

Sport SPOTLIGHT

JACK McDOWELL
Assistant Sports Editor



SAX-WHITFIELD RACES WERE GEMS . . .

Mal Whitfield has been called the greatest middle-distance runner in the world. The mercurious legman has captured just about every major title that exists, including two Olympic 800 meter championships.

Running for the famous Grand Street 'Boys' Athletic Club, he burned up the indoor boards during the past winter season, setting two new records—one in the 500 yard run and the other in the 600. Before every race the fabulous speedster confidently announced that he would be shooting for a new world record.

However, a college sophomore named Ollie Sax, with just a year's experience in the "bigtime" kept popping up to steal part of the bright spotlight which had shown so long on Marvelous Mal.

Together the pair wrote a torrid chapter in the record book of indoor track. In four meets Ollie could do no better than second, but their races were thrillers and track fans were screaming with delight when the two barreled around the boards.

Their first meeting was in the Philadelphia Inquirer Games when Whitfield won by a nose, a feat he was to repeat three more times. In the Milrose Games at Madison Square Garden Mal won by a stride again.

Then came the New York Athletic Club Games also held at the Garden. Twelve thousand frenzied fans leaned in their seats as the contestants for the Beurmeyer "500" came to the starting line. Whitfield had publicly announced that he would be gunning for a new world record in the classic. Jamaica's Herb McKinley, world 440-yard record holder, jumped into an early lead and set a fast pace in the first lap. Sax, running second, put on a terrific burst of speed on the last lap and passed the fleet Olympian. But Whitfield was coming fast. He passed Ollie to take the lead. Sax made a strong bid in the stretch and the two went to the wire neck-and-neck. Whitfield hit the finish line first, however, and got the win, setting a new world record—a sizzling 56.6 seconds.

Nevertheless, Sax's time was as good as the old mark. The stop watch read 56.9 when he crossed the line. But it was still a second place finish.

Next came the NAAU meet at the gardens and newspapers all over the nation were talking about the terrific rivalry that had sprung up between the two runners. This promised to be the meet of the season. Track fans weren't let down that night when the two toed the starting mark in the 600-yard run. Sax jumped off to an early lead at the gun, and set a fast pace for two laps. On the third and final lap he was still leading Mal. Down the stretch they came, Whitfield slowly gaining and another runner, Reggie Pearman, of the New York Athletic Club, and also an Olympic performer, coming fast from third place. With 20 yards to go, Whitfield caught the speeding Penn Stater and as they went into the finishline Pearman spurred into the pack. The three crossed the line together.

Three clocks read 1:10.4—2 second off the world mark. The judges named Whitfield the winner. Sax was given second place and Pearman third. Thus Ollie had matched the great Whitfield but had lost once again.

But the jet New Jersey flash was to get his chance. A week later, Lion Coach Chick Werner sent a ten-man team back to Madison Square again. This time Ollie was meeting an all collegiate field. No Whitfields, McKinleys or Pearmans. But there were names like Manhattan's Lou Jones and Vern Dixon, Seton Hall's great Morris Currota, and Villanova's John Gaffney—all great college runners. Ollie was up against a brilliant ICA field.

Seven men placed in the qualifying round that afternoon. At about 8 o'clock, two hours before the scheduled finals, Ollie came out on the track and began to warm up. Assistant track coach Norm Gordon, substituting for Werner, who was back in State College, ill, called Sax to the Penn State bench.

"How do you feel?"
"Fine," answered the lean speedster.
"Well listen, you're going out there and get that world record."
"Are you kidding?" came the amazed Sax's answer.
"No I'm not kidding," Gordon replied, "Look, last week you felt lousy and still ran a great race. Tonight you feel good. Go for that record." The conversation was interrupted by the announcement for the contestants to go to the starting mark.

"Okay," came Ollie's reply as he started down the track, "I'll try."
And try he did. Had fate not stepped into the picture he might have set the record, too. But seven men were just too many for the Garden track, normally equipped for six, and the runners had to take a standing start. Sax ran a 1:10.4, setting a new intercollegiate record, just a scant .2 second short of the world mark. A crouch start could have made the difference.

He blazed around the track that night like an F-86, seven yards ahead of his nearest foe, Currota. He was at last a champion, a winner in the biggest collegiate track extravaganza in the nation. But there'll be more opportunities for the dazzling speedster. The end is not in sight. He's already top-rate, and hasn't begun to reach his prime. He should be approaching that point about 1956, date of the next Olympic games.

Dick Lemyre, Bellmore, N.Y., wrestling star, is the student body's choice for All-College president at Penn State.

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Rod Eaken
Lion linksman

Samson Selected As Outstanding Wrestler

National 191-pound wrestling champion **Hud Samson**, won the 1953 William N. Neidig Award presented annually to "the senior who contributes most to the success of Penn State wrestling."

Samson, also golf captain, was beaten only twice during the '53 campaign, and climaxed the season in a blaze of glory by winning individual honors as the Lions brought the NCAA team title to the East for the first time.

Prior winners of this award, which was established in 1950 in the name of Penn State's first unbeaten wrestler, were Jim Maurey, Mike Rubine, and Joe Lemyre, who along with Samson won a National title.

Lion Coach **Charlie Speidel** called Samson's achievement in the Nationals "one of the most remarkable in my experience." Samson competed as a heavyweight during the dual meet season and gave up poundage in every match. "But," adds Speidel, "he was more than ready when he wrestled in his own weight class."

With four straight victories held in their one hand, the Rutherfordmen will travel to Princeton to see what they can grasp in their other hand in the way of intercollegiate honors. State's six-man squad will compete for both individual and team honors during the three-day EIGA tournament this weekend at the Tiger's Springdale course.

The six Nittanians who will compete for individual honors are Warren Gittlen, George Kreidler, Joe Webb, Lou Riggs, Gordon Stroup, and Rod Eaken. Gittlen and Lou Riggs are the only men to own 4-0 records for the season's first four matches.

Hud Samson, captain, has the only other spotless win and loss sheet with his one win acquired against Cornell.

Four of the five remaining men who have participated in match play this season are sporting 3-1 logs. Joe Webb lost a close one to Pitt's medalist, Rich McCarthy, 6-5. George Kreidler lost his only match by one point to Navy's Cliff Thomas, 4-3. Gordon Stroup suffered his only defeat by a 6-5 score at the hands of Cornell's Dick Love.

Rod Eaken, was dropped from the list of unbeaten State golfers when Dick Mattox did the trick with a 2 up win. Eaken lost last year, when the intercollegiate's were held at Virginia University, to Paul Harvey of Holy Cross, who won the Eastern Intercollegiate Golf Association championship.

Sixteen teams will compete during the weekend's action at Princeton-Cornell, Army, Pitt, Navy, Virginia, Georgetown, Brown, Yale, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dartmouth, Columbia, Princeton, Penn, Holy Cross, and State.

The Lion's have already met and defeated three of the teams who will visit Princeton Saturday. Navy, Pitt, and Georgetown have felt the heavy blow of defeat thrown at them by State's experienced linksman.

Gittlen, Stroup, Riggs, and Eaken have been match medalists for the first four matches. Gittlen scored a par 69 against Pitt, and Stroup went one over par with a 70 card against Navy. Riggs shot a 2 over par score of 71 against Cornell on his home grounds, and Eaken took the days laurels with a one over par total of 71 in State's 9-0 swamping of Gettysburg.

Dark Star, 'Dancer' Ready for Preakness

NEW YORK, May 5 (AP)—Derby winner **Dark Star** joined Native **Dancer** at Belmont Park today where their trainers mapped plans for the strategy leading up to their next meeting in the \$100,000 Preakness at Baltimore May 23.

Horsemen still were buzzing over the dramatic defeat handed Alfred Vanderbilt's grey **Dancer** as the Cain Hoy Stable's Derby hero arrived by train from Louisville.

"Our colt shipped here in fine shape," said Ed Hayward, who trains the Cain Hoy stable for Harry F. Gugenheim.

Penn State won national collegiate team titles in wrestling and gymnastics this year.

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