Alton Captures State Track Championship

By DON PLARSKI
Telegraph Sports Editor

CHAMPAIGN — Three times in seven years.

That's the record Alton High School has achieved in winning state track and field championships since 1963.

The Redbirds accomplished their latest feat here Saturday afternoon at the University of Illinois' Memorial Stadium in the 75th Annual Interscholastic Track and Field Championships.

They did it with 25 points. It was nine more than runnerup East Moline's 16 and 10 more than third place Chicago Englewood's 15.

The Redbirds had not been one of the pre-meet favorites although there was some support for them from some quarters. Much of the talk centered around Englewood, Proviso West, York of Elmhurst and Bloom of Chicago Heights. The Redbirds were cast in a dark-horse role.

After Friday preliminaries they were the talk of the town They qualified their entire team — six individuals and both relay teams for the finals. How could they miss?

They didn't. They came on strong in Saturday's finals. Gale Murphy, the speedy, long-legged sophomore finished third in the 100 and 220-yard dashes, the 880 relay team of Jim Scruggs, Gerry (Scooter) Wilson, Oscar Wallace and Murphy won first place, Wallace didn't jump in the finals of the long jump after establishing a new record the day before in the prelims with a 24-6¼ effort, Milton Johnson ran a strong third in the 440-yard dash and the mile relay foursome of Charles Ross, Roger Bower, Wilson and Johnson added icing with a second place finish.

That added up to 25 points on the meet basis of 6, 4, 3, 2, 1 for first through fifth.

Murphy, only a sophomore, helped the Redbirds gain 10 valuable points. He got off to a slow start in the 100 but finished strong behind winner Merlyn Hood of East Moline and Edwardsville's Morris Bradshaw, a surprise runnerup. Hood, a chunky All-State halfback in the football season, won with an explosive start. His time was :09.7.

Murphy and Bradshaw were timed in :09.8 but Bradshaw was given second place by the judges.

Later, Murphy came back to anchor the 880 team to a 1:28.4 time and first place. The Redbirds, running in the fifth lane, led all the way.

In the next-to-last event of the day, the 220, Murphy was in the fifth lane, sandwiched between Hood and Proviso West's Rich Vallicelli, the defending champion in the event. The speedy sopho, with the long stride of his, ran an excellent race but could not catch Hood or Vallicelli at the finish in an extremely close race. Hood and Vallicelli were timed in :21.8 and Murphy and Rod Moss of Englewood in :21.9. Hood was given first place. Vallecelli second, Murphy third and Moss fourth.

Hood was the only double winner of the day. He didn't lose a race including the prelims.

When Murphy finished third in the 220, it gave Alton 21 points. The Redbirds had it wrapped up. No other team could catch them going into the final event of the warm and windy afternoon — the mile relay.

Alton, which had the best qualifying time the day before, couldn't stave off Morton West in this race, anchored by Terry Erickson, Morton West won in the time of 3:19.7. Alton's time was 3:20.0.

Johnson, running anchor for the Redbirds, turned in a brilliant quarter mile. Taking the baton in fifth place, he was clocked in :47.6 in a vain effort to catch Erickson and Morton West. Erickson was timed in :48.2.

It was Johnson who gained three points for Alton in the 440. Running in the sixth lane, he got off to a fast start but saw Erickson and the winner, Jerry Foster of North Chicago outlast him to the finish line. Foster's time was :48.9, Erickson's :49.0 and Johnson's :49.1.

Alton's remaining six points came on Wallace's record long jump for first place. It was thought the Redbirds might get some help from junior George Gilcrest in this event but he could not better a 22-4 leap of the day before and finished in sixth place.

Pole vaulter Doug Mendenhall of the Redbirds, who had made 13 feet the day before in qualifying for the finals, went out when he couldn't make the same height on Saturday.

Alton won back-to-back state titles in 1963 and 1964 in Jim Wigger's first two years as head coach. They were third last year and hit the jackpot again this year.

Only three records were set in the meet. Wind made it almost impossible to turn in good performances. Wallace's was one and the other two came in the 180-yard low hurdles and two-mile run.

Running around a curve, Ron Classen of Wheaton North won the low hurdles with a time o :19.6. Since it was run on a curve, the time goes down as a record. Previous races were run on a straightaway.

Mark Visk of Palatine, a strong runner, beat the two mile mark with a time of 9:06.1. The old record was 9:08.6 by Rich Elliott of Proviso West last year.

Englewood got off to a good start on finals day when Mike Stover won the 120-yard high hurdles in the time of :14.0. The time bettered the existing record of :14.1 but too much wind nullified the effort.

Favored Willie Thomas of Englewood made a shambles of the 880-yard run with a first place time of 1:50.8. He was the defending champion in this event. The second place finisher, Cliff Dishmon of Chicago Phillips, had a time of 1:53.2 to finish far behind. Thomas had high hopes of breaking the record time of 1:50.4 set by Larry Kelly of Maine East in 1964. Without a wind he undoubtedly would have made it.

The mile run went to favored Ken Popejoy of Glenbard West of Glen Ellyn. His time was 4:16.2.

One of the most disappointed individuals had to be Collinsville's Steve Birger. The leader the whole season in the discus throw, he finished third in his event with a toss of 163 feet 4 inches. The winner, Bob Griffith of St. Charles, won with a heave of 171 feet 3 inches. Birger had tossed the platter 178 feet 6¼ inches in one of his best efforts this year.

Tyrone Carpenter of East St. Louis finished second in the high jump with a leap of 6 feet 6 inches. It was the same as the winner's, Gaylyn Sweet of Colfax Octavia, but Carpenter lost out when he had more misses than Sweet.

Another favorite missed when Toy McCoy of Mount Zion, the shot put choice, wound up second with a toss of 58 feet 10½ inches. Tom Holt of Bloom had the best toss — 59 feet 10¼ inches.

Ralph Williams of Thornton of Harvey was the pole vault winner with a 14-foot effort.

TEAM TOTALS

Alton 25, East Moline 16, Chicago Englewood 15, Chicago Heights Bloom 13, Morton West 10, Proviso West 9, Palatine 8, Proviso East 8, Moline 6, St. Charles 6, Colfax Octavia 6, North Chicago 6, Wheaton North 6, Harvey Thornton 6, Elmhurst York 6, Glenbard West 5, Aurora East 5, Skokie Niles North 5, New Lenox Lincoln Way 4, Edwardsville 4, East St. Louis 4, Chicago Forrestville 4, Mount Zion 4, Chicago Phillips 4, Deerfield 3, Princeton 4, Collinsville 3, Joliet West 3, Deland-Weldon 3, Glenbard East 3, Rankin 3, Rock Island 3, Chicago Lane 3, Naperville 3, Evanston 3, Hinsdale South 2, Urbana 2, Decatur 2, Chicago Marshall 2, Tinley Park 2, Villa Park Willowbrook 2, Dixon 1, Sparta 1, Champaign Central 1, Elmhurst Timothy Christian 1, Centralia 1, Carpentersville Crown 1, Oak Park 1.

INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

Pole vault — Ralph Williams, Harvey Thornton, 14 feet; Mark Nelson, Deerfield, 13-6; Randy Ullom, Naperville, 13-4; Steve Willis, Skokie Niles North, 13-4; Mike Markowitz, Carpentersville Crown, 13-0; tie between Gary Fagerson, Arlington Heights and Steve Edwards, Arcola, 13-0.

Shot put — Tom Holt, Chicago Heights Bloom 59 feet 10¼ inches; Troy McCoy, Mount Zion, 58-10½; Rich Bilder, Chicago Lane, 58-10¼; Paul Carther, Moline, 58-8½; Paul Andrew, Champaign Central, 57-11¾; Carrell Swaim, Chicago Heights Bloom, 57-5.

High Jump — Gaylyn Sweet, Colfax Octavia, 6-6; Tyrone Carpenter, East St. Louis, 6-6; Larry Hulsinga, Deland-Weldon, 6-5; Jim Wilson, Urbana, 6-5; Greg Hudon, Glenbard East, 6-3; Mike Towler, Oak Park, 6-3.

Discus—Bob Griffith, St. Charles, 171 feet 3 inches; Dave Boling, Chicago Heights Bloom, 167-0; Steve Birger, Collinsville, 163-4; Bob Elledge, Hinsdale South, 157-6; Mike Welch, Dixon, 157-3; Jerry Reiman, O'Fallon, 157-2.

Mile relay — Morton West (Larry Krev, Jerry Vondra, Al Regac, Terry Erickson), 3:19.7; Alton, 3:20.0; Chicago Heights Bloom, 3:20.9; Villa Park Willowbrook, 3:21.2; Oak Park 3:21.8; New Trier East, 3:22.4.

Mile — Ken Popejoy, Glenbard West, 4:16.2; Tom Swan, Princeton, 4:17.4; Dave Ingraham, Evanston, 4:19.4; Phil Donahue, Palatine, 4:19.7; Harry Johnson, Chicago Englewood, 4:20.9; Mike Tucker, Evanston, 4:22.7.

220—Merlyn Hood, East Moline, :21.8; Rich Vallicelli, Proviso West, :21.8; Gale Murphy, Alton, :21.9; Rod Moss, Englewood, :21.9; Tom Jones, Elmhurst York, :22.0; Mike Anderson, Rockford Auburn, :22.8.

880 relay—Alton (Jim Scruggs, Gerry Wilson, Oscar Wallace, Gale Murphy), 1:28.4; East Moline, 1:28.7; Skokie Niles North, 1:29.7; Chicago Marshall, 1:29.8; Rock Island, 1:29.7; East St. Louis, 1:29.9.

180 low hurdles — Ron Classen Wheaton North, :19.6; Gene Mobley, Proviso East, :19.9; Bill Patterson, Aurora East, :19.9; John Valant, Elmhurst York, :20.2; Dave Lindstrom, Aurora East, :20.8; Nick Silvestri, Wheeling, :21.2. (New record for curve; previous record for straightaway.)

440—Jerry Foster, North Chicago, :48.9; Terry Eickson, Morton West, :49.0; Milt Johnson, Alton, :49.1; Rob Mango, Tinley Park, :49.4; Steve Brink, Centralia, :49.7; Will Hattix, East St. Louis, 50.0.

880—Willie Thomas, Englewood, 1:50.8; Cliff Dishmon, Chicago Phillips, 1:53.2; Rick Loucks, New Lenox Lincoln Way, 1:53.3; Mark Stevens, Decatur, 1:55.2; Randall Veltkamp, Elmhurst Timothy Christian, 1:55.3; tie between Gary Rembardt, Belleville West, and Bill Totsch, Chicago Taft, 1:55.4.

Long jump—Oscar Wallace, Alton, 24 feet 6¼ inches; Doug Frederick, Chicago Forrestville, 23-6¼; William Cornelius, Rankin, 23-6; Robert Williams, Rock Island, 22-11½; Vin Boston Sparta, 22-6; George Gilcrest, Alton, 22-4. (New record; old record of 24-4 by Roy Houston, Evanston, 1966).

100—Merlyn Hood, East Moline, :09.7; Morris Bradshaw, Edwardsville, 09.8; Gale Murphy, Alton, :09.8; Rich Vallicelli, Proviso West, :09.9; Tom Jones, Elmhurst York, :09.9; Dan Deweese Jacksonville, :09.9.

120 high hurdles—Mike Stover, Englewood, :14.0; Gene Mobley, Proviso East, :14.1; Bob Cipolle, Joliet West, :14.1; Rick Swenson, Glenbard East, :14.2; William Patterson, Aurora East, 14.2; John Valant, Elmhurst York, :14.4.

Two-mile run—Mark Visk, Palatine, 9:06.1; Duane Smith, Moline, 9:06.7; Andy Isla-Rubert, Proviso West, 9:12.4; Peter Reiff, Elmhurst York, 9:14.2; Dave Merrick, New Lenox Lincoln Way, 9:17.8; Dan Hartung, Downers Grove North, 9:19.8. (New record; old record of 9:08.6 by Rich Elliott, Proviso West, 1968.)

CHAMPS—Here are the members of Alton's state championship track team. From left to right are Milt Johnson, 440 and mile relay; George Gilcrest, long jump; Jim Scruggs, 880 relay; Doug Mendenhall, pole vault; Gerry (Scooter) Wilson, 880 relay and mile relay; Roger Bower (partially hidden), mile relay; Oscar Wallace, long jump and 880 relay, and Gale Murphy, 100 and 220 dashes and 880 relay. Charles Ross of the mile relay team was missing when the picture was taken.

Minnesota Nears Crown In Baseball

CHICAGO (AP) — Only total disaster can prevent Minnesota's Gophers from winning a second straight Big Ten baseball title in the upcoming and final weekend of the season.

The Gophers missed a chance to clinch it all Saturday when they dropped a 6-5 decision to Iowa in 10 innings on a game-winning hit by Dave Krull with two outs.

The loss was the second in 14 games for the Gophers and only Ohio State, which was rained out of a doubleheader at Wisconsin Saturday, has any chance of winning the tiel outright.

Ohio State, which was unable to makeup the doubleheader Sunday because of rain, has a 7-5 record. If the Buckeyes take doubleheaders from Purdue and Illinois over the weekend, they would finish with an 11-5 record and a .688 percentage.

Minnesota then would have to lose twice at Michigan Friday and twice at Michigan State Saturday to finish with a 12-6 record and a .667 percentage.

Another possibility is if Minnesota loses four and Illinois wins four, the two teams would have identical 12-6 records. This possibility, of course, would eliminate Ohio State since Ohio State and Illinois close the season against each other Saturday.

In three doubleheaders played Saturday, Purdue defeated Michigan State 6-2 but lost the second game, 6-1. Northwestern downed Indiana 3-1 but lost the nightcap 10-5 and Illinois blanked Michigan 2-0 but was shutout in the second game 4-0.

Friday's full schedule finds Illinois at Indiana, Minnesota at Michigan, Iowa at Michigan State and Purdue at Ohio State in doubleheaders while Wisconsin is at Northwestern in a single game.

Majestic Prince Winner

BALTIMORE (AP) — The Belmont Stakes still is to be run, but when the final jewel is added to racing's Triple Crown on June 7 it will not sparkle as brightly as was expected—Majestic Prince will not be there.

Trainer Johnny Longden says the Prince, with the shot at becoming a Triple Crown king, will not run in the Belmont.

Owner Frank McMahon also says so — but with less conviction.

For a time Saturday it appeared that once again no one would get a shot at the Triple Crown. A foul was claimed against McMahon's unbeaten colt after he finished first in the $182,000 Preakness, but the stewards disallowed it after deliberating for 26 tension-building minutes.

"Boys we're taking him home," was the bombshell Longden dropped on newsmen when they appeared at his barn on the Pimlico backstretch Sunday morning to rehash Majestic Prince's head victory over Arts and Letters, who he beat by a neck in the Kentucky Derby.

McMahon, contacted before he left Baltimore, at first said he had reached no decision but later he told The Associated Press by telephone from his home in Florida:

"I am pretty well convinced we are not going to run him. We are awfully close to not going. He is not sick; his condition is fine. He's just lost weight because of the campaign (seven wins this year added to two in 1968)."

Longden also said the power-running chestnut's condition had nothing to do with his wanting to ship to his farm at Riverside, Calif., and return Majestic Prince to the races in late summer or fall. Then he said:

"I've checked back and I can't find any horse that had a tough race in the Derby or Preakness that came out of the Belmont and amounted to a damn. I mean they never run back to their top form."

Count Fleet was one of them. He was sound when he went into the Belmont. He never raced again after the Belmont."

Count Fleet, who won the Triple Crown in 1943, was ridden by Johnny Longden.

No previous winner of the Derby and Preakness has ever withheld voluntarily from the Belmont, in which just eight colts have clinched the Triple Crown—the last one was Citation in 1948.

A record Preakness crowd of 43,259 thrilled to the stretch duel between Majestic Prince and Arts and Letters, almost a carbon copy of their Derby battle, then waited out the foul claims.

Braulio Baeza, who rode the runner-up from Paul Mellon's Rokeby Stable, contended they lost ground on the first turn when they were bothered by Bill Hartack and Majestic Prince. But it was disallowed.

Once the field of 3-year-olds turned for home, it became a two-horse race, as Claiborne Farm's Jay Ray finished four lengths back of Arts and Letters and the Estate of Steven B. Wilson's Top Knight was another four lengths back.

Following them to the end of the 1 3-16 miles, timed in 1:55 3-5., were Pelican Stable's Al Hattab, Michael G. Phipps' Greengrass Greene, Elmendorf's Captain Action and Glenn M. Banker's Glad's Flame.

The $129,500 first money boosted the career earnings of Majestic Prince, purchased for $250,000 as a yearling, to $389,200.

Ricci Named Coach At Western Illinois

MACOMB — President John T. Berhard announced today that the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities has approved Guy Ricci as head basketball coach at Western Illinois University. Ricci replaces Leroy "Stix" Morley who has retired after 22 years at the helm of the Leathernecks. Ricci has served as assistant basketball coach at Western since joining the staff in 1954.

Coach Ricci attended Bradley University where he earned two letters in football and four letters in both basketball and baseball. As a member of the Braves basketball team he participated in the National Invitational Tournament in 1947 and 1949.

Immediately after graduating from Bradley, Ricci joined the coaching staff at Normal (Illinois) Community High School where he served as both head baseball and basketball coach for three years. He then joined the staff at Tremont High School where his teams in all three sports enjoyed outstanding success during a two year stint.

After joining the Western staff, Ricci replaced Wix Garner as head baseball coach in 1955. In 1965 he was selected NCAA COLLEGE Division Coach of the Year.

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