boys Class C action, Iron Mountain proved team depth can make a difference between winning and being an also-ran. Coach Rick Olds' thinclads won just five events, but still compiled 55 points to out-distance second-place Ironwood, which netted 42.

Jeff Legeret led the Mountaineers with victories in the 1,600 (4:34.69) and

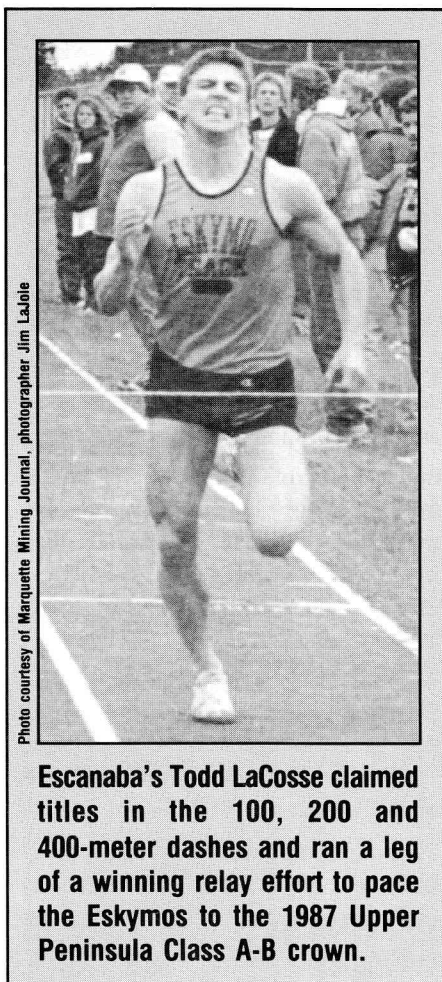


Photo courtesy of Marquette Mining Journal, photographer Jim LaBoie

Escanaba's Todd LaCosse claimed titles in the 100, 200 and 400-meter dashes and ran a leg of a winning relay effort to pace the Eskymos to the 1987 Upper Peninsula Class A-B crown.

3,200-meter (9:54.58) runs, but Munising's Jody Paradis stole the show. Paradis won the 110 hurdles in a U.P.-record time of :15.00; took the 300 hurdles in :41.03; and captured the 400 dash in :52.48.

Team depth again proved to be decisive for Coach Gordy Chinn's Ishpeming-Westwood squad in girls Class C competition. Taking just four firsts — three of them relays — the Patriots added second and third place individual finishes to claim the Peninsula title with 35 points to Stephenson's 33 and Calumet's 31.

Westwood's Heidi Knutson won the 400 dash in 1:00.50 and ran a leg of the winning 400 (:53.15), 800 (1:51.95) and 1,600 (4:18.65) relays to spark her squad. In the process, she took the spotlight away from Ishpeming's Tracy Holappa, who doubled in the 100 (:13.04) and 200 (:27.25) dashes.

Girls Class D action saw Coach John Bennis' Pickford squad dominate the competition. Using six first-place finishes, the Panthers rolled to 70 team points to far out-distance second place finisher Wakefield, which compiled 34. It was Pickford's fourth straight Peninsula championship.

Julie Wallis led Pickford with victories in the 800 (2:27.89) and 1,600 (5:29.22) runs. Diane Hongisto of Wakefield also took two individual events, the 100 (:13.22) and 200 (:27.94) dashes, as did Jeri Hosang of Lake Linden-Hubbell. The latter won the 400 dash (1:02.96) and the 300 hurdles (:48.48).

Coach Jim Nocerini's Crystal Falls-Forest Park Trojans used three firsts and six seconds to pocket the boys Class D crown with 51 points to runner-up Bessemer's 36.

Jon Gollakner and Dan Graff paced Crystal Falls with respective victories in the 110 hurdles (:14.99) and the pole vault (12-0). Gollakner broke his own record of :15.1 in the high hurdles set the previous season at the U.P. meet.

Engadine's Deren Pershinske was the day's biggest story in Class D, however. The Eagle runner claimed the 800 (2:04.52), 1,600 (4:33.62) and 3,200 (10:03.55) runs.

In all, 11 Upper Peninsula records — eight in boys competition — were snapped on a cold, blustery day. For the boys, four marks were shattered in Class A-B, three in Class C and one in Class D. In girls action, two Class A-B marks fell and one tumbled in Class C.



Craig Remsburg has been sports editor of the Marquette Mining Journal since 1977, covering the MHSAA Track and Field Finals numerous times during that span. A 1972 graduate of Michigan

State University, he is treasurer of the U.P. Sportswriters and Sportscasters Association and a member of the U.P. Sports Hall of Fame Council.