

Central Section

May 30, Madera.

It was the night of the discus at the Central Section C.I.F. Track & Field Championships hosted by Madera High School. In the boys competition 2 throwers tossed over 180 feet; and in the girls section winner Kim Shakir from Clovis West flipped one some 20 feet beyond her previous best to win with a 131-11 fling.

Those long distance platters by the boys came from first place, and state leader, Paul Bender (Shafter) with a 189-8 (off his 200-7 best); and second place Jeff Budwig of McLane in Fresno with 185-8.

Shakir's come through performance in the discus gave her Clovis West team a big boost toward the "Valley" team title - but it was teammate Karen VanWaggen's double victory which clinched the crown for the Eagles (63 points to runner up Lemoore's 44). Van Waggenen won the 1600 (5:13.2) and the 3200 (11:02.1) races. However for awhile it looked as though she'd have to run the 3200 again to prove herself. Here's what happened in a minor snafu with that girls 3200: As the pack came around the turn nearing its first lap, a member of the track crew,

stacking hurdles from the prior race, slipped and stepped backward onto the track. Mary Benales of South Bakersfield was tripped and she finished out of scoring position. VanWagenen, for the most part unaffected by the interference, then beat out Mt. Whitney standout Cynthia Rogers to win the race. VanWagenen kept pace with Rogers about a step behind for nearly the entire race, and then jumped ahead with about 200 meters to go to win by nearly 25 yards. Only VanWagenen's and Rogers' times were considered official, and the rest of the runners were required to run it again the next Tuesday to see who gets the final spot to the state meet.

In the boys team race Bakersfield outclassed the rest of the field by notching four first place finishes and two second places - largely on the strength of its sprinters (72 points to runner-up Hoover of Fresno with 40). In the 400 relay, Bakersfield edged out Hoover and favorite Edison with a 42.1, just a second ahead of the Patriots. The Tigers finished in 42.5. The Drillers' dominance was never more evident than in the 400, when Robert Johnson and Tom Barber finished 1-2. Johnson won it handily in 48.9 and Barber's second place in 49.6. Mel Watkins won the 200 for Bakersfield in 21.8 and ran a leg in both relays. The Drillers finished third in the 1600 relay at 3:22.2. Tulare won it in 3:19.0. In addition, Watkins grabbed second in the 100 at 10.9. Tyrone Henderson of East Bakersfield won the 100 in 10.8.

A couple of big upsets occurred among the boys races. First, Pete Quinonez, state meet placer past two years, waited too long to kick and was nipped at the tape by Sanger's Calderon, both timing 1:54.5. The other major upset occurred in the 3200 when Immanuel's (Reedley) Dave Lehrman hung with Sanger's Julian Vinton and Corcoran's Shawn Smallwood, and then blew by them on the last lap to win in 9:15.6.