

LEE D. JENKINS

Arabic Temple Readies NAAU Championships



Illustrious Potentate Jim Purgeson, will put aside their mystic symbols and secret code phrases when they throw open the doors of the University of Chicago fieldhouse April 15 and 16 to play hosts to the National AAU junior and senior women's indoor track and field championships. The sponsorship of the NAAU meet is a major ingredient in the local Shriners' extensive youth programming.



LUCINDA WILLIAMS He has had major coaching jobs ranging through the famed Chicago Comets track aggregation into Olympic and Pan-American competition.

Robicheaux reports that entries have been filed from female track stars from Canada, Tennessee, Alabama, Ohio, New York, California, Wisconsin, and Maryland. Early entrants include full teams from Tennessee A&I University, Tuskegee Institute, Colorado State University and a WAC group from Kansas.

The nation's distaffers have been taking a real beating in their noble but overmatched activities of an international flavor. Olympic gold medals have been few and their meetings with the Russians have rated 'E' for effort but little else.

Several of the country's prominent female stars place the blame for the U. S. shortcomings on the promoters of amateur athletics. Their complaint stems from the lack of competition for women athletes. Noting multitude of men's track activities in contrast to only TWO meets of any importance for women yearly, our female athletic counterparts may have a point.

The general consensus has it that the caliber of lady athletes is on the upgrade. The advent of scholarships at Tennessee A&I, Tuskegee and Colorado State is a step in the right direction. The next step, now undergoing full lobbying throughout the nation, would have every track meet, indoor and outdoor, a combined male and female attraction. There is every indication that the potential is there awaiting the need of development.

The NAAU meet will serve as the initial sounding board for the selection of the U. S. Olympic team. The meet will come under the full scrutiny of the track and field selection Olympic committee.

A full corps of defending champions will be on hand. Seeking to add to their '59 laurels will be Wilma Rudolph (50 yard dash), Joan Terry (70 yard hurdles), Martha Hudson (100 yard dash) and Lucinda Williams (220 yard run) from Tennessee A&I. Brooklyn's Queens Mercurettes will send back titlists Majorie Larney (shot put) and Ameilia Wood (basketball throw). Colorado State's Ann Flynn, Marlene Pope of the Cleveland Division of Recreation and Miss Terry will seek to break their deadlock for high jump honors. Tennessee A&I will aim for their second straight triumph in the 440 medley relay. Tennessee will also be defending their team title. Mayor Daley's Youth Foundation will have a full team in action in the defense of their 1959 junior title.

Also awaiting the starter's gun will be Chgo's Barbara Jones who topped her Russian competition in the last two U. S.-Russ dual meets. Miss Jones was also second in the Pan-American 60 meters dash and third in the Pan-Am 100. She has been a member of the last two Olympic teams.

Mrs. Grace Butcher, the leading female distance runner, will toe the line in the 880 yard run. Mrs. Butcher, mother of two, is U. S. meters champion and American record holder for the 880 with a mark of 2:24.4.

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Several special events have been planned to complete the two day card. Outstanding among the extras will be the appearance of Ira Murchison. Murchison was rated among the top sprinters in the world before a recent siege of illness. He is now in the midst of attempting a comeback that will win him a place on the '60 Olympic team.

"We're in a good spot," said Robicheaux. "With the meet falling on the Easter holiday weekend, we're sure to benefit from the large number of athletes who will be returning to the Chicago area. We expect record breaking entries — record performances — all we can ask for now would be record breaking attendance."