

AAU JUNIOR OLYMPICS

Bouyer wins AAU gold medal

By RAY GLIER
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MELBOURNE, Fla. — The only thing Nikki Bouyer likes to see in front of her while she is running the 100 meter hurdles is a flat track. If a competitor creeps into her peripheral vision, the jets go on.

"When I see somebody out of the corner of my eye," said Bouyer, "I go faster. I don't like to see anybody."

The only thing the competition saw of Bouyer Saturday was the back of her gray leotards and her long braids flying in the



Bouyer

breeze as she won a gold medal in the AAU Junior Olympics at Palm Bay High School. She won the race in 14.16 seconds, a personal best.

It was the second gold medal in as many years in the Junior Olympics for Bouyer, a June graduate of Sexton High. She also won the event last year in Knoxville.

Bouyer will enroll at Michigan State this fall.

"I was the defending champion, but I was still nervous before the race," she said. "It was that nervousness you get from butterflies. Anything can happen, so you have to make sure you don't make a mistake, like hit a hurdle or lose concentration.

"These people were good enough to win my race if I made a mistake."

But Bouyer looked mistake-

free. She reached the first hurdle in seven steps and was over and looked on her way to the win.

Bouyer slowed just a bit when her foot hit someone's arm as they came over the hurdle next to her. But she maintained her poise and the lead.

Even with the lead, though, Bouyer still didn't feel completely safe. She could see another woman out of the corner of her eye. That's when she kicked in and cleared her vision.

"I know I'm running fast when I can't see anybody," she said.

Sheila Seitz of Portland High School finished fifth and won a bronze medal in the 1,500 meter run (mile) for girls 17 and 18 years old. The top six finishers in AAU Track & Field receive medals.

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