

HIGH SCHOOLS

# Grosso smashes 9-minute barrier



Brian Grosso

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Of The Oakland Press

Brian Grosso of Walled Lake Western, running like an efficient, well-fueled machine, smashed the nine-minute barrier in the 3,200-meter run at the Oakland County Track and Field Meet Friday at Birmingham Groves High.

Grosso, generally regarded as the top prep distance runner in the nation, turned in an 8:56.78, the fastest time by a Michigan high school runner. He broke his old meet record of 9:01.2 set last year.

The Class A state record is 9:01.4. A state record can only be set at the state meet, which

Grosso, the defending champion, plans to shoot for next Saturday at Eastern Michigan University.

A stiff wind failed to stop the senior distance runner, who is headed for the University of Arizona on a track scholarship.

"I feel great," said Grosso, who, seconds after his spectacular run, turned to the cheering crowd and raised his arms in triumph and took several bows. "The wind was a little strong coming into the backstretch on each turn. I was just praying that I had enough (on the last straight-away) to bring it on."

After one lap, Grosso and Mike Goodfellow of Oxford

quickly separated themselves from the rest of the field as they ran together pushing a torrid pace.

"We talked about it (pushing the pace) and we wanted to be in around 2:12 at the half and that's what we did," said Goodfellow, a two-time Class B state cross country champion who took second in 9:29.2.

After the second lap, Grosso took off from Goodfellow and gradually lengthened his lead.

He reeled off lap after lap at a steady, driving pace as the crowd cheered his effort. He ran his first 1600 in 4:25 and clocked 65 seconds for his final lap as he drove to the finish

line well under nine minutes.

"I wanted to thank Mike, he had a lot of guts to go with me," Grosso said. "I think that's what really pulled me under nine minutes."

Last week Grosso came his closest ever to the nine-minute barrier with a 9:00.2 clocking at the Lake Fenton regional.

He won the Sunkist Invitational prep two-mile run in San Diego in January and took the two-mile at the National Scholastic Indoor Track championships in Annapolis, Md. in March.

He won the Kinney National Cross Country meet, which was televised on ABC's Wide World of Sports in December.