

# Ottoville Boys Win 3rd Straight PCL Track Title

Putnam County Sentinel – May 10, 1978

It was almost melodramatic as Bob Kaple wandered across the infield and found a resting place atop the platform in the middle of Ottawa-Glandorf's track.

The Putnam County track meet was far from over but Leipsic's Jim Restle knew the facts. So did Grove's Tracy Brown from his perch near the concession stand and Doug Karst, Pandora-Gilboa's track coach and host of this year's meet. Bob Baxter, who Continental Pirates were expected to supply the best challenge of the meet, didn't have to check the score sheet to follow his team's progress and as Kaple ironically found a resting spot on top of the winners stand, everyone who followed the league meet seemed to accept his place as obvious.

Ottoville won nine events last Wednesday to win the Putnam County League track title for the third straight year, but that was expected long before the big yellow buses started pulling into the parking lot behind O-G's high school. Continental won the remaining six events to finish second (as expected). Leipsic's overall balance captured the girls' championship a second straight time (also expected) and Kip Mansfield undefeated in his high school career in the county track meet, was named the meet's outstanding performer for the third straight time (ditto on the expected).

Ottoville's 91 points was the same total the Big Green had last year while Continental totaled 73 team points to replace Pandora-Gilboa as the meet's runner up. Columbus Grove was third with 33, P-G fourth with 27 and Leipsic fifth with 14 points.

"Bob Kaple is a scientist of track," Jim Maley, Ottoville's junior high track coach stated during the meet. "You should see the locker room at Ottoville. The walls are covered with the names and best times of every other trackster in the county and he can tell you at any time during the meet what just about every team will do." As if to prove the point Maley was making, Kaple hustled off to the scoring booth after one announcement of the team standings and, true to form, found a discrepancy in the scoring. The difference was slight, but scientists never settle for guessing.

Three Ottoville tracksters accounted for the bulk of the Big Green's points as Jeff Koester, Joe Wehri and Dan Hermiller all won two events. Wehri dominated the field events, finishing first in the shot and discus while Hermiller won both the mile and two mile runs. Koester established winning times in two new events, winning both the high and low hurdles, events that have been changed to 110 and 300 meter distances this year.

**The conversion of yards to meters for the various running events was so inconsequential that they were not treated as a different event.**

Jim Klima cleared 11 feet to win the pole vault title for Ottoville while Keith Wittler upset last year's champion, Junior Worline of Continental, in the high jump. Ottoville's other first was a winning time of 1:41.3 by Keith Wittler, Jim Gerdeman, Mark Odenweller and Darrell Hohlbein in the 880 relay.

"Keith's (Wittler) first in the high jump was unexpected," Kaple stated, "but the big surprise was our 880 relay team. We haven't had three handoffs that good all year, but they sure did a nice job of it today."

Kip Mansfield was the county's outstanding performer in both his freshman and sophomore meets and the 6'4" junior was a shoo-in for the honor again last Wednesday. Mansfield won the 100 yard dash (10.9), the 200 (23.7), the 440 (53.7) and the long jump (19'7¼") for the second straight year and has yet to be beaten in the county meet. Mansfield's best 440 time of the season, 52.0 flat, ranks second among the top Class A times in the state according to the Track & Field News while his best long jump and 220 performances rank third and fifth respectively in the state.

"He's a great kid and a pleasure to coach," Baxter stated about his star performer. "We're proudest of his 440 time. He set it at the Ayersville Invitational and five of us in the stands clocked him at 51.6 (a time matching the best in the state). The final time they gave him was a 52.0, but it's not really the time as much as where he finishes that's important."

Steve Ford accounted for another Continental first with a 2:10.4 clocking in the 880 yard run while the relay team of Gary Ford, Junior Worline, Steve Ford and Doug Spitnale, beat the rest of the field to take the mile for the Pirates.

Jim Dunn paced the Columbus Grove Bulldogs to their third place finish, turning in second place efforts in both the 100 yard dash and the 220. Mike Heffner added seconds in the 440 and discus while Jay Follas was second in the shot.

Scott Lee placed second in the high hurdles and another second in the mile relay sparked the Rockets of PG while Mark Hoffman and Greg Ellerbrock paced Leipsic with a third and fourth place finish in the discus. Hoffman also placed fourth in the shot.

Cold, windy weather slowed times somewhat and aside from Jeff Koester's marks in the new hurdle events, the closest thing to a meet record was Dan Hermiller's 10:02.8 clocking in the two mile. Hermiller's time was just .8 of a second off the meet record set last year by another Ottoville distance runner, Brent Devitt.

## SUMMARY

Ottoville 91, Continental 73, CG 33, PG 27 and Leipsic 14.

SHOT PUT - Joe Wehri (Ottoville) 45'9"  
DISCUS - Joe Wehri (Ottoville) 142'9"  
HIGH JUMP - Keith Wittler (Ottoville) 5'10"  
LONG JUMP - Kip Mansfield (Continental) 19'7¼"  
POLE VAULT - Jim Klima (Ottoville) 11'0"  
110 METER HIGH HURDLES - Jeff Koester (Ottoville) 17.5  
\*NR 300 METER L. HURDLES - Jeff Koester (Ottoville) 42.5  
100 YARD DASH - Kip Mansfield (Continental) 10.9  
220 YARD DASH - Kip Mansfield (Continental) 23.7  
440 YARD DASH - Kip Mansfield (Continental) 53.7  
880 YARD RUN - Steve Ford (Continental) 2:10.4  
MILE RUN - Dan Hermiller (Ottoville) 4:43.0  
TWO MILE RUN - Dan Hermiller (Ottoville) 10:02.8  
880 YARD RELAY - Keith Wittler, Jim Gerdeman, Mark Odenweller and Darrell Hohlbein (Otto) 4:41.3  
MILE RELAY - Gary Ford, Junior Worline, Steve Ford and Doug Spitnale (Continental) 3:49.7