

There's no debate: Jays are champions

By Marty Niedbala
Special Writer

YPSILANTI — The debate team at Southfield sets a torrid pace, but it's nothing that the boys track team can't handle.



ESCHMANN

Southfield has won the last two debate state championships and now has duplicated that feat in boys

track.

The Blue Jays placed in 10 of the 11 events in which they qualified to win their second straight Class A championship Saturday at the Olds/Marshall Track on the Eastern Michigan University campus.

Southfield scored 65½ points, topping runnerup Monroe, which had 44. Birmingham Brother Rice had seven points and Troy ended with four.

Ann Arbor Pioneer won its fifth straight girls title, outscoring favored Detroit Cass Tech 70½ to 58. Troy got consistent performances to finish fourth with 30 points, while Birmingham Seaholm got two points from Teri McDowell's seventh-place finish in the 400 meters at 59.9 seconds.

"I'm thrilled for the team, their families, the school and all those who have supported us," said Southfield boys coach Tom Eschmann.

The Blue Jays' 3200 meter relay team of Jeff Gibson, Elijah Hayes, Tom Robinson and James Robinson got things going with a school-record 7:55.11 for a surprising second place behind Monroe. The team's previous best time this year was an 8:04. The old school record was 7:57.5.

For Eschmann, it was the turning point.

"Psychologically, it dried my feet. The time was a pleasant surprise, too," said Eschmann.

It helped that Detroit Public School League champ Murray-Wright, which originally took second

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in the race, was disqualified because its anchor runner impeded James Robinson in the last 200 meters.

Southfield also got a break in the 1600 relay when the Murray-Wright anchor cut in front of Cassidy Wright of the Blue Jays in the final 200 meters. Wright did a nice job keeping his balance when his foot hit the rail bordering the inside lane. The foursome of Jeff Reynolds, Gibson, James Robinson and Wright went 3:21 for third.

It was fitting that the only firsts for Southfield were team events, the same relays the Blue Jays won last year. Bobby Johnson, Jeff Reynolds, Wright and Marvin Reynolds went 1:28.2 for the win in the 800 relay, and Johnson, Chris Porter, Lawrence Reynolds and Marvin Reynolds went 42.9 to win the 400 relay.

Jeff Reynolds came through with two second places, going 22.37 in the 200 dash and losing in a photo finish with a 10.96 in the 100. Johnson took sixth in the 100 with an 11.12.

Southfield's Ricky Duncan went six feet, six inches to tie for fifth in the high jump. Gibson finished fourth in the 300 low hurdles with a 38.51, while Wright was sixth in the high hurdles at 14.68 and seventh in the 400 at 49.39.

Rice got its points from its only two qualifiers. Sophomore John Cowan came from several positions behind in the 1600 to place sixth in 4:22.8.

Marc Milia ended his prep career with a toss of 52 feet, 8¾ inches in the shot put for fifth.

Troy scored in the 3200 relay, where Mit Desai, Ramsey Wilson, Ed Andrews and Alex Ramos went 8:00.47, just .21 seconds out of fourth.

The Troy girls performed consistently and were rewarded with a second, three thirds and a fifth.

Kristi McKimson, Anna Jontony, Jenny Holder and Westerby went 9:24.2 for second in the 3200 relay. Westerby, who was eight seconds behind when she started her leg, went 2:13 in her 800 to close the gap to two seconds at the finish.

Westerby then ran a 2:15.7 for third in the open 800.

Another third came in the 1600 relay, where Angie Knox, McKimson, Jontony and Westerby went 4:03.3. Jontony also took third in the high jump at 5-4, while McKimson ran in a downpour in the 1600 and placed fifth at 5:15.