

State Meet May Be Killed For a North-South Split

By Al Moss

The big rush for spots in the State track and field meet begins in earnest all over Northern California this week, with sectional and sub-sectional meets pitting the best against the best.

To those who succeed may go a dubious honor — the right to compete in the last State meet.

A move is afoot now, and with strong support, to abolish the State meet, apparently in favor of separate all-star meets for Northern and Southern California each year.

The huge North Coast section of the CIF has long been an opponent of state-wide or all-star competition in any sport. San Francisco now has added its dissenting voice with the principals voting, 6-3, to discontinue the State meet.

As a result, that's how S. F. will vote when the matter is presented June 3 at the Federated Council Meeting of the CIF in Los Angeles.

Just what will be gained by the abolition of the State meet is not apparent. The loudest cry is "over-emphasis of high school sports." How this "evil" will be righted by replacing the State meet with sectional all-star meets is beyond us.

The North Coast Section, in suggesting the change at the March CIF meeting (at which that same section also did its best — or worst — to kill such worthy all-star football games as the Shrine Game, but happily failed), listed three reasons.

1—"The State meet, being held in different areas of the State, requires participants to travel great distances at considerable expense in order to participate."

(We've always heard that travel is broadening and educational and we seriously

doubt that the cost is so prohibitive as to be a serious reason for eliminating the State meet.

(Besides, in Northern California especially, does it cost so very much more for a team from, say, Fresno to travel to the San Francisco Bay Area, or even farther, for a Northern California meet than it does for the same team to travel to Los Angeles or thereabouts for a State meet? And the same is true of just about every team in Northern California. Most of them would have to travel a medium distance every year for a sectional meet instead of a long distance once every two or three years for a State meet.)

2—"State competition is not permitted in any other sport and it is inconsistent that it should be permitted in track."

(The worst thing to be said here is that State-wide competition ISN'T permitted in all sports, not that it IS permitted in one. Track, by its very nature as an individual, as opposed to team, sport, can much more easily be handled on a State-wide level than any other sport.)

3—"The establishment of an annual track meet in Southern California and Northern California could develop into an outstanding meet."

(But not as outstanding as a State meet. That's simple logic.)

In informal conversations, we have yet to talk to a coach that opposes the State meet. Believing that they are far more likely to recognize the strong points of such competition than others, may we ask any coach who has an idea on the subject, pro or con, to write to us before the June 3 meeting. We'll be most happy to sort the letters and forward them, in organized form, to the CIF

to let them know what the coaches think. Ideas from fans, and the athletes themselves, would also be welcome.

Coaches Favor One State Meet

By Al Moss

The principals may not be in favor of the State high school track and field meet, but the coaches, 600 strong, are all for it—officially.

In answer to a plea in this corner recently for support of the State Meet, which may be on its way out, we received a letter from Connie Smith, Hillsdale High coach and track chairman of the California Coaches' Association.

The three-page letter, which we will forward to the California Interscholastic Federation meeting at Los Angeles this weekend, states:

"In response to your recent article requesting correspondence about the abolishment of our California State Track Meet, the California Coaches Association (composed of more than 600 coaches) wants to go on record as favoring the present meet arrangement and being against the two meet proposal."

A move is afoot to discontinue the present state-wide competition in favor of two regional meets for Northern and Southern California.

The North Coast Section, long an opponent of state-wide "all-star" competition, introduced the measure, which is expected to be voted upon at this week's meeting.

Enough railroading might get it through, unfortunately. We say railroading because of what happened recently in San Francisco. The principals voted, 6-3, to instruct the city's CIF representative to vote against continuation of the State Meet. This vote was taken after each principal supposedly talked the thing over with his school's track coach, and the defense for the vote was that "the coaches seemed to want it that way."

Yet the eight coaches, speaking to us off the record, were overwhelmingly IN FAVOR of continuing the present state-wide competition.

Smith sets forth a ten-point plea in his letter that pretty well covers the many reasons for continuing the State Meet. The most important points:

"We feel that if the two meet proposal is accepted, it may only be the initial step in a movement to de-emphasize athletics and will continue to mushroom until eventually it will lead to complete abolishment of competitive athletics except in a "back yard" situation. Even the Russians know that competitive athletics on a large scale is important to the morale, general welfare and health of a nation's youth. At a time when our President talks about and sets up a program to get more children into competitive athletics are we going to head in the opposite direction?"

"The argument that the State Meet is economically

unfeasible is not sound.

"How will the elimination of the State Meet be justified . . . ? For 42 years it has been felt that the meet is a worthwhile project. Why the sudden change in attitude?"

"The idea that the North and South meets will allow a great many more boys to compete is not so. The North Coast board of managers figured the two meet plan would allow only one more boy to compete in each event."

Smith winds up with a repeat of our recent plea:

"The California Coaches Association asks those people who are voting on the problem at hand to consider carefully all the ramifications of the elimination of this meet."

"Sound mind, sound body" as the old saying goes.

But whatever the outcome, there'll be a State Meet this year, and it promises to be a dilly.

The meet will be held Saturday at East Los Angeles Junior College.

The North Coast Section, with over 100 schools from which to glean talent, scored 24 points Saturday and half of them were made in the discus.

The Oakland Athletic League, with only five schools and no discus competition, tallied 14½ points.

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McClymonds' junior T. C. Jones was naturally elated when he got off a shot put of 58-6.

He was so eager to check the distance he stepped over the restraining block, was called for fouling, and nullified what would have been a school record.