

High School Track Growing, As Times, Distances Improve

By MARY GARBER

Saff Reporter

Coach Paul Derr of North Carolina State looked out across the infield at Fayetteville Terry Sanford High School last Friday and said that North Carolina high school track had come a long way since 1955.

"I remember the first year I came to N. C. State," said Derr. "I was asked to come to Chapel Hill and help run off the high school meet. There were 12 schools entered and I guess there must have been around 100 boys there. There was no such thing as a sectional or qualifying meet. Anyone who wanted to come did.

"Now, there are six sectionals and two divisions and just look at the boys we have here today."

"What is more, these times and distances compare well with other sections of the country.

"Why that young man down there at the high jump (Robert McAdoo of Greensboro Smith) jumped six feet, 7 3/4 inches. That is a good jump anywhere. And this broad jump of 23 feet (by Mike Lemmons of Hendersonville). That would be good for a college meet.



PAUL DERR
... big change ...

"I think there are a number of reasons for the growth and improvement. The high schools are getting better coaching and the facilities are much improved.

"Track is really getting big in North Carolina."

Derr, who will retire as State coach after this spring, was honorary referee.

Derr's opinion was shared by the high school coaches.

One very sound indication of the growth of interest was the 2,500 persons who attended the night program.

Terry Sanford High School officials did a good job putting on the meet. The events ran smoothly. Sure, there were some problems as there will be anywhere.

Now, the question is should the state meet be held at a high school or a college site. State has been host for several years and with its new all-weather track will be able to hold the meet next year. The attendance at Fayetteville was good and the enthusiasm of the students added to the meet. But there is always the question of the advantage of a home court.

Track coaches like the split of the meet but they would prefer even more division. Although two records were set by 2-A athletes, by and large the smaller schools cannot compete with the larger schools.

One coach suggested that track was big enough now to be split into four classifications. He suggested state meets in all four divisions with a final meet of champions to pick the big winners.

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