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**PENN RELAYS ASSUMES NEW LOOK;
PROVIDES UNIFORMITY OF COMPETITION**

The oldest and biggest track competition in the world will take on a new look this April.

The 73rd running of the Penn Relay Carnival April 28-29 will be over a new plastic track installed at the University of Pennsylvania's Franklin Field. The new surface will provide uniform conditions for each of the more than 5,000 athletes expected to compete in the two-day event.

"Our Penn Relay emphasis is on numbers and quality of competition," explained Ken Doherty, director of the Relays. "This new track will give us tremendous organizational help. We now will be able to compete 5,000 athletes at the highest possible level of performance at all times.

"We will be able to save very valuable time in preparation of the track. Previously, this took a great deal of time, both prior to the carnival and during the competition. This time now can be used for competition."

The East's foremost track event is steeped in tradition. From the running of a one-mile relay event and 13 intra-squad events in the first Carnival in 1895, the competition has grown to over 86 races and 35 or more individual and open events. One track event is run every 5 1/2 minutes during the 14 hours of running today.

86
35

121

World records have been common to participants in the Penn Relays. Already, 60 Olympic champions have competed, and many competitors from foreign lands have raced over the Philadelphia landmark.

The first relay meet was conducted in connection with the dedication of

of Franklin Field in 1895. Eight colleges and eight high schools competed that day in eight different races. In 1966, more than 100 colleges and close to 500 junior, high schools, prep schools and secondary schools competed in the 120 events.

In 1915, more than 3,500 athletes already were competing in the Relays, more than were entered in the entire 1912 Olympic Games.

With the emphasis on numbers of participants, it is essential that the track be in top shape at all times. Groundskeepers found this hard to do with so little time. Invariably, the athletes who ran at the end of the day or at the end of the meet were racing through heavily worn areas on the track.

With the new "Tartan" surfaced track, the running area is constant at all times, rain or shine. There are no ruts or loose spots at the end of the day, and all athletes are able to compete under the same circumstances. Rain does not affect the non-slip properties of the 3M Company material.

"We are most pleased to have the 'Tartan' all-weather track here at Pennsylvania," said Jerry Ford, II, director of athletics. "Pennsylvania always has been proud to make its track available for all types of championships and meets, and we feel that the addition of the new track gives us track and field facilities unequaled in the nation."

The Penn Relays is only one of the events to be staged over the track during the coming years. The University of Pennsylvania teams have been working out on the surface since its installation last fall. In fact, they even have been able to train throughout the winter months.

"We used the track all fall," said Penn track coach Jim Tuppeny, "something that was impossible with the previous cinder track. It now offers our program an all-year training capability. In the fall and winter or the spring when it rains, the

surface is constant. We don't have to worry about it being soft or filled with ruts. The fact there will be no frost on the track also means we can get on it early in the spring."

The resilience of the materials makes it easy on the legs and actually cuts down on injuries, according to Tuppeny. This is due to the consistency of the surface and "the fact that holes and soft spots are eliminated. When the track season starts, it also means that we do not have to take time off for maintenance or meet preparation.

"Psychologically, it also is a help. It is amazing to see how the boys take to this track and feel like running. The cushioning of the track makes the boys feel like they're running faster."

Pennsylvania always has been known as one of the top collegiate track powers in the nation, and the coaches and other school officials feel the new track will help to enhance this position.

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