



TROJAN TIMES

4th Quarter
2008

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Success in the Classroom and Beyond

BY BARBARA PARKINS, SUPERINTENDENT

As another school year nears its end, I am excited for our graduating seniors. I am also sad to see them leave because this year's senior class has been part of our ongoing successes both in the classroom and beyond.

From an academic standpoint, our student achievement scores at the high school increased 23% in reading and 21% in math on the most recent PSSA test and we met AYP.

Our athletic and extracurricular teams have also had a tremendous amount of success during our seniors' time at the high school.

For example, the Old Spice 50 Red Zone Player of the Year has been awarded to one of our players during three of the past four years (winners included LaRod Stephens-Howling, Aaron Brezovic and Antwuan Reed). In addition, our girls softball and soccer teams posted back to back milestone seasons. Girls softball teams won 32 games in the past 2 seasons, while the girls soccer team posted

a 9-9 record in 2008 and made the playoffs for the first time in years. The Trojan Color Guard is preparing to make their annual trip to Wildwood, N.J., for competition. This is their 28th year in a row.

Our district is also considered one of the state's leaders in after-school activities, a fact evident as we participated in the Nationwide Celebration of Lights On for Afterschool Activities Program for the eighth consecutive year.

These are but a few of the many success stories our students, parents, teachers, board and administration have achieved by working together. I am proud of the team effort and our many accomplishments. You all are what make Greater Johnstown School District a special place.

To the graduates of the Class of 2008, good luck. We'll miss you and hope you remember to come back and visit! As for our remaining students, I hope you have a great summer and come back ready to achieve even more successes next year.

East Side Stories

Kick-off Event: Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Dr. Gerald Zahorchak was a special guest reader during the First Book-Johnstown Kick-Off event on March 27 at the Cambria County Library. Approximately 50 students from Pre-K to first grade in the Greater Johnstown District sat and listened as Dr. Zahorchak, a former Greater Johnstown superintendent, read. First-Book is a non-profit group that provides books for low-income children.

Work of Art: Art Instructor Mr. Joe Barr and several of his students participated in the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art program Artists of the 21st Century Student Art Exhibition. The exhibition was on display from Feb. 22 to April 6.

East Side students included: Fifth grader Rebekah Mikeasky; fourth graders Les Paul Buchko, Kohl Henry, Kane Stiffey and Rickey Weimer; third grader Sadie

Critz; and first graders Kirsten Meyer and Corgan Paulovich.

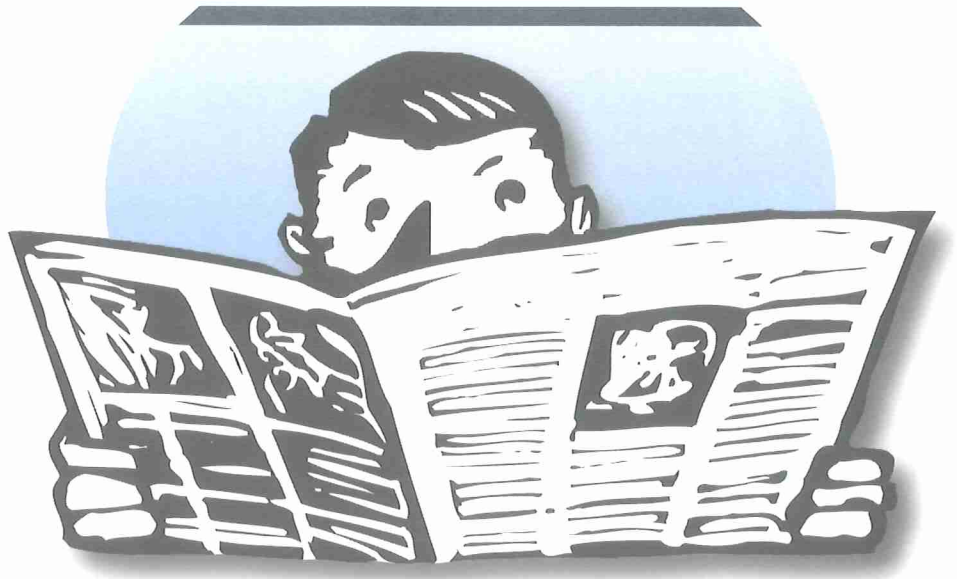
Hold the Onions, Please: East Side faculty participated in McTeacher's Night by working behind the counter at the McDonald's Restaurant on Scalp Avenue for two hours on April 3. The teachers filled orders and pleased customers. A portion of the front counter and drive-thru sales during the McTeacher hours was donated to East Side.

Hopping to Breakfast: The Easter Bunny visited East Side and shared breakfast with students and their parents on March 13.

Jump Start: Twenty-two East Side students raised \$871 for the American Heart Association through the Jump Rope for Heart program. The school's three top fund-raisers, in order of finish, were Ashley Barmoy of Mr. Kurtz's second grade class; Melissa Gutskey of Ms. Bawiec's fifth grade class; and Jasmine Lehman of Mrs. Ford's second grade class.

Circle These Dates: The second English as a Second Language Parent and Staff Workshop will be held June 5 (9 to 11 a.m.) at the GJSD Administrative Building on Broad Street.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Writing Workshop will hold a creative writing workshop for children entering grades 2 to 4 at East Side from June 16 to 20 (9 a.m. to noon). For more information call Mrs. Dryzal at 533-5550.



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West Side Stories

McDonnell's McFlurry of Activities: Spring has been a busy time for Ms. McDonnell's classroom at West Side. WJAC-TV meteorologist Tony Martin visited students and explained how weather patterns are studied to forecast the region's weather. Martin presented a slide show and told students which classes he studied to become a meteorologist.

Lisa Kegg, a speech pathologist in the GJSD, told primary level students how we make speech sounds. She pointed out the difference between speech and language, and voiced and unvoiced sounds. Kegg also demonstrated how vibrations are important for speaking, and students interacted in the presentations.

The Grade 5 students in Ms. McDonnell's reading class participated in Cambria County's One Book, One Community program. As part of an incentive offered by the National Park

Photo Courtesy of West Side Elementary School



WJAC-TV meteorologist Tony Martin explains how weather patterns are studied to students at West Side Elementary.

Service through Penn Highlands Community College, students will travel to the Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic site in Gallitzin for a day. Finally, all of Ms. McDonnell's students will participate in the grand finale of the school year, a book sale to raise money to buy mosquito nets for African families through Malaria No More Foundation. Donations of children's books will be accepted in room 43 for the project.

Creative Cooperation: Mrs. Lynn Berkebile's K4 students and parents worked together in creating a class-

room quilt and homemade musical instruments. The K4 quilt and the instruments are on display in the showcase outside the West Side Library. The project was an extension of the units "Arts and Artists" and "Making Music."

The activities provided an opportunity for parents and their children to work together and create expressions of the themes the students are learning about in the classroom. "It was wonderful to see the enthusiasm and excitement of the children as they brought their creations to school," Mrs. Berkebile said. "When you give the parents a chance to participate in their child's learning, there is both cooperation and support."

In Conference: West Side held a Spring Parent-Teacher Conference Night on April 17. The conferences, scheduled by the teachers, were held so that parents or guardians had an opportunity to be more involved in their child's education. The evening's schedule was planned to enable as many parents/guardians as possible to have an opportunity to speak with their child's teacher. The Conference Night was well-attended.

SPOTLIGHT ON...SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Our Greater Johnstown School Board of Directors has focused diligently on the 2008-09 budget. The board emphasis, as always, is to improve student achievement while enhancing the quality of the student experience. As a result, the 2008-09 budget includes school reform projects designed to continually improve student progress. The board anticipates that there will be **NO** tax increases as part of the upcoming budget.

Photo Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



MIDDLE SCHOOL MILESTONES

Resourceful Thinking: Comedy Central political satirist Stephen Colbert inadvertently helped JMS receive four mini-grants to purchase teaching resources. Mr. Moore and Ms. Kmett, JMS English teachers, were awarded the grants through projects funded by DonorsChoose.org, a Web site that matches individual donors with public school teachers seeking resources for student-centered projects.

Colbert brought attention to the program on his popular Colbert Report, urging viewers to donate to Pennsylvania schools in the name of their presidential candidate. More than \$120,000 was raised in a few weeks, and \$1,500 of that benefited Mr. Moore and Ms. Kmett's classes, which received student copies of a short story anthology, a weekly literature magazine and two classic American plays.

Study on the Island: The Study Island and its 21st Century technology enabled JMS students to better prepare for the PSSA Reading and Math tests. The Web-based program allows students to complete assignments from home by using the Internet.

Study Island's lessons are based directly on Pennsylvania Assessment Anchors, the topics and concepts that are assessed on the PSSA. Each topic begins with a concise lesson and ends in a test. However, students are given a choice: they can either use "test" mode, a traditional multiple choice exam, or they may choose one of many interactive games. In the game mode, the reward for answering questions is the opportunity for students to play a few seconds of one of the games.

In 2005, schools using Study Island outperformed those not using it by

8.3% in achieving Adequate Yearly Progress on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment exams.

Test Time: JMS students participated in the PSSA state testing from March 31 to April 7. Students are engaged in six sections of the PSSA's – three sections of math and three sections of reading. The first two hours of school were designated toward faculty administering the tests to grades 6, 7 and 8.

An Incentive Assembly has been planned for both students and faculty for their participation in the PSSA's. Test results will be available in August.

Rite of Spring: With the assistance of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center Project, the Trojan

Learning Center is "springing forward" with field trips to enhance students' artistic, cultural and physical well being. TLC field trips are made possible by the collaboration of staff, community support groups, parents, local libraries and museums.

Losing is Winning: With an increased awareness on health issues, nine members of the Johnstown Middle School took weight in their own hands. Nine JMS staff members lost a combined 63 pounds during a district-wide "Biggest Loser" competition. Grade 7 science teacher Brian Hockensmith was the champion.

JMS had issued a health and wellness alert to increase the staff's position on medical topics. As a District, staff and administrators lost a combined 436 pounds.

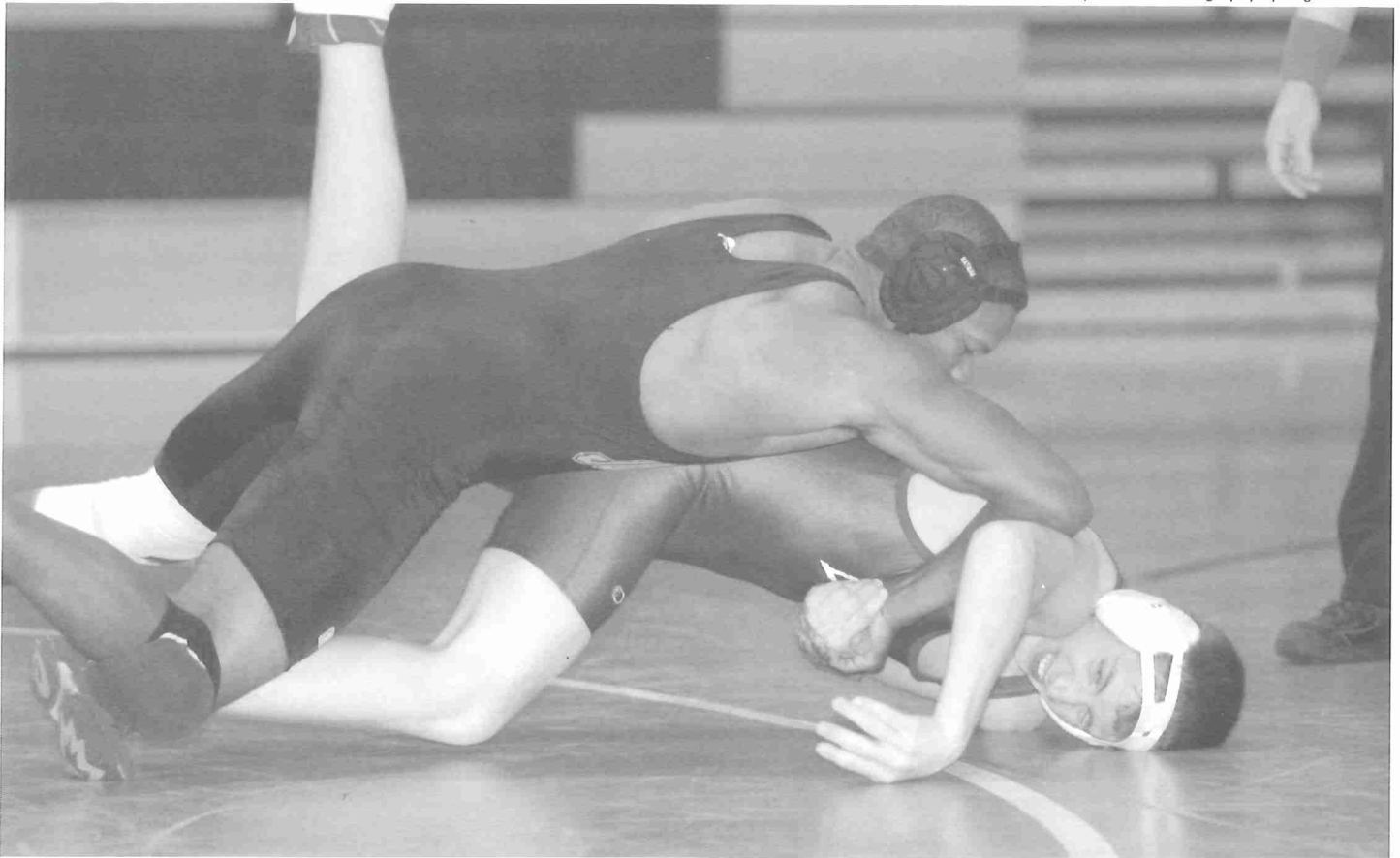
Photo Courtesy of Johnstown Middle School



Students prepare for the PSSA Reading and Math tests thanks to the Study Island program at JMS.

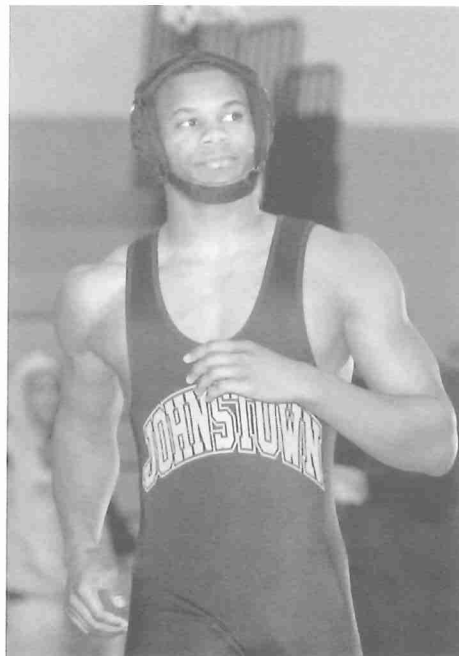
IT'S GAME TIME

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



Will Harris wrapped up a stellar career with a District 6 Class AAA runner-up finish and a trip to the Northwest Regional Tournament.

Will-Power: Johnstown senior wrestler Will Harris wrapped up a stellar career with a District 6 Class AAA runner-up finish and a trip to the Northwest Regional Tournament. A 171-pounder, Harris placed fourth at regionals and was one bout shy of advancing to the state championships again. Harris went 26-3 under coach Gary Radnotti, and had a combined 56-8 mark in his junior and senior seasons, including district and regional crowns last year when he advanced to the PIAA championships in Hershey.



Will Harris

Look Who's Up Next: The Trojans junior high boys basketball team finished second in the LHAC and posted nearly 20 victories.

Back for More: The Lady Trojans softball team used momentum from last season's District 6-AAA runner-up finish to start strong this spring. Coach Randy Romesberg has seasoned veterans such as pitcher Megan McMillen, Stephanie Szczur, Kassie Sabo, Lauren Carosi and Lindsay Lovrich on the roster.

Continued on page 8

TROJAN TRIUMPHS

Photos Courtesy of Johnstown High School

Bye Bye: JHS' had a hit musical with the performance of "Bye Bye Birdie" at Cochran Auditorium.

This year the production showcased the talents of senior leads Tim Gosnell, Von-Neisha Miles, Dave Mishler, Amber Gobbel, Shawn Lehman and Cassie Charney. Also in supporting roles were Laikin Simone, Caitlin Scanlon, Courtney Piro, Matt Harris and special guest star from the middle school, Jonathan Skufca.

The Johnstown Production broke the norm of the traditional musical theater presentation by taking the show into the audience, a signature technique for the GJHS musical.

Presidential Politics: Greater Johnstown High School played a significant role in the April 22 Pennsylvania Primary as both Democratic presidential candidates were represented in a high-profile manner at the school.

First, former President Bill Clinton appeared at Johnstown High to speak on behalf of his wife and former First Lady, Senator Hillary Clinton. The former president spoke to a large crowd and later posed for photographs.

Presidential candidate Senator Barack Obama made a stop at Johnstown High, and like the former president, was greeted by a large, enthusiastic turnout.

Hillary Clinton arrived at Stofko Gymnasium on April 20, once again bringing the masses to Johnstown High. The large crowd again was vocal and enthusiastic.

The campaign stops brought statewide and even some national attention to Johnstown.

Making Votes Count: Mr. Heinrich's AP U.S. History classes teamed up with Mr. Capraun's Communications 1 and 2 and Advanced Web Page classes to provide students with a cross-curriculum, real-world experience heading into an election year.

Groups of history students were randomly assigned a candidate and instructed to act as the candidate's management team with the goal of having the student body vote for their candidate. They use the Internet, contact local party offices and use student surveys to present a message about their candidate. Graphic designers and Web page designers from Mr. Capraun's class then make the



Tim Gosnell, (third from left, wearing black suit) as Albert J. Peterson, and Shawn Lehman, (fourth from left, wearing leather jacket) as Conrad Birdie, were two of the actors in the Greater Johnstown High School Musical "Bye Bye Birdie" held from April 4 to 6 at the Cochran Auditorium.

message a reality by completing an ad campaign and Web sites.

Artistic Endeavor: Art Instructors Carrie Andraychack, Cynthia Maloy and Tricia Patula had several of their students participate in the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art program Artists of the 21st Century Student Art Exhibition from Feb. 22 to April 6. The Greater Johnstown High students included: seniors Aaron East, Brody Kmett, Gina Tomeo; junior Brittany Trotz; sophomores Jasmine Smith and David Coleman.

Musical Notes: Greater Johnstown High School was well-represented in the musical arena this spring. Sophomore Matt Harris participated in Regional Chorus on Tenor I at Central Cambria from March 26-29. Junior Alex Skufca advanced to the All-States Wind Ensemble on the Baritone Saxophone.

A Whole New (Disney) World: The JHS Marching Band performed in Disney's Magic Music Days Parade in the Magic Kingdom on April 15. The band traveled to Disney World in Orlando, Fla.

Do You Compute?: Greater Johnstown produced multiple placewinners at the Regional Competition of the Pennsylvania High School Computer Fair presented by IU8 section at Penn State-Altoona on March 10.

The team of Alex Skufca, Laura Stibich and Kevin Podolak placed first in Web page design. Jared Jones, Joe Landis, Emily Cernic and James Baigmoradi placed first in Multimedia presentation.

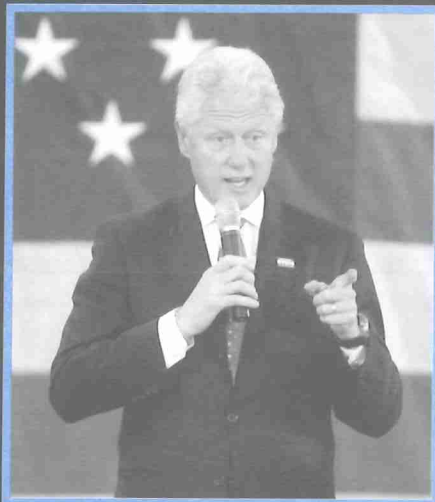
Second-place winners were Lindsay Lovrich (Multimedia presentation), Alisha Boerstler (Digital movie); Katelin Lindrose, Jason Lechak and Adam Lechak (Web page design). Third place went to Katy Landis (Digital movie). First place winners advance to states on May 20 at Dickinson College.

Special Visit: Greater Johnstown 2007 graduates Allison Webb and Jake Hodos returned to the high school on April 2 to share information about Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center's School of Histotechnology. Biology and anatomy teacher Mrs. Rebecca Corte arranged for the two histotechnology students to visit her classes.

Greater Johnstown
School District's

1,000 POINTS OF LIGHT

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



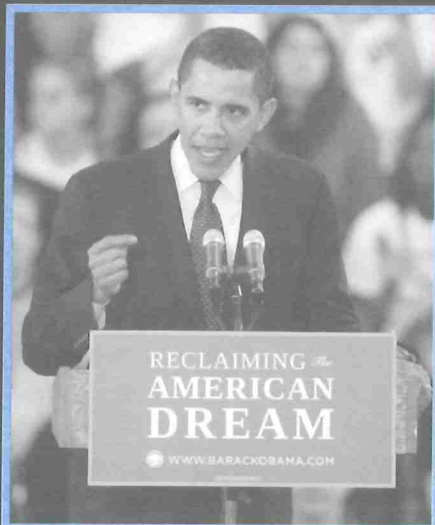
This edition of The Trojan Times' 1,000 Points of Light highlights Greater Johnstown School District and its modern high school drawing thousands of people and potential voters to the city in the weeks leading up to the April 22 Pennsylvania primary. Johnstown High was the site of three high-profile stops in the campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Approximately 1,500 people packed into Ed "Doc" Stofko Gymnasium to catch a glimpse of former President Bill Clinton, who spoke in support of former First Lady and current presidential candidate Senator Hillary Clinton. On March 12, a line stretched nearly halfway around the high school as people stood for hours in damp, chilly weather to see the 42nd President of the United States. President Clinton spoke 45 minutes.

On March 29, Senator Barack Obama held a "Town Meeting" at Greater Johnstown High School and more than 1,200 people attended. The 46-year-old Illinois senator received an enthusiastic reception as he addressed many campaign issues during his visit.

On April 20, Hillary Clinton made her campaign stop at Stofko Gymnasium. For the third time in just over five weeks more than a thousand Pennsylvania voters and other interested parties gathered at Johnstown High.

Greater Johnstown served as a proud host while playing an important role in the region's political process.



IT'S GAME TIME

Continued from page 5

Hoops Improvement: The Lady Trojans basketball team improved as the season progressed and built a solid foundation. Lauren Carosi was named the team's Laurel Highlands Athletic Conference MVP. Carosi and Tanea Preston each were selected to play in The Tribune-Democrat Senior Hoops Showcase all-star event at the War Memorial.

Silver Performance: Greater Johnstown's boys basketball team finished strong, earning the District 6 Class AAA runner-up trophy. In his final season, coach John Fuschino led the Trojans to an upset victory over a 20-win Somerset squad in the semifinals. Central

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



Junior Paul Weatherly led the Trojan's boys basketball team in scoring on their way to the 6-AAA title game.

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Cambria defeated the Trojans in the 6-AAA title game. Johnstown junior Paul Weatherly was the team's leading scorer. Guard Nijon Joiner was selected to participate in the inaugural Tribune-Democrat Senior Hoops Showcase event at the War Memorial.

Diamond Duties: Coach Dee Dee Osborne's baseball team opened with a solid record, including a dramatic victory over rival Bishop McCort that was won by Bobby Helman's grand slam homer at Point Stadium. Helman signed to continue his academic and athletic career at Pitt-Johnstown. Work continued on the baseball team's future home, a field being renovated next to the Johnstown Middle School.

Making Tracks: The boys and girls track and field squads turned in their share of outstanding performances in the early season. Johnstown standout Antwuan Reed was undefeated in the 100-meter dash for coach Neil Cobaugh through mid-April. Stephanie Szczur had won the javelin event at each meet, and Sidney Baxter claimed the 100- and 200-meter wins each time out through mid-April for coach Pat Barron.