



Stanley E. Romanoski - *Sports and Athletics*

Stan Romanoski could justifiably be labeled “Mr. Track and Cross Country” in West Virginia for his 40-year college and high school coaching career capped by 24 years at West Virginia University.

He was an ambassador and state pioneer for the sport and promoted running and track and field year-round. He traveled the state in the summers to assist local coaches with competitions, clinics, AAU meets, etc. At WVU, he founded the Mountaineer Relays and the WVU Invitational cross country meet for high school runners. He originated the state prep cross country meet, which was later sanctioned and run by the West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission as the state championship event. He started the indoor track program at WVU without a facility and led the effort for new indoor and outdoor track facilities in the 1970's. Also, he was the featured speaker to kick-off the Elby's Distance Race in Wheeling.

Coaching men's track and cross country teams from 1957-81, he piloted more All-America trackmen (7) than any other Mountaineer coach. Included were distance runners Carl Hatfield, Roger Meador, Mike Mosser, Don Sauer, and Alex Kasich, hurdler Garnet Edwards, and pole vaulters Jack Carter plus his first team captain Dave Tork, currently a Wheeling resident, who later set a world record as the world's second 16-foot vaulter. Mosser, an NCAA indoor champion, participated in the “Dream Mile” with Olympians Jim Ryun and Marty Liquori. Edwards won the 1979 Penn Relays' high hurdles and was an NCAA outdoor high hurdle finalist two years and indoor finalist in 1979 when he was “outleaned” for first place by Olympian Renaldo Nehemiah. He also coached WVU's first African-American varsity athlete--long jumper Philip Edwards from Morgantown.

At WVU, Romanoski's track teams were 70-39-1 and cross country team records were 128-64. He coached three Southern Conference cross country title teams which advanced to the NCAA Tournament. The 1962 squad finished 20th in the country, the highest placing for a WVU team. He also served as vice-president and later president of the IC4A track coaches' association and conducted college and high school coaching clinics around the region.

His passion for the sport started at Triadelphia High School. Competing for coach Charley Petty, he won the state one-class 880-yard titles as a junior and senior (1936) with times of 2:03.2 and 2:04, compared to the state record of 2:02. He also set a West Virginia regional mile record time of 4:40 which lasted a decade. And he played end in football.

He enrolled at Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina and played three sports for two years before enrolling at WVU for his final two years. At WVU, he ran track under his coaching predecessor, Art Smith, and was a member of the 1941 mile relay team which set a school record that lasted over 30 years.

After college, he rebuilt two state high school athletic programs sandwiched around a Navy tour of duty. He started his coaching career at Ansted High School, which was coming off a 30-game losing streak in football and a 3-60 basketball record. His three football teams went 24-5 including 9-0-1 in 1947, and a basketball team was 19-2. After the Navy tour, he took over a Dunbar program that was 1-9 in football and 1-19 in basketball the previous year. In nine seasons, his football teams were 52-33-1 and his 1957 track team won a one-class state championship. That feat earned him the state all-sport Coach of the Year award, the only time in 70 years of the honor that a coach was cited primarily for track. He had started track at both schools and also coached basketball. He also coached the South to a victory in the 1953 West Virginia North-South Football game. Overall, he coached 11 winning prep football teams. Then it was off to WVU.

Romanoski was born August 2, 1918 in Homestead, Pa. His family moved to Wheeling in 1923 and resided in the Overbrook area. He attended St. Vincent's Grade School before enrolling at Triadelphia High School. He passed away on June 26, 2004.

He has been inducted into the West Virginia University Sports Hall of Fame and the West Virginia state Sports Hall of Fame.