Thomas breaks world high jump mark in NE track meet here

By Tom Brenske, TSU

The Tech Sports Editor

John Thomas, Boston University's sensational soprano high jumper, eclipsed his own outdoor world record by 1 3/4" by a quarter of an inch Saturday in the high jump event of the third annual New England Intercollegiate Amateur Athletic Association track meet at MIT's Briggs Field.

Two other field records fall as Brown University won the title handily--49 to 27 over Connecticut and Holy Cross—but it was clear that the crowd of 2000 were not disappointed.

With the bar measured to 7' 3 1/2", at his request, the limpy Thomas was the first to approach the wind, and began his graceful seven-step approach from the left side and soared over the barrier.

But on remeasurement as prescribed by the AAU, referee Larry Johnson raised it to 7' 1 3/4"—and a check by the numerous officials present showed him correct.

Thomas missed 7' 2 1/4"

In what was by then anticlimactic, Thomas tried 7' 3 1/4" three times but nicked the bar each time on the way down. He said later that when "I was mentally ready, the wind was too active, and I had to wait."

After the second try he seemed dissatisfied with his take-off stride, but he couldn't correct it on his remaining chances.

Thomas missed just once on his way up to the new mark. At 7' 1 3/4", his trailing leg tucked the bar into the pit behind him, but he cleared the mark easily on his second attempt. The competition in the high jump started at 5' 8", but Thomas didn't enter until all the other competitors had gone out at six feet even. Then he cleared 6' 2" with little effort. Three straight times he cleared the bar with room to spare—at 6' 4 1/4", 6' 5" (breaking the old New England record of 6' 5 1/2"), and 6' 7 1/2".

Tech Among Scorers

Rhode Island ended fourth in the meet with 32 points, followed by Boston (16), defending champion BU (13), Maine and Trinity (11), Tufts (10), Springfield and Wesleyan (12), Vermont (5), Boston College (4), MIT (3) and New Hampshire (1). Seven schools failed to score.

Joe Davis, BU, joined Tuthill's points in a five-way tie in the high jump. The other MIT favorites failed to register in the finals, although captain Bill Nichol, '60, qualified for the finals of the hammer throw. He was sixth, a foot shy of the scoring column.

The hammer throwers were both credited all day by the cage around the throwing area. Even Lawlor caught the wind after one of his tosses. Several times hammerers were caught in the wire and clothed trunks had to come up the cage after them...

The high jumpers and pole vaulters should have been pleased with the pits—1 1/2" lens of foam rubber were purchased and spread out to provide a soft, although somewhat bouncey, landing. . . Thomas was given the royal treatment by the officials—as soon as the other entrants were out of contention the men in charge disposed of the best triangular bar and produced a whole set of cylindrical ones which he apparently has been care-fully studied away for the big moment. . . . The meet announcer was supplied with information from all over the field by walkie-talkies, and often he had announced Thomas' latest jump when the record-setter and scarcely climbed out of the pit...

One Running Mark Allowed

The only track record allowed was in the freshman 880-yard relay which Holy Cross won in 2:33.6. Tech was fifth. Other record jumping performances, such as UConn's Gene Givens' 100 and 220 victories, were disallowed due to the wind.

The other meet victories were: Mile—Brisie Paraly, Wesleyan; 440—Rudy Smith, Bates; 120-yard high hurdles—Earle Beasley, Tufts; 220—Bob Lowe, Brown; 800—Jay Brown, Holy Cross; 440—Earle Basler, Tufts; 100—Bob Lowe, Brown; and 220-yard low hurdles—Jim Morland, Brown.

The Tech

All-in-all, it was a day of top contestants and top performances in the field events. Terry Horne of Maine topped the listed New England discus record with a throw of 109". UConn's Red Crawford surpassed the javelin standard with a heave of 216' 9 3/4". The defending champion in the hammer throw, John Lawlor of BU, won the event easily, but failed in a record bid.

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Picture: Photo by Boyd Estus, '63

Tom Thomas begins his roll over the bar at 7' 3 1/4", a new world high jump record, in the New England track championships Saturday at Briggs Field.

[Image: old-spice-stick-deodorant-comes-to-the-rescue-fast]