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THE DETROIT NEWS SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 1995

High schools

CLASS A TRACK

Williams anchors 2 winners

Hamstring injury keeps Cass Tech football star out of sprints, but his team still grabs lead.

By Tom Markowski
The Detroit News

SAGINAW — Clarence Williams of Detroit Cass Tech ended a fine four-year varsity career in style by anchoring the winning 800- and 400-meter relays at the Class A track and field championships at Saginaw High Saturday. It wasn't the way he envisioned it ending, but he was happy with the results nonetheless.

"It feels good to win, but I'm disappointed I got hurt," said Williams, who is still not 100 percent after pulling a hamstring in March. "I wasn't totally happy with my run in the 800 today. I was a little tight. I'm not sure if I'll run track next year. I'll see, and that had something to do with it. This weather is terrible, but, hey, it's Michigan weather. In the 400, I felt somebody next to me, so I just accelerated. The 800 relay was a warm-up for me."

Williams, a running back rated No. 4 on the Blue Chip list, said he will make a decision on his football season at Michigan with new coach Lloyd Carr.

Williams also ran the first leg on the winning 400 relay.

"I was very confident out there," said Williams. "I always run with confidence. It feels great to be fastest in the state."

The first day of the meet were delayed an hour because of rain. A number of field events, such as the pole vault, were delayed even longer because of slick conditions. The rain finally stopped in time for the 100 hurdles finals.

After 10 events, Cass led the boys competition with 33 points. Detroit Chadsey was second with 21, and Flint Carman-Ainsworth 20. On the girls side, Ann Arbor Pioneer and Cass were tied with 43. Flint Central was third with 24.

Cass is the defending champion for boys and girls.

Sophomore won the girls 100 and 100 hurdles.

Ayesha George of Pioneer won the 100 hurdles (14.9), and Karissa Allen of Cass Tech won the 100 dash (12.4).

"I didn't get a good start like I usually do," said George, who finished a fraction of second ahead of Pamela Gregory of Ypsilanti. "I felt the energy when I got to the third hurdle. It helped to have Pam out there pushing me. I've beaten her a few times, but I gotten me a few times this year."

Among the boys, Greg Richardson of Lansing Everett won the 110 hurdles (14.2), and Jamal Allen of Southfield-Lathrup won the 100 dash (11.2). Both are seniors.

"I've never had a feeling like this before," said Richardson. "I've finished first in the Honor Roll Relays at Lansing Sexton, but nothing compares to this."

Allen came from behind to overtake Jason Granger of Harrison. Granger led all the way until the final few meters.

As for the girls, Cass' Chantelle Nagbe ran the third leg in the 800 relay and was the anchor on the 400. Both won.

"You can't think about the weather," said Nagbe. "You can't think about anything. My coach (Bertha Smiley) and if you start thinking about anything while running, it takes away from the energy in your legs. So I don't think when I'm running."

A record was set in the girls discus as Susie VonBerenth of Okemos won with a toss of 146 feet. The old record was set in 1992 by Katja Pettinew of Lansing Eastern (144 feet, 9 inches).

In the girls 3,200 relay, Rochester Adams and Troy Athens set the early pace. Athens took the lead from Adams after the second leg. But Pioneer, which has dominated the event over the last decade, came on strong in the last two legs and won in 9:50.06. Clarkston (9:54.60) was second, and Athens (9:40.20) third.

In the boys 1,200 relay, Pontiac Northern passed Flint Kearsley in the final leg to take first with a time of 9:04.5. Godfrey Herring, a sophomore, ran the anchor for Northern and pulled away from the pack with 200 meters to go. Warren DeLaSalle edged out Kearsley for second, 9:05.2 to 9:05.5.

■ You can listen to Tom Markowski's prep sports update by pressing 1914 after calling America's Voice at 212-2200.

The prep scoreboard is on Page 13E.

CLASS B TRACK

Comstock repeats; Caledonia girls win

By Dan Wetzel

MIDLAND — The Comstock boys finished what they started last year. They dominated the Class B championship for the second consecutive year.

"We were talking about this year last year," four-event winner Randy Hunt said. "We really only lost one person from last year's team, so we came into this season with a lot of confidence."

There was so much confidence that Comstock won even though J.B. Thomas pulled up with a hamstring injury on the second leg of the 800-meter relay. In the 400-meter relay, not even two poor handoffs could keep the Colts from winning handily.

Caledonia won the girls championship.

The Colts' deep cast of sprinters helped them amass 69 points.

The only person having an easier time on the Midland Stadium track was Lynn Channell, a senior from Ypsilanti Willow Run.

Channell dominated the girls sprints, sweeping the 100 (12.64), the 200 (25.70) and the 400 (57.45).

"I wish I were in Class A because I think I could be a Division I competitor," said Channell, who will attend Eastern Michigan on a full athletic scholarship. "I really haven't been training as hard as I should have. I've been kind of laid-back."

"Lynn is amazing," said Tycomesh Hugh's Angie Hamilton, who coaches Channell in the 400. "You know she's trying, but she's so smooth it doesn't always look like it. When we finish, she doesn't even breathe hard."

Caledonia, the defending girls cross-country champion, used sophomore Corrie Lesnik to upset Willow Run and River Rouge.

None of Caledonia's distance runners could catch Corrie Goold, a junior from Powers Catholic in Flint, who won the 1600 meter (5:03.20) and 3200 meter (11:03.27).

River Rouge was led by junior Kenyetta Grigsby, who won the 100-meter hurdles (14.68) and the 300-meter hurdles (43.31).

Corrie Troy Lesnik (14:19.02) edged teammate Jodie Mouyna of Ionia at the finish line to win the boys 1600-meter run.

Dan Wetzel is a free-lance writer.

CLASS C TRACK

New Haven boys, Hemlock are champs

By Don VanderVeen

AUBURN, Mich. — The rain stopped in time for Saturday's Class C track and field finals. But New Haven's reign in Class C is showing few signs of letting up.

New Haven, which won the boys Class C championship with four runners in 1994, successfully defended its title Saturday at Bay City Western High School.

With five first- and three second-place finishes, the Rockets scored 70 points to easily outdistance runner-up Newaygo by 28 points. Charlevoix was third with 37, followed by Breckenridge (28) and Quincy (25).

New Haven Coach Frank Reed brought a larger team to the state finals this year. It was seven strong.

For New Haven, it was a "Mack-attack" seven. Junior John Mack achieved a state-finals grand slam with victories in four events.

"When you get a lot of first and seconds, the points add up," Mack said. He and Billy Chemesh were the lone returnees from last year's champions.

New Haven's big finish was a 1-2 showing in the 200, with Mack finishing first (23.97) and Chemesh second (22.20). Mack also won the 400 (48.99) and anchored the Rockets to victory in the 800 relay in 1:30.05.

"You don't find any better kids anywhere," Reed said. "They're all good kids, very religious and very talented."

Mack has won three Class C championships in the 400 meters and still has a year of high school left.

He made up 20 meters on the bell lap and — despite getting hit by another runner's baton — blew past the competition on the anchor leg to help the Rockets win the 1,600 relay in 3:28.85.

New Haven was the first boys team to repeat in Class C since Detroit Lutheran West in 1987-88.

Don VanderVeen is a free-lance writer.

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