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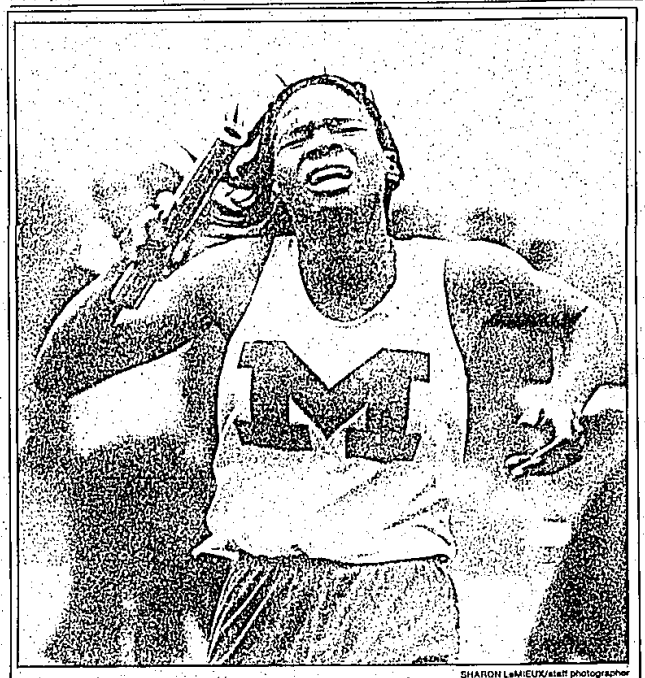

SHARON LaMIEUX/staff photographer

Agony of victory

Nicole Pryor of Farmington Hills Mercy crosses the finish line after running the anchor leg of the winning 3,200-meter relay team Tuesday in a quadrangular track meet. See story on Page 2B.

Shamrocks adjust to win Elks Relays

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

The chances of Redford Catholic Central winning the Dearborn Elks Relays didn't look good Saturday when star athlete Eric McKeon got hurt early in the track/field meet.

McKeon pulled a muscle competing in the long jump, forcing coach Tony Magni to remove him from the running relays and restructure his lineup to compensate for his loss.

Ironically but fortunately for the Shamrocks, Magni managed to construct another winning combination in those frenzied moments. CC won five events and edged Plymouth Canton for first place at Dearborn High School.

It marked the first championship for CC after more than 20 years of competing in the annual event. The Shamrocks scored 52 points, Canton 45 and the host Pioneers 29.

Other teams in order of finish were Westland John Glenn (26), Temperance Bedford (18) and Highland Park (18), the University of Detroit-Jesuit (17), Novi (15), Plymouth Salem (14), Detroit Osborn (10), Wyandotte (5), Hazel Park (3) and Livonia Franklin (0).

"IT WAS ONE of those things where you have to make some changes real quick, and I switched everybody around," Magni said. "But the guys I moved here and there did a real nice job and responded very well.

"The kids knew, without McKeon, it would be tough to do well. But, as the meet progressed, things started to snowball. Of the last six running events, we won four, so we knew we were going after it."

track

'It was one of those things where you have to make some changes real quick, and I switched everybody around. But the guys I moved here and there did a real nice job and responded very well.'

— Tony Magni
CC track coach

CC's tradition for outstanding cross country teams and fine distance runners was evident in the longer relays.

Brandon Dalziel, Damon Harris and Steve Witek were on the 3,200- and 6,400-meter relay teams that posted winning times of 8:20.4 and 19:14.4, respectively. Chris O'Keefe was the CC leadoff runner in the 3,200 race and Chris Kuzia in the 6,400.

Witek also helped the Shamrocks win the 1,600 relay. Aaron Sheposh, T.J. Kitchen, who substituted for McKeon, and Marc Eden combined with Witek for a 3:33 finish.

CC was tied with Canton going into the last event — the 1,600 relay. But Magni knew the Shamrocks were guaranteed first or second in the discus (those results had not been posted yet) and thus had clinched the victory. However, he didn't tell his relay runners that.

"I told the kids 'If you beat Canton, we can't lose' and we just *nudged them,*" he said. "I *wanted* them to run a good race and do well in the mile relay."

CC ALSO WON the intermediate hurdles relay as each of four team members ran 150 meters on a straightaway. Eden, Ron DeMarco, Pat Palson and Ron Castro finished first with a 1:25 time.

The Shamrocks were first in the discus in which Joe Suhajda, Kevin Jakubowski and Doug Brzezinski combined best throws for a total distance of 354-6.

Magni inserted Sheposh into the distance medley relay to run the 1,200-meter portion in place of McKeon, and the team of Brian O'Reilly (800), Eden (400), Sheposh and John Wiktor (1,600) produced a second-place time of 11:16.4.

"Everything worked out well for us," Magni said. "All the moves I made paid off."

Suhajda, Mike Grzywacz, Nick Kallas and Brzezinski comprised the runner-up team in the shot put. CC's Kevin Roslinski, Scott Gutt and Steve Horvath got second in the high jump.

The Shamrocks had no third or fourth places but captured a pair of fifths. Without McKeon and Kitchen the 400 and 800 relays were the only events in which CC didn't score.

The same foursome that won the intermediate hurdles also scored in the high hurdles relay (1:11.7), and Rob Clark combined with freshmen Mark Barbarich and John Scherkenbach to place in the pole vault (25-0).

Women's champ returns to defend marathon title

WHAT: West Bloomfield Half Marathon and 5K Run.

WHEN: Sunday, April 26. Half marathon begins at 12:30 p.m.; 5K run begins at 12:42 p.m.

WHERE: Both races begin at the West Bloomfield High School parking lot.

REGISTRATION: Race day registration will be accepted 10:15 a.m. to noon in the West Bloomfield High School gymnasium. Registration fees are $16 for the half marathon and $14 for the 5K.

CATEGORIES: Men and women by age group, citydestriter, wheelers, husband and wife teams.

SPONSOR: West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Department and the Henry Ford Medical Center West Bloomfield.

RECORDS: Men — Doug Kurtis, Northville, 1:07:32 in 1989. Women — Cheri Sly-Dexter, 1:15:57 in 1989.

MOST ENTRANTS: There were 939 runners in 1993.

POSTPONMENTS: The 1983 race was postponed one week after a blizzard dumped seven inches of snow in West Bloomfield the night before the race.

MULTIPLE WINNERS: Doug Kurtis, Northville, 1979, '89, '90, '91; Larry Fisher, Pontiac, 1983, '84.

CONTROVERSY: In 1981, the first year the race was run as a half marathon, the lead car took a wrong turn and shortened the course by two miles of a mile . . . There were banned runners in the 1982 race which resulted in the winners being disqualified.

By Bill Parker
staff writer

In her very first half marathon, Rochester's Laura Murphy accomplished what most distance runners only dream of.

Despite less-than-favorable running conditions which included steady drizzle, 10-15 mph winds and brisk 38-degree temperature on race day of the 1991 West Bloomfield Half Marathon, Murphy ran a solid race to win the overall female championship in 1:19.06.

The 28-year-old Rochester resident will attempt to defend that championship Sunday when the gun sounds to signal the start of the 1992 West Bloomfield Half Marathon. Murphy will be among an expected field of 700 runners (there were 473 pre-registered runners as of Tuesday) participating in the 16th running of the race, which begins at 12:30 p.m. in the parking lot at West Bloomfield High School. A 5K run has been added this year and gets under way at 12:42 p.m. Race officials expect upwards of 500 runners for the 5K if the weather cooperates.

"Last year was pretty cool," Murphy said. "That was my first half marathon. It was the longest (race) I'd ever run. I just hope the weather is a little better this time."

MURPHY WAS surprised last year at the rolling terrain on the 13.1-mile course which winds through the neighborhood streets of West Bloomfield.

"I was a little surprised," Murphy admitted. "My husband, Mark, ran in the race in 1990 and I remember him telling me there was a big hill near the end. I thought that was all there was to it and when I started running I realized there were hills all over the place. Then I thought, 'Wow! It must really be a big hill at the end.' Actually I don't think it's a super tough course, but I do remember the hills."

Murphy followed the West Bloomfield victory by winning the Williamston Half Marathon (near Lansing) in November in another race which featured adverse weather.

"(Williamston) was very cold," Murphy said. The temperature was around 28 degrees and the wind chill was down near zero."

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Wildcats best team in state

By Brad Emons
staff writer

The Western Wayne Wildcats are on the prowl again.

The 18-and-under AAU girls basketball team, coached by Gary Schwan and Fred Thomann, captured the state championship April 10-12 at Plymouth Salem High School with a 73-69 triumph over the Top Guns, a team from the western side of the state. (Northville also hosted first-round games.)

Sparked by tournament MVP Dawn Warner of Livonia Franklin, the Wildcats will be headed for the National AAU tourney, beginning June 26 in Clovis, N.M.

The same nucleus of players competed in last year's 16-and-under AAU nationals, finishing 3-3 in Johnson City, Tenn.

"There are a lot of good players, but the neat thing is how they share the ball and play together," Schwan said. "There's no doubt we have a lot of talent, but they sacrificed their individual talents to succeed."

baseball

Led by the Western Kentucky-bound Warner, a 5-foot-7 point-guard, the Wildcats reached the finals by disposing of Kalamazoo in the semifinals (107-56); the Brick City Bombers in the quarterfinals (102-67); and Lansing in the sweet 16 (101-54).

SALEM'S Darcie Miller, a 6-1 center headed for Valparaiso University (Ind.), made the All-AAU tourney team along with Wildcat teammates Tanisha Stevens of Mount Clemens (signed with Michigan), Lisa Negri of Flint Powers (Ohio State) and Sarah Willyerd of Powers (Old Dominion).

Also selected to the All-AAU squad was Benton Harbor's Laticia Morris (Eastern Michigan) of the Top Guns.

Rounding out the Wildcats' squad is Plymouth Canton's Julie Nicastri (Saginaw Valley), Farmington Hills Mercy's Laure DeMattia, Powers' Noelle Beaudry (Toledo), New Boston Huron's Janet Hughes (expected to sign with Michigan or University of Detroit-Mercy), Tecumseh's Julie Oxley (EMU) and Jackson County Western's Allegra Stoetzel (Alaska-Anchorage).

Lori Young of Rochester Adams, headed for Ferris State, will also join the Wildcats in Clovis.

Thirty-five teams began AAU elimination play at two regional sites (Grand Rapids and Salem/Northville) on March 27-29.

After receiving a first-round bye, the Wildcats romped to 88-34 and 85-54 regional wins, respectively. They opened their season by winning the Waterford St. Patrick's Day Tournament.

"This is a chance to work with some of the finest players in the state," Schwan said. "We asked them to play at a fast pace and they responded well."