

JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Hot Preps Dominate Teen-Set

by BOB HERSH, WALT MURPHY & JIM SPIER

Knoxville, Tenn., June 13-14—One would think that the AAU Junior Championships (open to those who remain teenagers throughout the whole year) would be dominated by college freshmen. Somebody forgot to tell the preps.

Certainly, the collegians did win a few more events (11-8), but the most notable stuff came from high schoolers. In fact, they produced no less than six high school records (100, steeple, two 6 miles and two 10,000s).

The most impressive were Houston McTear's 10.0 century and the 28:22.8/29:11.2 clockings by Rudy Chapa and Eric Hulst at the long distances. In between, John Gustafson chopped the steeple standard to 9:06.4.

As well, numerous age and class records tumbled. The other record of note established was a JC steeple mark of 8:48.2 by Henry Perez.

STEEPLE: The steeple saw Henry Perez of San Joaquin Delta JC take the lead after a lap, force the pace all the way, and hold first place to the end. His time of 8:48.2 established a JUCO record, bettering the 8:57.8 set by Dick Krenzer way back in 1962.

Oregon freshman Larry Hurst ran in second for most of the race, but faltered in the last two laps and lost a spot on the international team to Tennessee frosh Jon Wright, whose 8:52.2 was a big PR.

Back in fourth, John Gustafson of South Eugene was running a steady race with the object of breaking the national high school record. He did so with plenty to spare, turning in a 9:06.4, which knocked 5 seconds off the US and Eugene record established back in 1967 by Dale Keenan of Eugene North. Further back, Eric Hulst (9:19.2) and Jim Shields (9:23.0) became the 6th and 10th best preps ever.

5000 METERS: Although it couldn't match the quality of the previous night's 10,000, this race had its share of talent and top marks. Pat Davey took the field through the mile in 4:33.0. The pace slowed to 71 as they passed two miles in 9:17.0. Defending champ Ralph Serna led at this point but soon faded out of contention.

The pace was too slow for Ralph King who sped the next quarter in 67.1, opening a large gap on everyone but Alberto Salazar, a junior from Wayland, Mass. These two continued their hot pace for the remainder of the race with King only shaking Salazar in the last 220 to win in 14:11.8, a meet record. Salazar's time of 14:14.6 tied Craig Virgin's junior class and age-16 records. He passed the 3-mile mark in 13:45.6, missing by 0.2 Serna's class record set in last year's race.

10,000 METERS: Low humidity, 70° weather, and a track slightly wet from an earlier rainfall resulted in the greatest prep 6M/10,000 race ever run. For it was high schoolers who were responsible for most of the hot action, including 10 types of broken records: national HS, soph and junior class and ages 16 and 17, at both of the distances.

Tennessee frosh Pat Davey took the early lead, but dropped out at 5½ miles. In the end, it was juniors Rudy Chapa (Hammond, Ind) and Eric Hulst (Laguna Beach, Calif) staging a shoulder-to-shoulder struggle that wrested a pair of national records from Gerry Lindgren. The Californian had the lead as both passed the 6-mile mark in 28:22.8 (Lindgren was 28:23.8), then reversed that order in a 29:11.2 10,000 (Lindgren 29:17.6). Lindgren's marks had stood for nearly 12 years, but this pair has another year to destroy them even more. They demolished the junior class 10,000 mark by an incredible 2:27.2.

"Different people kept trying to break up the pack," said winner Chapa. "I expected much more from Davey. His time was good on paper but maybe his training has dropped off. My plan was to stay in reach for four miles and see what I had left." He then revealed, "This is my first race at this distance. I really didn't know what I could do."

East Tennessee's Mark Finucane was next at 29:23.2, while super-soph Bill McChesney (South, Eugene) picked off four records in fourth. His 29:27.2 and 28:31.0 clockings are class and world age-16 records, relieving Hulst of four of his records. Preps George Watts (28:37.0, 29:33.2) and Thom Hunt (28:53.0, 29:46.0) were 6th and 7th to further rewrite the all-time high school lists at these distances.

June 13(a)-14(b): all contestants born in 1956 or later.

10,000(a), Chapa (Hammond, Ind) 29:11.2 HSR (28:22.8 =HSR); 2. Hulst 29:11.2 =HSR (28:22.8 HSR); 3. Finucane (E Tenn) 28:23.2; 4. B. McChesney (South, Eugene) 29:27.2; 5. McGuire (Mich) 29:30.6; 6. Watts (Edison, Alexandria, Va) 29:33.2 (28:37.0); 7. Hunt (Henry, San Diego) 29:46.0 (28:51.0).

Steeple(b), Perez (San Joaquin Delta JC) 8:48.2 JCR; 2. Wright (Tenn) 8:52.2; 3. Hurst (Ore) 8:57.2; 4. Gustafson (South, Eugene) 9:06.4 HSR; 5. Crews (Troy St) 9:06.8; 6. Schultz (Ky) 9:15.8; . . . 9. Hulst (Laguna Beach, Calif) 9:19.2.

5000(b), King (N Car) 14:11.8; 2. Salazar (Wayland, Mass) 14:14.6 (13:45.6y); 3. Hunt (Henry, San Diego) 14:19.0; 4. Pinkowski (Hammond, Ind) 14:19.2; 5. Clary (East, Anchorage) 14:23.6; 6. Kissin (San Ramon, Danville, Calif) 14:26.0; 7. Simonian (LACC) 14:28.0.

1500(b), Lacey (Wisc) 3:45.2; 2. Buttermark (NC St) 3:45.4; 3. Scott (Irvine) 3:47.5; 4. Elliott (Central, Pontiac, Mich) 3:48.1; 5. McCarthy (Fordham) 3:48.9; 6. Barker (Furman) 3:50.6.