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Telford Telescope: Detroit's dominant dashmen

By Dr. John Telford
SUN COLUMNIST



Statewide, nationally, and internationally, predominant dashmen came out of Detroit throughout the 20th century. From the 1920's until the 1990's, dozens of sprinters from the Detroit Public Schools Athletic League (DPSAL) went on to

attain broad acclaim.

Interestingly, the competitive distance of more than half of them was the quarter-mile (440 yards) and the slightly shorter 400 meters, whereof I wrote a now out-of-print techniques book on the event, 'The Longest Dash' (Track & Field News Press, Los Altos, CA, 1965, 1971). These Motown quarter-horses who shattered city and state records included old Northeastern's John Lewis, Northwestern's Stan McConner, Central's Cliff Hatcher (inducted posthumously into the Detroit Public Schools Sports Hall of Fame in 2019), Southeastern's George Wesson and Lorenzo Montgomery, Cass Tech's Harlan Huckleby, Mumford's James Grace, Ford's Mike Holt, and old Coolidge's Stan Vinson and lucky Claude Tiller (who incidentally has just wed the

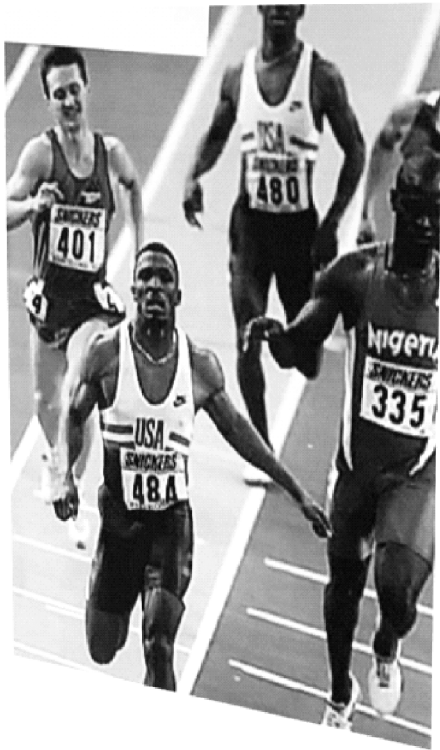
lovely Holly Powell on this past New Year's day). Were these stellar long sprinters to be ranked comparatively via the unforgiving stopwatch alone, the fastest would have to have been Pershing High School's state champion Darnell Hall (pictured), with his 400-meter clocking of 44.6 seconds. Hall, who ran on America's winning 1,600-meter relay team in the 1996 Olympics, belongs in the DPS Sports Hall of Fame with Hatcher and two other former DPSAL quarter-milers who are in it already--this writer (Northwestern and Denby High Schools, Wayne State University, the Detroit Track Club, and the United States national team, inducted in 2014) and Deon Hogan (Kettering High and the University of Kansas, inducted in 2016). In 1957, I became the first Michigan collegian and first DPSAL-bred sprinter to run the

full quarter-mile under 47 seconds. I did it again and yet again at 400 meters, going undefeated at the distance representing the U.S. in Europe. Deon Hogan was the first Detroiter under 46 seconds with a world-record 45-second clocking in 1979 for Kansas. Hogan's 45-second time for the full quarter could have been as fast as 44.5 for the shorter 400 meters, which would have placed him a step ahead of Darnell Hall's all-time Detroit best.

Henry Carr, the great "Gray Ghost" of Northwestern High and Arizona State, who was also inducted posthumously in the DPS Sports Hall in 2015, won the Olympic 200-meter dash in 1964 and like me clocked quarter-miles in the 46-second range, but unlike me, Hall, and Hogan, he wasn't a quarter-mile specialist. I need to say, though, that had Hall, Hogan, and I raced against each other in a hypothetical contest at our physical peaks from different decades, with me challenging them on a modern rubberized composition surface rather than the archaic dirt and cinders of my era, we would have been competing for second place if the preternaturally gifted Carr were in the race. Rubberized tracks have been calibrated to be 1.8 seconds faster over a quarter-mile than those of dirt and cinders--and like me, Henry Carr never had the chance to run on rubber, which gives back bounce rather than the hindering drag of dirt. After winning that Olympic 200 in record time, Carr's relay leg on the victorious Olympic 1,600-meter team was in the low 44s--faster than Olympic 400-meter champion (and my old rival) Mike Larrabee's leg on that same relay team.

I intend to ensure that the Hall of Fame committee will see this column and appropriately induct Olympian Darnell Hall in 2020!

Former DPS Superintendent John Telford was an NCAA All-American quarter-miler at WSU. For signed copies of his six Detroit-oriented books, call (313) 460-8272 or email DrJohnTelfordEdd@aol.com. Hear him Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. and Mondays at 6:30 p.m. on WCHB AM1340 and on Detroit Internet Television (DETIPV.com). His website is www.AlifeontheRUN.com.



Treasury: Scammers using fake letters in collections scam

Michigan taxpayers with past-due tax debts should be aware of an aggressive scam that's making the rounds through the U.S. Postal Service, according to the Michigan Department of Treasury (Treasury).

In the scheme, taxpayers receive what appears to be a government-looking letter about an overdue tax bill, asking individuals to immediately contact a toll-free number to resolve a state tax debt. The letter aggressively threatens to seize a taxpayer's assets including property and Social Security benefits if the state tax debt is not settled.

"This is a tricky scam that's been reported throughout the state over the past year," said Deputy State Treasurer Ann Good, who oversees Treasury's Financial and Administrative Services programs. "Taxpayers have rights. If you have questions about an outstanding state tax debt, please contact us through a verified number so we can talk about options."

The piece of correspondence appears credible to the taxpayer because it uses

specific personal facts about their real outstanding tax debt that's pulled directly from publicly available information. The scammer's letter attempts to lure the taxpayer into a situation where they could make a payment to a criminal.

The state Treasury Department corresponds with taxpayers through official letters sent through the U.S. Postal Service, providing several options to resolve an outstanding debt and information outlining taxpayer rights.

Taxpayers who receive a letter from a scammer or have questions about their state debts should call Treasury's Collections Service Center at 517-636-5265. A customer service representative can log the scam, verify outstanding state debts and provide flexible payment options.

To learn more about Michigan's taxes and the collections process, go to www.michigan.gov/taxes or follow the state Treasury Department on Twitter at @MITreasury.

New 2020 overtime pay requirements for Nonexempt workers took effect Jan. 1

PRNewswire/ -- With the new year approaching, the U.S. Department of Labor's final rule governing the earnings thresholds necessary to exempt employees from the Fair Labor Standards Act's (FLSA) overtime pay requirements took effect on January 1, 2020, prompting employers to take action. In order to avoid civil money penalties for each violation, employers must make changes to comply with the new requirements before January 1.

The final rule, which was issued in September 2019, is the first time the weekly threshold has been updated in nearly 15 years. The rule updates the standard salary levels needed for executive, administrative, and professional employees to be classified as exempt from these requirements from \$455 per week to \$684 per week. According to Lisa Franke, employment law analyst at Wolters Kluwer Legal & Regulatory U.S., even if employers have not yet taken steps to comply with the new thresholds, they still have time to make the changes ahead of the January 1 deadline.

"Back in 2004, the duties tests were completely revised, which was significantly more burdensome for employers to prepare for," said Franke. "Complying with the changes in this final rule - mostly a revision in salary levels - is relatively simple compared to that endeavor. However, communication out to affected employees is critical."

Wolters Kluwer's experts have outlined the most important points for employers to be aware of regarding these changes ahead of 2020.

To comply with these changes, employers must identify employees who are currently classified as exempt from overtime but do not make at least \$684 per week, which equates to \$35,568 on an annual basis. After these employees are identified, employers can reclassify exempt employees as nonexempt, paying these employees overtime for any hours worked over 40 per week, or maintain the exemption for these employees by raising their pay to meet or exceed the revised standard salary level. If employers choose the second option, they should ensure these



employees meet the two additional tests involved in FLSA classification: the employees must be paid on a salary or fee basis, and must meet the executive, administrative or professional duties test which has not changed.

Utilizing nondiscretionary bonuses and incentive payments

Under the new ruling, nondiscretionary bonuses and incentive payments can be used to satisfy up to 10 percent of the standard salary level. Employers can give catch up payments to employees at the end of the 52-week period if bonuses do not help to meet the standard salary level.

Handling employee status changes from exempt to nonexempt

If an employee's status will change from exempt to nonexempt, communicating the updated status and overtime eligibility to the employee ahead of January 1 is important. "Even though employees who are reclassified from exempt to nonexempt status can earn more money due to additional overtime pay, realize that they may view the change as a sort of demotion or loss of status," says Franke. "Employers should assure the employee that the change is not a reflection of performance and that it is strictly based on job duties and compensation in relation to federal regulations."

A similar ruling was issued under the Obama Administration in 2016 and was blocked by a federal court. This prompted some employers to implement the changes by reclassifying employees to nonexempt status or raising their salaries. Employers that made those adjustments a few years ago are likely using procedures in line with the new thresholds, but it is advisable to reevaluate processes ahead of the upcoming deadline.

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