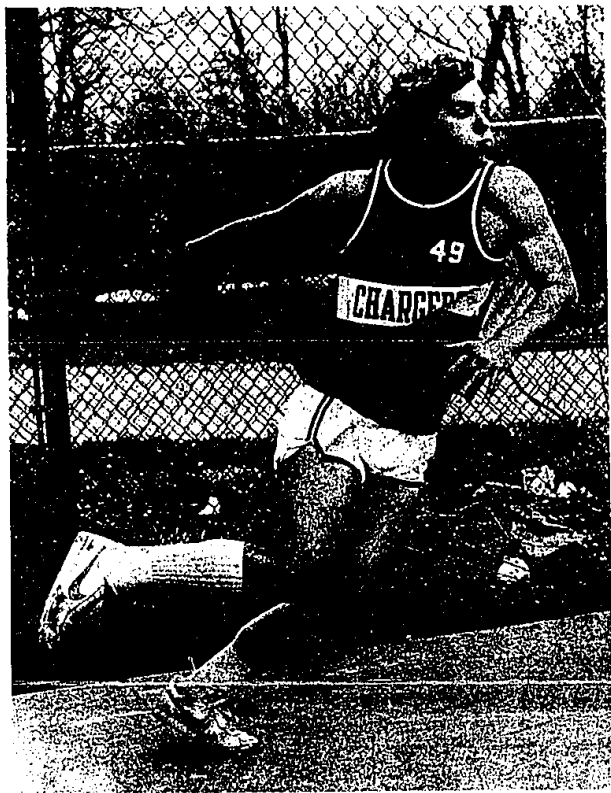


Monday, May 8, 1983 O&E

Rain can't stop surging Churchill



Tim Luch (top photo) helped Churchill to the team title by winning the discus. He was also a member of the winning shot put relay squad. In photo at right, Observerland contestants (from left) Jeff Verkerke of RU, Tim Engling of Stevenson, Rick Pater of CC and Erik Highley of Farmington try to qualify in the 120-yard high hurdles.

By C.J. Risak
staff writer

Rain does funny things to people. Showers come pouring down and most people hurry for cover.

Not included in that number are the 17 boys' track teams that braved the elements Saturday in the 13th annual Observerland Relays at Redford Union's Howard Kraft Field. And one team in particular seemed undaunted by the downpour that left much of the cinder track submerged.

Indeed, Livonia Churchill appeared to thrive on the rain. The Chargers ignored the weather and created a storm of their own in rampaging to seven firsts in 13 events and winning the Observerland title handily.

IN CLAIMING ITS fifth outright championship, Churchill amassed an incredible 120 team points. By comparison, Redford Catholic Center's 69 points was the winning total a year ago.

The Shamrocks did better at this Observerland than the last, coach Kevin Kavanaugh said. Their 90-point total verified that. But this year it was worth no more than second place.

Put simply, Churchill was just too good. "They just ran super," said a happy but soaked Churchill coach Fred Price of his team's performance. "I don't think they could perform that well in these conditions."

THERE WERE FEW, if any, times that Churchill was in trouble. Plymouth Salem, the 1981 Observerland winner, rang up a surprising total of 85 points in the field events and was tied with the Chargers going onto the track.

"We thought we'd get 24 points (in the field) and we got 36," said Gary Balconi, Salem's coach. "We had two sophomores (Mike Harwood and Richard Pinko) record personal bests in the pole vault (an event Salem won)." Unfortunately for the Rocks, "the opposite was true on the track," Balconi admitted.

"We didn't do as well as I thought."

Still, the Salem coach admitted when questioned about Churchill's easy victory that "the only surprise would have been if they didn't win."

CC's KAVANAUGH agreed. "We couldn't get away from them," he said. "Every event we scored well in, they were right there too. We didn't get any help from anyone."

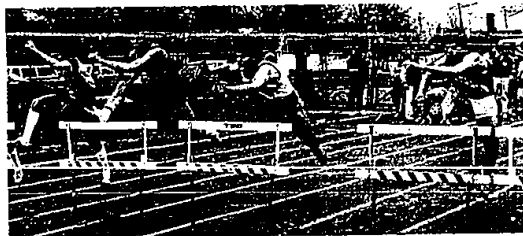
Winners? Price said he "couldn't pick out any one outstanding performer" on his team. There were just too many.

Erik Hansen, a Danish exchange student and soccer player who only came out for track at the urging of teammate Bill Crawford, shocked the crowd when it was announced he won the open 100-yard dash in 9.6 on a puddle-covered track. As it turned out, it was actually a "93 or 94" yard dash, according to meet director John MacKenzie. The rain had confused officials and the event was started at the wrong spot.

WHATEVER, HANSEN was impressive. He also anchored the Chargers' winning 880 relay, with Bob Thomas, Larry Blais and Paul DeFurio (1:34.3), and the sprint medley, with Thomas, Blais and Crawford (2:37.8).

Other Charger winners included the team of Tim Luch, Dave Mize and Mark Jucodawiks were winners in both the discus (420.3) and shot put (40.3-41.4) relays. Also not to be overlooked was the victory of Churchill's Keith Oplach in the open 120 high hurdles (15.3). CC's Marty Hegarty captured the open mile run (4:51.25).

CHURCHILL ALSO won the high jump relay, with Matt Blais, Steve O'Hara and Mike Meehan tying the meet record of 18-5 set in 1981 by Farmington. CC's team of Hegarty, Pat Isom, Steve Shaver and Paul Buchanan was first in the four mile relay (18:57.0). Salem, which finished fourth behind a late-surging Redford Bishop Borges, won the long jump relay with Dan Lingg, Jeff Arnold and Mike White (59-0) and the pole vault relay with Lingg, Harwood and Pinko (36-4).



photos by ART EMANUELE/staff photographer

Judges' ruling puts damper on careers

By Jim DuFreene
staff writer

The trouble with gymnastics is that it's a judge, not the competitors, who determine the winner. The trouble with being a senior is that it's your last shot. The trouble with Greg Boscauwen is that he was a senior on the Michigan State gymnastic team. This was his final season, so he was gunning for the top honors: He wanted to finish his career as an all-American.

The MSU captain entered the NCAA meet in early April with the second highest average in the nation for the parallel bars. Only Scott Johnson of University of Nebraska had a higher

seasonal average. BUT THE MEET ended for Boscauwen in the preliminaries. One judge rated his performance 9.8, the other 9.3. Because of the wide discrepancy between the ratings, the judges compromised and gave the North Farmington grad a 9.4.

It was Boscauwen's lowest mark of the year, but worse, it was 0.5 points short of qualifying for the finals.

"I was a little disappointed, no, I was really disappointed," said Boscauwen. "What I wanted to do was make all-American, and I would have done it if I made the finals."

"But that's the sport. It all depends on the judges."

THE SCORE CAUSED a minor uproar among the meet's 12 judges. Many wanted it reconsidered and protested throughout the day. But in the end, it remained, and the MSU senior watched the finals from the stands.

"There was quite a controversy over his score," said Kurt Golder, assistant coach for the Spartan squad. "Five judges approached me and said that Greg got a hose job."

Boscauwen wasn't the only one stripping off the green-and-white uniform for the last time after the preliminaries. Pete Roberts, a Southfield-Lathrup coach, also wrapped up his gymnastic career at the NCAA championships. The vaultier failed to make the finals

when he scored a 9.4 in the first round. "Pete took three steps on his landing, and that cost him a 9.7 score," said Golder. "Still, both of them had great seasons. At one time, Pete was rated number one in the nation, and Greg was rated second for their events."

NOT BAD, CONSIDERING both were walk-on's their freshman year.

Boscauwen began the sport as a sophomore in high school. He issued much from North Farmington coach Dennis Fitzgerald but took few honors during his prep days.

"Our team was mediocre at best," said Boscauwen. "Everybody on the squad had never been in gymnastics before."

But the groundwork had been laid. Both gymnasts signed up for the Spartan team, stuck with it their freshman year and earned a spot on the varsity squad the following season.

BOSSCAUWEN BACKED into the line-up when an injury sidelined the man ahead of him. He made the most of the opportunity and he finished fourth in the Big 10 championships on the parallel bars. Roberts had a great season as a sophomore, winning the conference vaulting crown.

This winter, Roberts finished fifth in the Big 10. Boscauwen was third. Both earned a trip to the NCAA meet despite

their team managing only a seventh-place finish in the conference championships.

"It's been a long road for me," said Boscauwen. "My first year as a walk-on, no one knew who I was."

He's come to the end, however. Boscauwen graduates in April and plans to move to California to look for work. He realizes high-level gymnastic competition is probably a thing of the past.

"I still plan on working out because I like to," said Boscauwen. "But it's just fun now from now on. You're just beach meets."

The kind where there aren't any judges around to spoil the fun.

'Unbelievable!' Harrison girls whip Western

Farmington Harrison's girls' track coach Mark Babcock kept repeating, "unbelievable!" when he phoned in the results of the Hawks' meet with Walled Lake Western.

The reason? It was the first time in the history of the school that Harrison's girls defeated Western. And the Hawks did it with a first-place finish in the last event of the day — the mile relay.

"We're all sitting around here in a daze," Babcock said of the 64-59 win. "It's just unbelievable. Unbelievable." Harrison and Western went into the mile relay tied, 59-59. But Carol Kopko, Jamie Lyons, Marlene Sanders and Tracy Brod won the event in 4:19.6 to clinch the meet.

"Unbelievable," Babcock stressed. "Alice Short turned in a typically outstanding performance with wins in the shot put (42-6), discus (115-3), 100 hurdles (15-4), and ran on the winning 400 relay team (53.3) with Jill Biers, Sanders and Carol Primo."

Lori Rank played a major role in the win as she doubled up to win the mile (8:47.0) and two mile with a school record time of 17:17.7.

Brod won the 400 (2:17) and Jamie Holcomb was first in the 300 hurdles (40.3). Harrison, 3-1 overall and 1-1 in the

Western Lakes, hosts Livonia Franklin Tuesday.

NORTH FARMINGTON swept both ends of a meet with Redford Union Thursday as the Raiders boys took an 83-43 win and the girls prevailed, 63-60.

Eric Collier won the long jump (19-4) and 440 (53.7), while Dan Schaffer was a winner in the 100 (10.5) and 220 (23.7). Schaffer also ran on the winning 440 relay team (47.3). Bob Loettler won the 320 low hurdles (20.7) and was on the first-place 880 relay team (1:54.8).

The Raiders improved to 4-2 overall and 2-1 in the Northwest Suburban League. Sue Hedfield won two events and participated on the first-place 800 relay as the girls slipped Redford Union by three points.

Kim Mandell put the Raiders in the winning circle when she finished first in the 500 (24.5). Hedfield was a winner in the 100 (18.5) and 300 (50.5) hurdles, and joined Audrey Niskar, Sharon Shifra and Laurie Wright on the 800 relay team (1:57.6).

Laine Shaw was first in the 100 (12.8) and Shifra won the long jump (19-4). North, 4-1 overall, and 3-0 in the Northwest Suburban, is at Birmingham Groves Tuesday.

track

FARMINGTON HIGH took both ends of a track meet with Walled Lake Central Thursday, as the boys posted a 101-51 score and the girls came out ahead, 69-54.

Pete Brown led the boys with wins in the shot put (51-4) and discus (153-3). Mike Forgy won the 100 (10.5) and 220 (24.0), and joined Paul Polos, Mike Ryan and Tim Berry on the winning 880 and 440 relay teams.

The Falcons are 4-3 overall and 2-1 in the Western Lakes league. Annette Salick and Rhonda Lancaster were double winners in the girls' victory. Salick won the mile (8:53.4) and two mile (18:33.0) while Lancaster was first in the 110 (16.3) and 320 (51.7) hurdle races.

Both Sherman set a school record with a first-place toss of 116-7 in the discus. Lynn Looser was the 800 (2:54.4) and Karen Runyan was first in the 100 (18.3).

The mile relay team of Looser, Laura Spence, Kim Steiner and Tracy Hale was first in 4:34.3.

Farmington, 3-4 overall and 2-1 in the league, hosts Plymouth Salem Tuesday.

BLOOMFIELD HILLS Andover swept its meet with Hazel Park Thursday, as the boys posted a 69-43 win and the girls rolled to a 108-15 victory.

Both Barron squads improved their record to 3-2. Kristie Walsh led the girls with wins in the high jump (4-0), the 110-yard hurdles (18.7) and the 320 hurdles (49.8). She was also a member of the winning 880 relay team.

Debi Dickinson won the long jump (16-3), 100 (12.5) and the 220 (28.7), and was a member of that first-place 880 relay team.

Misty Proctor and Tracy Pritchek were double winners for Andover. Proctor was first in the shot put (35-7) and the discus (73-10), while Pritchek won the mile (8:53.4) and two mile (18:07.3).

The boys needed a first and second in the two-mile run to wrap up the victory, and Steve Schmidt and Mike Shore

were equal to the task. Schmidt won the event with a 10:09.2, and Shore followed with a 10:12.1.

In the final event, John Arts came from 30 yards back to give the Barrons the win in the mile relay, which won in 3:37.5. Arts was joined by Mike Masters, Keith Terry and Craig Johnson.

Arts also won the 440 in 52.8. Matt Bertfield won the high hurdles (18.0) and Masters was first in the mile (4:37.1).

George Pallen, Steve Brandt, Mike Zommer and Brian Allt teamed to win the 880 (1:36.3) and 440 (46.5) relays.

BIRMINGHAM GROVES split with Southfield-Lathrup Thursday, as the Falcons boys pulled off an 85-47 victory, while the Chargers girls prevailed, 73-49.

Chuck Loughery led Groves with wins in the 200- (23.4) and 400- (51.9) meter runs, and was a member of the 800 and mile relay teams. Loughery and Kevin Jackson to win the 800 (1:35.0), and ran with Jackson, Glen Drotbler and Scott Richter on the mile relay team (3:38.1).

Drotbler won the high (17.3) and low (17.7) hurdle races, Craig Compton was

first in the long jump (18-9) and high jump (5-3), and Mike Ursu won the discus (116-9) and shot put (44-6).

Ursu also won the 3200 for Groves in 10:18.0, and Steve Hitchcock led the pole vaulters with an 11-4.

Tom LeBay led Lathrup with a 4:33 in the metric mile and a 2:05.1 in the 800.

Groves (1-3) hosts Farmington Tuesday. Lathrup (0-3) is idle until Thursday when it plays at Douders.

Lathrup's girls were led by double winners Lori Carithers and Lisa Van Buskirk. Carithers won the 100 (13.5) and 300 (37.8), while Van Buskirk was first in the shot put (35-4) and discus (100-0).

All three Charger relay teams came in first. The 800 relay won in 1:33.5, the 400 was first in 55.4, and the mile met clocked in at 4:44.0.

Sandy Niedermaier was another Lathrup winner with a 4-8 in the high jump.

Carla Walker and Karen Hector were double winners for Groves. Walker was first in the 100 (18.3) and 300 (33.8) hurdle events, and Hector won the metric mile (8:41.0) and two mile (13:15.0). Julie Lemieux was first for the Falcons in the long jump (14-5 1/4).