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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

A HISTORY OF THE MALE VARSITY TRACK AND FIELD PROGRAM
AT FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY FROM 1948-1974

By
CURTISS M. LONG

A Dissertation submitted to the Area of
Professional and Clinical Programs,
Program in Physical Education, in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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DEDICATION

This study has been dedicated to two men who have devoted their lives to the education and betterment of the young men who have composed their athletic teams.



Kenneth D. Miller
Head Track Coach 1948-1954



Mike Long
Head Track Coach 1955-19

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PREFACE

The study had its beginning in the office of N. B. "Bim" Stults during the winter quarter of 1973. Stults, recently retired after twenty-six years as head swimming coach at FSU, was packing boxes of swimming memorabilia gathered during his long coaching career at Tallahassee, and was lamenting the possible loss of FSU's swimming heritage due to the lack of an archives in which to preserve invaluable athletic records. Stults had been Florida State University's first and only head swimming coach until his retirement, and it was apparent that his departure from the university community could deprive posterity of a rich and irreplaceable source of historical information concerning the evolution of the athletic program.

Having been a varsity runner at FSU, the realization that the same situation existed in the men's track and field program was almost instantaneous. The track program had been started and nourished by Dr. Kenneth Miller. Mike Long had been installed as head coach when Miller was assigned departmental administrative duties in 1955, and he has served continuously as head track coach to the present. Both men were still employed by the university, but both were approaching retirement age. Thus, the sudden awareness of the need to record track history while key primary sources were still available provided a logical catalyst to conceiving the idea of an historical study of track and field at FSU.

For various reasons, the study was delimited to the male varsity track and field program at Florida State during the period 1948-1974 and included both indoor and outdoor competition with the exclusion of cross-country, separate freshman competition, and intra-squad events. As the investigation proceeded, the twenty-six year period of track and field history was sub-divided into five eras created by natural groupings of events due to team success and the one head coaching change.

The story of the Florida State University track program was built upon individual and team performance. Emphasis in this study was placed upon the performances of the superlative athletes who set the records, but special attention was paid to the men whose second and third place efforts often made the difference between defeat and victory.

A complete factual record was developed for each year from meet results, including places of finish, performance standards, location of the meet, and schools competing. Additional data were included as appendices--a chronological listing of all school records and outstanding performances, and a team roster listing name and varsity letter awards.

Difficulties were encountered in attempting to locate summaries of results for all meets. Office records were found to be incomplete, and often newspaper accounts were not inclusive, resulting in sketchy summaries for some meets. In the appendices, meet reports for large competition contain only a listing of the events in which Florida State University placed. Whenever meet summaries listed times and performances for places other than first, the performance was recorded in parentheses after the athlete's name. It is regrettable that in a large number of

cases, times and performances were recorded for only first place. Because of this limitation, personal best marks of many athletes have gone unreported.

For the purposes of this study, Florida State University was also referred to as: Florida State, FSU, the Seminoles, and the Tribe. Unless otherwise cited, all meet data were obtained from the first reference listed for each meet.



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Appreciation of the help extended by the physical education program, the FSU athletic department, and to innumerable past and present personnel who have made pertinent data available is gratefully acknowledged. The invaluable assistance and information provided by Mike Long, head track coach, was essential to the writing of the study. Special recognition of Mrs. Dee Frye and Mrs. Eleanor Ludwig and the entire athletic and intramural departmental secretarial staffs is in order.

Sincere and profuse appreciation is extended to the writer's wife, "Andy," without whose help and inspiration the study would not have been completed.

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING: 1948-1954

1948

Florida State University's track program had its beginnings in the fall of 1948. The master plan covering the expansion of the athletic program did not call for the fielding of a track team for several years (Annual Report: 1947-1948); however, events unfolded that forced the time table to be moved forward. The prime factor in this evolution was the somewhat bungled hiring of a new staff member at the newly coeducational Florida State University.

Kenneth Miller was working as head track and assistant football coach at Lock Haven (Pennsylvania) State Teachers College when he heard of a physical education and coaching opening at FSU. He recalled:

I heard of an opening at this new school and, largely out of curiosity, wrote a letter of inquiry which included my vita. Somewhat surprisingly, an offer followed almost immediately. The opening, among other things, included the basketball coaching job. Don Loucks had been the first basketball coach at FSU, but he wanted to take over the tennis coaching position, and so when my letter, indicating considerable experience in basketball was received, the job was offered to me. This opportunity in my favorite sport was the primary reason I came to Tallahassee. My job at Lock Haven was a great one, and the salary there was better than the new offer. Also, as it turned out, I would have been department chairman the following year if I had remained at Lock Haven. But I wanted to be a head coach in basketball. (Miller, 1975)

In the fall of 1948, Coach Miller arrived on campus believing he was to be the basketball coach. Coach Miller's ambition to direct

the FSU basketball program, however, was not to be realized. During the summer, J. K. "Bud" Kennedy, the FSU athletic business manager, had been named to the basketball post. Miller describes his reaction and the solution Howard Danford concocted for the dilemma of having two well-qualified coaches for one basketball position:

I was shocked. I had given up a better position for only one reason, and now, after my bridges were burned, that challenge had somehow been taken out of the picture. Dr. Danford's explanation was simply that during the summer he had decided to begin a track and field program, and since I was the only staff member qualified to direct it--while Bud Kennedy was well-prepared to handle the basketball job--I was the new track coach. Period. (Miller, 1975)

Through a controversial administrative decision, the track program was begun ahead of schedule with the services of an experienced coach. Ken Miller had an extensive career in track and field both as a runner and as a coach. His early formal running experiences were at Galileo High School in San Francisco where he was a sprinter primarily because his basketball coach believed track to be a desirable off-season activity for basketball players. Miller was a very average high school sprinter, and recalls his "best" effort as one related to some very humorous circumstances. As he put it, he attained a 30-minute-long world class reputation when, as a junior, he was clocked in a :09.4 100-yard dash (Miller, 1975). This startling performance, which occurred in a city-wide Young Men's Christian Association championship meet, equalled the world record established by Frank Wykoff a year previously. Unfortunately, Miller's glory lasted only until the track was measured as a part of the record claiming procedure. The running course was found to be a very exact 90 yards!

After graduating, Miller entered Marin (California) Junior College. Basketball and, to a lesser extent, track and field were his primary athletic interests at Marin. It was during this period that the junior college track coach moved him from the sprints to the quarter-mile. A third place finish in the state junior college championships during his sophomore year was the product of this decision.

During the summer following his graduation from junior college, Miller was invited to Washington State University to try-out for a basketball scholarship. After a week-long practice session with varsity members on campus, he started home without a firm offer. En route, Prince Callison, the football coach at the University of Oregon, met the young athlete at the Portland train station and asked him to visit Eugene where they were looking for a quarter-miler. Miller accepted the invitation and within the week was offered, and accepted, an athletic scholarship at Oregon.

Miller was still more interested in basketball, and even though his scholarship was for track, he had not given up the idea of playing basketball for Oregon during track's off-season. Knowing of Miller's background, the Oregon basketball coach was pleased to have an experienced junior college player as part of his program without using basketball scholarship funds. This seemingly ideal arrangement, however, proved to be ephemeral. Miller recalls that only a few days after the fall semester began Colonel Bill Hayward, the legendary Oregon track coach, drove into the parking lot of the fraternity where Miller was staying, and honked his horn until someone came out of the

house to see what he wanted. He had Miller paged, and Coach Miller recalled the ensuing events:

He didn't even say "hello." He just said, "I understand you're a basketball player." I replied, "yes, sir!" "Well, you're not anymore!" He didn't say another word. Hayward got into his car, slammed the door, and drove away. He didn't want his runners participating in other sports. And on the Oregon campus what he didn't want didn't happen. (Miller, 1975)

Thus began the track career of Ken Miller at the University of Oregon. Although he anchored the mile relay team throughout his career at the University of Oregon, Coach Hayward moved him to the half-mile as his regular event. Once again, the move up in distance paid dividends. His best mark of 1:53.4 was, at that time, the university record. He ran 1:54.0 or better on several occasions during his two years at the university, and in 1937 was selected by Hayward as a member of an all-time University of Oregon track squad.

Miller graduated from the University of Oregon in 1937, and remained as coach of the freshman team during the following year while working on his master's degree.

His first head coaching position was at Liberty Union High School, Brentwood, California, beginning in the fall of 1938. He served as head track coach and assistant football and basketball coach at Brentwood for three years. During this period, he renewed his participation as a basketball player as a member of the Delta Market squad, a San Francisco Bay area AAU team. In 1941, he left Liberty High to enter the doctoral program in physical education at the University of Michigan. This plan was interrupted by World War II, and Miller entered the naval aviation program. During his training period,

he played basketball for the Iowa "Seahawks," and subsequent to receiving his wings, he played for the Quonset Naval Air Station and the Bunker Hill Naval Air Station teams. As a naval aviator, he later had combat duty in the Aleutian Islands and in the Mariana Islands.

Upon receiving an honorable discharge early in 1946, Miller returned to the University of Michigan to continue work on his doctorate, and that fall, he accepted the position of head track coach and assistant football coach at Lock Haven State Teachers College. Coach Miller returned to Ann Arbor during the summers and completed his doctoral work in 1948, the year he accepted the offer extended by Florida State University.

The premature beginning of the track program left the new coach with several serious problems. The most pressing was the total lack of facilities. In the fall of 1948, Florida State University was committed to having a track team, but had no track. There was no relief in the local community; as only Leon High School had a track program, but again, no track.

Because of the initial cost of an adequate track complex, the university attempted to build the facility using university personnel (Durbin, 1975). An area on the old west campus was selected as the site for the new track. The track was completed immediately prior to the advent of the 1949 season (Clendinen, 1962).

In order to provide drainage, the track was constructed with one turn higher in elevation than the other. This meant that one-half of a lap was run slightly uphill; the other a few degrees downhill (Miller, 1975). The drainage problem was solved, yet obvious problems

for the runners were created. Wooden curbs were installed around the inside of the track. Eventually these curbs were replaced by concrete (Miller, 1975).

The foundation of the eight-lane facility was low grade yellow clay, with the top running surface composed of red clay. The running surface was fast when properly prepared, but one hard rain would turn the track into a quagmire, and hot, dry weather resulted in a concrete-hard running surface (Miller, 1975).

The high jump and vaulting pits were filled with wood shavings donated by the Elberta Crate and Box Company. Dump trucks from the factory would stack the shavings as much as four feet high. This provided a very soft landing area until the pile compacted. The broad jump pit was filled with white construction sand. All pits were lined with wooden planks (Miller, 1975).

The most prominent recollection of the track by former athletes was its isolation and lack of protection from the sun. Ken Jarrett recalled:

The only shade in the place was off the second curve. There was only one large oak tree. We gathered around that oak tree between runs as that was the only shade for us. In 1953, Coach Miller got the shop to come out and they put up a steel frame and hung a canvas on top of it. That was the only shelter we had while on the track. It did get hot, the hottest place I've ever been--just wide open spaces. (Jarrett, 1975)

The track was located about 300 yards from the dressing facility, in an area popularly known by the athletes as the "grinder" (Miller, 1975). In 1953, Coach Miller had the wood shop build a large foot locker at the track in which to store the equipment. Robert Schmelz, a footballer who threw the shot, summed up the isolated track

site with the statement, "it was a long way for water!" (Schmelz, 1975).

The barely adequate first track becomes a marvel of yankee ingenuity when considered in the light of the expertise and equipment available to the men burdened with the actual task of building it. Credit must be given to the maintenance and grounds personnel responsible for the track construction. This facility served the needs of the track program for seven years.

With the track completed and the first home meet rapidly approaching, a second problem was brought into sharp focus. The lack of maintenance personnel with knowledge concerning the preparation of a track for competition worked a hardship on Coach Miller. He had to train the maintenance staff in the art of lining and measuring the clay oval and in marking off the sectors and arcs for the shot put, discus, and javelin. Coach Miller often found himself performing these tasks to insure their authenticity (Miller, 1975).

The lack of track enthusiasts in the local area made the task of obtaining meet officials difficult. Through perserverance and hard work, Coach Miller slowly began the buildup of dedicated followers of track and field at Florida State University. This point is best exemplified by two faculty members--Greg Phifer and Richard Husband. Dr. Phifer, a former runner at the University of Pacific, officiated the broad jump, and later the triple jump when that event was added to the dual meet order of events, since 1951 (Phifer, 1976). A former distance runner at Dartmouth University, Dr. Husband has been an official timer and/or finish judge for 24 years (Husband, 1976).

Coach Miller had only a few short months to assemble the first FSU track and field team. His task was made more difficult by a miniscule budget. The entire track budget totaled only \$1,600 (Athletic Office Budget File, 1948-1949).

Coach Miller remembers that the money was adequate for purchasing equipment, as there were no recruiting costs or athletic scholarships in 1949. Basic policy of the athletic department, under the direction of Danford, prohibited the practice of awarding scholarships for athletic ability.

The athlete shall be treated the same as other students. There shall be no favoritism shown him and no discrimination against him because he is an athlete. Therefore, there shall be no subsidization of athletes. Boys shall play for the love of the game. Their rewards shall be those which are derived from taking part in the sport. Any monetary rewards create a false sense of values and create situations in which it is useless to expect significant educational results. In brief, the university dedicates itself to promotion of the amateur ideal in sports. (Annual Report, 1947-1948)

This idealistic philosophy soon faced extreme pressure from alumni, town people, and students who wanted to upgrade the football program (Tallahassee Democrat, 23 January 1949). Grudgingly, in 1951, the ban against athletic scholarships was rescinded for the football program (Annual Report, 1950-1951). This concession by the athletic committee and Danford opened the flood gates for an expanding football budget and sounded the death knell for Danford's idealistic dream of a truly amateur sports program that would have no distinction between major and minor sports (Tallahassee Democrat, 18 August 1948). Danford's hope was that within a broad spectrum of activities students

could find a sport in which they could participate (Tallahassee Democrat, 1 October 1948).

From 1949 to 1953, track athletes were enticed to Florida State University on the program's merit and the offer of possible parttime employment. The advent of scholarships in track and field did not terminate the belief that the program existed for the students. The track program was always open to any FSU student who desired to develop his talents. The reputation of the Florida State University track program has repeatedly attracted the unsolicited services of many quality athletes.

The most valuable recruiting aid to the talent discovering efforts of the coaching staff has always been the help of active and former members of the team. Many prospective track athletes have been swayed to attend FSU by the enthusiastic endorsement of the FSU program by Seminole track men.

After the purchase of equipment, the funds available for travel were limited. The method of transportation was strictly limited to bus and private cars.

Charles Durbin became the athletic department bus driver in 1947 and served continuously through the period of this study (Durbin, 1975). An old bus was purchased secondhand in the spring of 1948. The age of the bus necessitated frequent repairs as the vintage vehicle had a propensity for breaking down on trips. FSU athletes on various teams had the dubious honor of pushing "Old Ironsides"--an affectionate nickname for the first bus--to get it started or moved for repairs (Durbin, 1975).

Don Veller, head football coach from 1948-1951, accurately described travel conditions existing for athletic teams during those formative years.

Because of limited budgets in the earlier years, Florida State University teams often began return trips to Tallahassee immediately following out-of-town contests. It was standard procedure to travel all night, sometimes reaching the university in the middle of the following day. These conditions, compounded with the faults of the ancient bus, made many trips both laborious and unpleasant. (Clendinen, 1962).

Limited financial support in ensuing years has prevented the track program from improving its mode of travel significantly. With the exception of national caliber meets involving very small numbers of athletes, the 1974 track team traveled in the identical fashion as did the early teams under Coach Miller.

1949

The historic first call for track men was issued in the winter of 1949. An admixture of FSU football and basketball players, former high school track athletes, and FSU students interested in the possibility of earning a varsity letter joined together to form the pioneer track team (Miller, 1975).

The field events were the strongest Seminole suit as Al Bradford, a former Florida prep champion in the shot put (Miller, 1975), joined a football contingent of Ed Fox, James May, and Robert Schmelz to form a solid nucleus of weight men for the team. Bill Rodger, a walk-on javelin thrower (Miller, 1975), added to the Seminole strength in the field events. John Thombleson and William Weigel rounded out

the field event entries that comprised the majority of the scoring punch of the 1949 Seminole tracksters.

The Seminoles were woefully weak in the running events and especially vulnerable in the sprint and longer distance races. Coach Miller remembered his first team as willing but not possessing outstanding talent (Miller, 1975). Unfortunately, the results of the 1949 season bore out his pessimistic evaluation.

The first meet for the fledgling Seminoles occurred on April 7 at home against Mercer College of Macon, Georgia (FSU Track Office Files, 7 April 1949). The meet's opening event, the mile run, provided an indication of the difficulties facing the Seminoles. The Mercer distance men swept the mile run with a slow winning time of 5:10.0.

Undaunted by the opening setback, Charles Mahoney cruised to a :54.8 victory in the 440-yard dash. Thus Mahoney became the first Seminole to score a track and field victory for the garnet and gold.

Norman Eubanks, an All-Dixie Conference football end (Veller, 1976), followed Mahoney to the winner's circle by copping the 120-yard high hurdles with a time of :16.8. Jim Pence captured a valuable third behind Eubanks.

A put of 38' 6-1/8" by James May was the winning effort in the shot put and his effort moved Florida State to within four points of Mercer College after the completion of four events. The Bears quickly recaptured their commanding lead by sweeping the 100-yard dash and the high jump.

The young Seminoles refused to quit as they won both the 880-yard run with George Grosskopf's 2:08.6 clocking and the javelin on the strong arm of Bill Rodger. Rodger's winning toss was a pleasing effort of 157' 4-3/4".

The Tribe's victory in the discus, with Ed Fox's throw of 110' 9-1/2", was the last bright spot for the Seminoles until a 3:40.4 effort by the mile relay quartet of Joe Wells, George Grosskopf, Dave Harden, and Charles Mahoney brought victory in the concluding event of the day.

The lack of a Seminole sprinter or distance runner was graphically illustrated by the 35 to 2 advantage enjoyed by Mercer College in the 100-yard and 220-yard dashes, mile, and two-mile races. The Bears eventually won the meet 82 to 49--the exact margin they had carved out in the sprint and distance events.

Florida State won seven out of fifteen events and these made up the first school records. In an attempt to guarantee the integrity of school records, Coach Miller instituted a policy that school records had to be winning performances. This rule was enacted primarily because only first place in the running events are usually timed with more than one stopwatch. The assumption was that timing on the remaining places was subject to wide error. The policy was made all-inclusive to provide equality of opportunity between the field events and running events (Miller, 1975).

The Seminoles journeyed to Coral Gables, Florida, for the second dual meet in their short history. The University of Miami, at that time a power in southern track and field circles, outclassed the young Seminoles by a lopsided score of 92 to 34 (FSU Track Office

Files, 29 April 1949). The Hurricanes had rudely introduced the Tribe to the world of big time track and field competition.

Florida State was able to send only three men to the victory circle. George Grosskopf lowered the school record in the half-mile to 2:07.8 with his triumph in the two-lap race. He had set the previous record two weeks earlier against Mercer College.

James Lohmeyer's leap of 5' 8" in the high jump garnered the Tribe its second individual victory and established a new Seminole record in the process. The broad jump produced the third win of the day, when John Thombleson settled into the sand 19' 9-1/4" from the take-off board. Thombleson's school-record setting performance ended the Seminoles victory efforts for the day.

The Florida State University track team concluded its first dual meet schedule at home against Mississippi College on May 7 (FSU Track Office Files, 7 May 1949). The Seminoles engaged the Choctaws on the west campus red clay track, where Mississippi College's strength in the running events provided the Choctaws an edge that the Tribe was never able to overcome.

George Grosskopf was the only Tribe runner able to break the Choctaw's stranglehold on first places in the foot-racing. Grosskopf scored his third consecutive dual meet victory in the half-mile, as his 2:05.9 clocking lowered his own school standard for that event.

Sweeps of the top two spots in three field events spearheaded a Seminole drive that fell just short of victory. Al Bradford completed the weight double by scoring victories in both the shot put and discus with school record tosses of 40' 6" and 117' 10-1/2",

respectively. Bill Rodger won the javelin throw with a school record performance of 168' 7", while Bradford completed his afternoon's efforts by capturing second place in the javelin behind Rodger.

Despite shuttling back and forth between the shot put and the high jump, James May tied the school record with his winning leap of 5' 8" in the high jump. May finished second behind Al Bradford's record setting performance in the shot put. The school record holder in the high jump, James Lohmeyer, added the second place in that event to the Seminole total.

John Thombleson improved his broad jump school record with a 20' 9-1/16" winning effort. Thombleson remembers this effort as "one of my better jumps" (1975).

Florida State University's efforts in the field events had pulled the Tribe to within five points with only the mile relay remaining to be run. The Seminoles' hope for a tie was quickly snuffed out as Mississippi College sped to a convincing 3:35.9 victory.

The Seminoles concluded their inaugural season by competing in the First Annual Dixie Conference Championship on May 21 in Macon (FSU Track Office Files, 21 May 1949). The Tribe finished a very respectable fourth. The Seminoles amassed 32 5/6 points and finished ahead of Oglethorpe College and Florida Southern College.

Florida State University was led by victories by Bill Rodger in the javelin, and Al Bradford in the shot put. Both men set new school records in registering their winning marks. Rodger broke the 170-foot barrier in the javelin with his toss of 171' 9-1/2". This throw was to be the best of his career and a school record which

lasted until 1954. Al Bradford's winning toss in the shot put measured out at 42' 6". Bradford was never able to better this mark, but his school record remained on the record board until early in the 1952 season.

Summary. The Seminoles concluded the historically significant first season winless in dual meet competition, but this did little to detract from the outstanding performances of individual team members. The Seminoles were prolific in their school-record setting activities. The Tribe established nine school records, as the only events that produced no winning performances were the 100-yard dash, 220-yard dash, 220-yard low hurdles, mile run, two-mile run, and the pole vault.

The Florida State University track team was unable to ring up a victory during their first season, yet valuable experience was gained. The Seminoles had made its entrance into the world of competitive track and field and from this humble beginning, a highly respected program would rapidly grow.

1950

The second season began much as the old season had ended with the Seminoles absorbing a sound beating at the hands of a powerful University of Miami track team. However, the 1950 version of the Seminole track team was to prove a small southern power with which to be reckoned. The Hurricane loss was the only blemish on the Tribe record, and 1950 was the year that settled old scores from the previous year.

Due to the lack of budgetary funds and the no scholarship policy, recruiting during the summer of 1949 was limited to responding

to inquiries concerning the program and to the encouragement of FSU students to come out for the team. Despite such restriction, Coach Miller shored up glaring weaknesses in the sprint and distance events. He had discovered a superb athlete in Tom Bowman, an all-round performer who was to turn the program around. Bowman had played football the previous year at the University of Florida, yet wanted to transfer to a school where he could concentrate on the decathlon. The emerging track program at Florida State University afforded him the opportunity to compete in several events on a regular meet basis. Tom Bowman talked with Dr. Miller and decided to compete his senior year as a Seminole (Miller, 1975).

Two athletes from Pennsylvania contacted Dr. Miller on the possibility of obtaining financial help to attend Florida State University. Joe Fracassi and Peter Frascchetti were Erie city champions in the pole vault and 880-yard run, respectively. Coach Miller was delighted at the prospect of obtaining the services of two quality athletes.

They were the first ones that we really brought in. They came by themselves and the reason that they came is because that they knew I had coached at Lock Haven. When they got out of high school, they wanted to go on to college and they wanted to get some kind of financial help. We did not have scholarships yet, but they contacted me on the basis of knowing of my Pennsylvania background. Of course, I wanted them to come to Tallahassee. We had nothing, and here were a couple of big city high school champions who had the kind of talent we needed to start building. So, I scrounged to get them jobs. I tried to get them summer jobs in construction, and both of them worked on housing construction during that summer. They had a tough time all the way through school. They did not have much money, but they made it on odd jobs. (Miller, 1975)

Bill Duncan, a Florida state high school champion, was a freshman walk-on in the fall of 1949 whose steady progress was to fill the void in the distance events (Miller, 1975). The presence of Duncan, Bowman, Frascchetti, and Fracassi, coupled with six returning school record holders from the 1949 squad, gave the Seminoles a balanced scoring potential.

The opening dual meet of the season with the University of Miami on March 28 held little joy for the Seminoles. The Hurricanes stretched the Seminole losing streak to four with their 91 to 35 defeat of the Tribe (FSU Track Office Files, 28 March 1950).

Florida State University was able to find some solace in the performances of Duncan, Bradford, and Bowman. Bill Duncan's copping of the meet-opening mile run with a Seminole record setting clocking of 4:43.1, and Al Bradford's winning toss of 41' 10-1/4" in the shot put gave the Seminoles some early momentum. However, the Tribe failed to win again until Tom Bowman's burning :24.5 victory in the 220-yard low hurdles. His triumph was the first ever for a Seminole in the low hurdles. Bowman wound up being the leading point getter for FSU with nine markers.

The Seminoles began their 1950 home schedule on April 1 against Mercer College. FSU showed little southern hospitality to the visiting team as they swept to their first dual meet victory in the short history of the track program (FSU Track Office Files, 1 April 1950).

The friendly west campus oval yielded seven new school records as the Seminoles romped to a 89 1/3 to 41 2/3 win. Tom Bowman began the record parade by clipping two-tenths of a second off the old

120-yard high hurdle record with a mark of :16.6. Richard Mize continued the march by slicing a whopping two and two-tenths seconds off of the 440-yard dash school standard, lowering the record to :52.6.

It was now Tom Bowman's turn again as the speedster returned to the track in the 100-yard dash. Bowman's victory dash lasted only 10.1 seconds as he became the first Seminole to ever win a sprint race.

Running in only his second race as a Seminole, Peter Frascchetti garnered the 880-yard run and the school record as he lowered the standard to 2:05.2. Frascchetti's victory completed a string of four consecutive school record setting performances on the track.

The Tribe field eventmen were not without their record breakers. Tom Bowman and James May combined to tie for first place in the high jump with a new school record height of 5' 10".

The pole vault was the scene of the sixth school record as William Weigel sailed over 10' 6". The story of Bill Weigel as a pole vaulter is an interesting one. Dr. Miller reconstructed the circumstances surrounding Weigel's normal meet entry:

Bill Weigel was one of our all-time outstanding defensive basketball players. He was team captain during his senior year. He really wasn't an outstanding track man, but he had a high level of all-around athletic ability, and he loved to compete. Competition was so necessary to him that he was attracted to the one-against-one aspect of track and field during the basketball off-season. For us, he competed in the illogical double of the pole vault and the two-mile run! This is an impossible combination, but under the conditions of our early operation, anyone who could (or would!) run two miles and/or pole vault was a welcome addition to the squad.

The pole vault, of course, takes a long time to run off. We always tried to push the event along because we wanted Weigel to get as high as he could before the two-mile came around. After this event, he was not going to vault anymore. At least, not very successfully. So, usually, he'd do 10 feet or so before his run and that was it. But he usually

scored and sometimes won. His importance, though, was in his attitude toward competition, his desire to challenge an opponent, his love of the effort involved. This helped me greatly with the development of a team spirit. Weigel was never a champion pole vaulter or runner, but as an "athlete" he was a real champion in my mind. (Miller, 1975)

The mile relay foursome of Frascchetti, Stafford, Weigel, and Mize closed out the historic afternoon in record setting fashion as the four Seminoles romped to victory in 3:42.3.

Florida State University entered the Southern Relays on April 8 in Birmingham. A fourth place finish by the 880-yard relay foursome of David Harden, Harry Bringger, Frank Pearson, and Charles Mahoney was the only Seminole place in the meet (Tallahassee Democrat, 9 April 1950).

The Florida State University tracksters journeyed to Atlanta on April 15 in search of their second dual meet victory. The Seminoles made their sojourn a success by crushing Emory University 100 1/3 to 30 2/3 (FSU Track Office Files, 15 April 1950).

Tom Bowman almost outscored the entire Emory team as he garnered 26 points by capturing four events and finishing second in two more. He set two school records and tied a third. His record performances were a :16.1 clocking in the 120-yard high hurdles and a 21' 11-3/4" leap in the broad jump. Bowman equalled his own school record in the 100-yard dash by flashing to victory in :10.1. He added seconds in both the high jump and javelin.

Bill Duncan scored a distance double, and his 10:42.1 mark in the two-mile run established a new Seminole record. The shot put and discus titles fell to Al Bradford, as his all-time personal best throw of 125' 2-1/2" broke his own existing school discus mark by over

seven feet. Joe Fracassi shattered William Weigel's pole vault record by a full foot when he soared 11' 6" on his winning effort. Florida State University's mile relay, consisting of Mahoney, Stafford, Pearson, and Frascchetti, raced to a new school record of 3:39.1 which ended the competition as it had begun--with a Seminole victory.

April 29 saw the Seminole track team competing away from home for the second consecutive week. FSU was trying to make Florida Southern College their third dual meet victim in a row (FSU Track Office Files, 29 April 1950).

Bill Duncan and Peter Frascchetti got the momentum flowing the Seminole way as they copped the two top spots in the mile run. For the third time in the young season, Duncan lowered the school record for the mile run with a time of 4:34.2.

Tom Bowman kept the pressure on by copping the first of his three wins of the day with a blazing, wind-aided :15.1 in the 120-yard high hurdles. Alternating between the track and the high jump area, Bowman carved out victories in the 100-yard dash and high jump with school record tying performances of :10.1 and 5' 10", respectively. He finished the day with 19 individual points. Coming off a second place effort in the mile run, Pete Frascchetti lowered the school record in the 880-yard run as he ran to a 2:04.7 triumph.

The Seminoles, led by Al Bradford's weight double, swept five of six field events and shared the top spot in the other. Bill Rodger was tops in the javelin while John Thombleson captured the broad jump win. Joe Fracassi and Bill Weigel shared the top spot in the pole vault at 11' 0" with Warner of Florida Southern College. In winning

12 of 14 events, the Seminole strength proved too formidable as the Tribe rolled over Florida Southern College 86 to 40.

The search for victory number four took the Tribe to Clinton, Mississippi, on May 6. The Seminoles evened their series with Mississippi College at one victory apiece with a convincing 75 1/2 to 55 1/2 triumph (FSU Track Office Files, 6 May 1950).

Florida State University was paced by the school record performances of Pete Frascchetti and Joe Fracassi. Frascchetti had only three events intervening his third place finish in the mile run and his school record 2:02.0 winning effort in the 880-yard run. The second Seminole record of the day was set in the pole vault. With the bar resting at 11' 9", freshman Joe Fracassi tasted victory for the third time during the 1950 season.

Tom Bowman and Al Bradford did yeoman duty as they combined to score 29 points. Bowman registered victories in the 100-yard dash and the 220-yard low hurdles, and finished second in the shot put, high jump, and the broad jump. Al Bradford completed the weightman's double with victories in the shot put and discus throws. It was the third time in five meets that the Tallahassee senior had accomplished that feat.

With the meet safely tucked away, the mile relay of Frascchetti, Mahoney, Pearson, and Mize added the finishing touches by winning the event and shattered the school mark in the process. Their aggregate time of 3:32.8 was three and one-tenth seconds under the old mark.

The Florida State University closed out the 1950 dual meet season on the road with a breather against Howard College on May 13. A heavy rain shower just prior to the meet did not dampen the Tribe's enthusiasm for the fray. The Tribe outscored their adversaries eight to one in the meet opening mile run and the rout was on. Before the mile relay was mercifully cancelled, FSU had won every event and run up a 109 to 17 advantage (Tallahassee Democrat, 14 May 1950).

Tom Bowman outstripped the entire Howard College team with his combined point total of 28. The decathlete won the 100-yard dash, :10.0; 220-yard dash, :22.2; 220-yard low hurdles, :24.5; high jump, 5' 7"; and finished second in the shot put. His efforts in the 100- and 220-yard dashes were new school records and his time in the low hurdles equalled his own school standard set in the first meet of the season against the University of Miami.

With only competition from teammates to motivate them, Richard Mize and Bill Duncan drove to school record performances in the 440-yard dash and two-mile run, respectively. Mize burned the oval in :52.3 seconds for the quarter-mile victory. On the other hand, Duncan seemed to toil effortlessly around eight laps of the track to lower his own existing school record by 10.4 seconds to 10:31.7. The Florida State University Seminoles boarded the bus secure in the knowledge that they were ready for the challenge awaiting them the following week at the Dixie Conference Championship (Miller, 1976).

The Seminoles journeyed to Macon, Georgia, on May 20 to compete in the second running of the Dixie Conference Championship. FSU combined outstanding individual effort with overall team depth to pull

out a 13-point victory over runner-up Mercer College (FSU Track Office Files, 20 May 1950).

Tom Bowman headed the list of individual stars by scoring 20 3/4 points and edged Bob Reeder of Mercer College for high point man of the meet (Tallahassee Democrat, 21 May 1950). First place winners for the Seminoles included Joe Fracassi in the pole vault, 11' 6"; Dick Mize in the 440-yard dash, :52.6; Tom Bowman in the 120-yard high hurdles, :15.9; Pete Frascchetti in the half-mile, 2:02.7; and Al Bradford's school record in the shot put of 42' 9-5/8". Only Dick Mize's time of :52.2 in the quarter-mile was not a new Dixie Conference record (Tallahassee Democrat, 21 May 1950).

Florida State had accumulated enough points by the mile relay to be assured of victory. However, the Seminole quartet of Mahoney, Mize, Pearson, and Bowman was not content to let the season end quietly. The school record-shattering-performance lasted only 3:31.6 and wound up the most successful season in Florida State University's two-year track history.

Tom Bowman added more honors to the school and himself when he traveled to Tulare, California, on July 1 for the National Decathlon Championship. Competing against the best all-round athletes in the country, he finished seventh scoring 6417 points (FSU Track Office Files, 1 July 1950).

Summary. The Seminoles had raced to a 6-1 dual meet record with its only loss coming at the hands of the powerful Miami Hurricanes in the season's opener. FSU had concluded the season on a very positive note with a satisfying triumph in the Dixie Conference Championship

meet. A fantastic achievement for a team winless in 1949 and only in its second year of track and field competition. School records were broken 31 times and a new standard was eventually set in every event except the javelin.

The year 1950 marked the end of Tom Bowman's track career at Florida State University. Bowman ran at FSU for only one year, yet he rewrote the record book in five individual events and anchored the school record setting mile relay team. He personally accounted for 142 1/4 points in that single season! Despite expanding schedules, his season point record still stands at this writing, 24 years later. Bowman scored 28 points against Howard College on May 13, 1950, and that, too, is a single meet scoring record remaining unbroken in 1974. Tom Bowman was truly the first great athlete to perform in track and field at Florida State University.

1951

The young Seminole track squad faced the 1951 campaign confidently despite the loss of three men who were instrumental in the extraordinary success of the 1950 season. Tom Bowman, school record holder in seven events and the single season point leader had exited via graduation. The unexpected departure from school of freshman distance running sensation Bill Duncan left a void in the mile and two-mile runs that just had to be filled. The graduation of weightman Al Bradford robbed the Seminoles of an inspirational leader and school record holder in two events.

A total track budget of only \$3,500 (Athletic Office Budget File, 1950-1951), did not allow Coach Miller the opportunity to recruit except by mail. However, fate took a hand and steered three young men to Florida State University. John Poston, Elwood Parker, and James Arnold were newcomers to the track team, and subsequently played a prominent role in fashioning a successful season.

Elwood Parker's path to Florida State University was typical of many track athletes attending FSU in the early years.

In high school, while I did perform well, I was not what you would call an individual standout in any event. I primarily accumulated points in relays. To be completely honest with you, I was not a sought after athlete, by any means. My high school track coach did tell me he could get me a scholarship at Presbyterian College, but at that time I was not really too thrilled at going out of state. So, I told him to forget it. When I entered Florida State, I was not really sure I was going to run track. (Parker, 1975)

After several weeks of practicing in relative obscurity, Coach Miller suggested that Parker change his event from the sprints to the quarter-mile. This was an event that Parker had run only once in high school (Parker, 1975), yet the change was made and time would show this decision to be an astute coaching move.

John Poston was a walk-on sprint candidate from Jacksonville, Florida. He had never run track in high school, although he had served as the student manager for his team (Miller, 1975). Poston's first competitive running experiences were in military service programs. Coach Miller could never understand how Poston's talent could have been overlooked in high school.

He had been a manager of his high school track team. I always thought that was very strange because he was the classic sprinter type. He was lean and wiry and practically gave

off sparks. He exuded nervous energy, and this quality is characteristic of all top-flight sprinters. He always seemed to be on the verge of taking off, of exploding. Almost from my earliest recollection of track and field experience, I knew that when you saw a guy like that you were looking at a potential great one. Although this type doesn't always prove to be that talented due to other factors, to be good a sprinter one has to be of that nature. Sprinters must have fast reflexes and fast reaction time. They have to be high strung, like race horses. In my coaching experience, whenever I encountered a boy with those characteristics--whatever his age level--I couldn't wait to get him out to a level stretch of ground and time him over 50 yards.

Anyway, I never could understand how Johnny could have been overlooked by his high school coaches and physical education teachers--particularly when he was right under their noses as the team manager. When he got into service, there were running activities in his basic training program, and it was immediately apparent that no one could beat him. From this point on, he knew, and everyone else knew, that he was a pretty good sprinter. I've often wondered what those lost two or three years of high school competition have meant to his running career. I always figured that he needed about that many more seasons to be of Olympic team calibre. (Miller, 1975)

Fortune continued to deal Coach Miller good athletes in the form of two football players. A freshman two-miler by the name of James Arnold was what the program needed to replace the departed Bill Duncan, and Tom Sebring improved the outlook in the weight events.

The return of school record holders Peter Fraschetti and Richard Mize in the 880- and 440-yard runs made the flat races very strong for the Tribe. Joseph Fracassi and William Rodger headed a strong field event group that appeared solid and reliable.

The 1951 edition of the Florida State University track team was characterized by a number of quality athletes; yet, it had some events that were manned by personnel not tested in the heat of competition. The maturation of its talented newcomers was a prerequisite for

success. The upcoming season opener against Duke University would provide the Seminoles with a severe test of their mettle.

The Duke Blue Devils, an Atlantic Coast Conference powerhouse, severed the Tribe's five-dual-meet winning streak by the embarrassing margin of 103 to 28 (FSU Track Office Files, 28 March 1951).

School record marks by Joe Fracassi in the pole vault and Tom Sebring in the discus were the only victories that the FSU squad could manage. Fracassi became the first Seminole to ever clear the 12-foot barrier in the pole vault with his winning jump of 12 feet even. In his first track appearance as a Seminole, Tom Sebring hurled the discus almost 10 feet further than any previous Tribe discus thrower, with a throw of 135' 1-3/4".

FSU demonstrated resiliency by bouncing back against Dixie Conference opponent Mercer College. Coach Miller rallied his charges after only three days rest to pound out a 80 2/3 to 50 1/3 triumph in Macon, Georgia (FSU Track Files, 31 March 1951). The Seminoles were not especially sharp, but did manage to capture eight out of nine running events, losing only the two-mile run.

The Seminole effort on the track was highlighted by John Poston's :23.7 clocking in the 220-yard dash. The Jacksonville junior had turned the furlong in the second fastest time in Florida State University track history.

The best individual effort in the meet for the Seminoles was Joe Fracassi's jump of 12 feet even in the pole vault. He tied his own school record set only three days previously in the Duke University meet. The Seminole victory hinged on four events as the Tribe

came away with all nine points in the 100-yard dash, 220-yard low hurdles, 440-yard dash, and the discus throw.

Florida State University picked-up a pair of thirds in the Southern Relays in Birmingham on April 14 (Florida Times-Union, 15 April 1951). The foursome of Richard Mize, Elwood Parker, John Poston, and James Arnold finished in third place in the sprint medley relay. Poston, Parker, Frank Pearson, and Mize captured the identical place in the mile relay.

The Seminoles returned to the west campus oval in search of their second win of the season in a triangular meet with Davidson College and Emory University (FSU Track Office Files, 21 April 1951). Relentless pressure by the Seminoles eventually brought about a thrilling triumph over Davidson College, but the men from Davidson College had come to run, and chased the Seminoles to three new school records.

John Poston became the first Seminole to ever crack the 10-second barrier in the 100-yard dash. The Jacksonville speedster turned-in an impressive :09.8 clocking. He later won the 220-yard dash and ran the lead-off leg on the meet concluding mile relay. Freshman Woody Parker dipped under 52 seconds in the quarter-mile as his fluid strides carried him to a school and track record setting victory in :51.6 seconds (Tallahassee Democrat, 22 April 1951).

The victories by Alan Carter in the 220-yard low hurdles, :25.5; James Seagram in the broad jump, 21' 6-1/2"; and James Arnold in the two-mile run, 10:29.4; were indicative of the improvement being made by the young Tribe harriers. James Arnold's two-mile time improved the previous school mark by one and nine-tenths seconds. Thirty-seven and

one-half of the $80 \frac{1}{3}$ points totaled by the Seminoles were scored by freshmen.

The Seminoles trailed Davidson College by $14 \frac{1}{6}$ points with only five events remaining, yet overcame this deficit and led going into the mile relay by five and one-sixth points (Tallahassee Democrat, 22 April 1951). The Seminole's surge had mathematically assured them of victory, but the Tribe entered the mile relay with the strongest quartet they could muster. Each man had figured prominently in the scoring prior to the relay and they were once again being called to the track. The foursome of Poston, Frascetti, Parker, and Mize shook off their fatigue and responded with a 3:40.3 triumph. The Seminoles had earned a hard fought $80 \frac{1}{3}$ to $73 \frac{1}{6}$ conquest of Davidson College as Emory University trailed with a meager $8 \frac{1}{2}$ points.

The Seminoles coasted to their fourth straight victory with a $82 \frac{1}{2}$ to $48 \frac{1}{2}$ pasting of old rival Mississippi College in Tallahassee on May 5 (FSU Track Office Files, 5 May 1951). The Seminoles began slowly as Mississippi College captured the top two spots in the mile run and came right back in the next event to cop first place in the high hurdles. However, Florida State University completely dominated the field events and eventually won all six field events.

Joe Fracassi scaled 12' 7" in the pole vault to finish first, while raising his own school record. His attempt to become the first Seminole to clear 13 feet narrowly failed as the bar quivered and finally fell off on his third and final attempt at that height (Tallahassee Democrat, 6 May 1951).

A personal best of 21' 6" for John Thombleson earned him the winner's position in the broad jump. This was the first win for the Jacksonville junior since the meet with Florida Southern College on April 29, 1950. Tom Sebring's creditable toss of 129 feet earned a victory in the discus.

Overcoming a poor start, John Poston slipped under ten seconds in the 100-yard dash for the second consecutive week with a quick :09.9. The Jacksonville flier was off with the gun in the 220-yard dash and lopped six-tenths of a second off of Tom Bowman's old school mark, with a :21.6 clocking.

The quarter-mile had been billed in premeet publicity as the feature race of the day (Tallahassee Democrat, 6 May 1951). The race matched FSU's veteran Dick Mize against his freshman teammate Woody Parker. As so often happens in important races, this match developed into a test of strategy. Parker's stretch drive carried him to a thrilling one yard victory; however, the winning time was a disappointing :53.0.

Florida State University closed out its dual meet schedule on May 12 as it breezed to an easy 85 to 46 triumph over outmanned Howard College (FSU Track Office Files, 12 May 1951). FSU was never in any difficulty as they gathered 47 out of a possible 54 points in the field events.

Coach Miller entered many of his men out of their specialties. The only noteworthy performance was a school-record-tying :09.8 effort in the 100-yard dash by John Poston. This was the first meet in 1951 that FSU did not set a track record (Tallahassee Democrat, 13 May 1951).

Florida State University traveled to Clinton, Mississippi, on May 19 determined to successfully defend their Dixie Conference crown. Nevertheless, Coach Miller had figured the competition to be close (Miller, 1976). As predicted, the meet was a three-way battle for the crown that began with the opening mile run and was not ended until the baton had been carried across the finish line in the mile relay.

FSU prevailed as they eked out a seven-point victory over runner-up Mercer College (FSU Track Office Files, 19 May 1951). The Mississippi Southern Choctaws finished third only 14 1/2 points behind the Seminoles.

The Florida State Seminoles cracked five conference marks and tied another (Tallahassee Democrat, 20 May 1951) on the way to their second consecutive Dixie Conference championship. John Poston swept the 100- and 220-yard dashes with conference record setting performances of :10.0 and :22.3, respectively. Woody Parker responded to the big meet competition with a school and conference record performance of :50.6 in the one lap event. On the strength of his sterling performance in the quarter-mile, Parker was named as the outstanding athlete of the meet (Tallahassee Democrat, 20 May 1951). Woody Parker recalls how it felt to win that race.

A very thrilling event for me as I was only a freshman and you might say it came on all of a sudden. While this was not the most memorable experience of my track career, it was certainly one I was proud of since it was accomplished in my freshman year. (Parker, 1975)

The remaining conference records set by the Seminoles were in the field events. Tom Sebring tossed the discus 128' 4" and Joe Fracassi negotiated 11' 6" in the pole vault.

Florida State University maintained a fragile lead throughout most of the competition. With only the mile relay remaining, the Seminole bulge stood at five points over Mercer College (Tallahassee Democrat, 20 May 1951).

Competing in his third event of the day, John Poston led off the mile relay. By the time the baton had passed from Poston to Parker, then to Pearson, and on to anchorman Mize, the Seminoles were mile relay and Dixie Conference champions. The elapsed time of 3:29.9 lowered the FSU and Dixie Conference mark by one and seven-tenths seconds (Tallahassee Democrat, 20 May 1951).

Summary. The year had begun with high hopes of promising newcomers filling the gaps left by the graduation of Tom Bowman and Al Bradford and the unexpected departure of freshman distance runner Bill Duncan. The emergence of John Poston into sprinting prominence and the steady quarter-mile work of Woody Parker provided the drive necessary for the 1951 Seminoles thinclads to duplicate the previous year's 5-1 dual meet record and repeat as Dixie Conference champions.

The record board underwent major revision as seven individual event marks and the mile relay standard fell by the wayside. John Poston led the charge by erasing the 100- and 220-yard dash marks as he sped to a :09.8 clocking in the hundred and a quick :21.6 in the furlong. In addition, Poston ran the lead-off leg on the mile relay team that reduced the school and Dixie Conference records to 3:29.9. Woody Parker, Frank Pearson, and Richard Mize teamed up with Poston on the record shattering mile relay. Parker established a record of his own in the 440-yard dash with an impressive :50.6 clocking in the Dixie

Conference Championships. The remaining school record set in the running events was turned in by James Arnold in the two-mile run with a time of 10:29.4.

Two new school standards were set in the field events. In the first meet of the year, Tom Sebring unleashed a fine throw of 135' 1-3/4" in the discus. Joe Fracassi became the first Seminole to clear twelve feet in the pole vault and ultimately set the FSU record at 12' 7" against Mississippi College on May 5.

1952

Coach Ken Miller's 1952 edition of Seminole track promised to be the best of his four-year stint as head coach of the Florida State University track program. With the exception of James Arnold, the nucleus of the 1951 Seminole track team was returning. The premature departure of Arnold would hurt the Tribe. In addition to senior Ed Kucera, first year men Bill Wagoner and Ken Jarrett would be called upon to fill the void left by the departed school record-holder in the two-mile run.

Carlos Fraundorfer, the most unlikely weight man ever to compete for Florida State University, made his appearance on the Tribe track scene. Fraundorfer packed only 175 pounds on his lean 6' 3" frame. He depended upon exceptional quickness and power to propel the weight implements. Fraundorfer also used these exceptional talents to excel in the high jump, broad jump, sprints, and an occasional 440-yard lap on the mile relay team. Max Watson, the 1951 team captain, had

exited via graduation leaving his hurdle replacement, Julian Hurst, to shore up a weakness in the hurdle events.

The Seminoles had all the ingredients for a highly successful season, covering all of the events well and having talent at the top.

The Dixie Conference had folded during the off-season (Biennial Report, 1950-1952) and the Seminoles were forced to seek new challenges. The schedule was mixed with old opponents and some new teams. Coach Miller was slowly introducing his team to stiffer competition. The recipe was obviously working, as the Tribe had copped 10 of their last 12 dual meets after going winless in their inaugural season.

The Florida State University Seminoles opened the 1952 campaign with an indoor excursion to Chapel Hill, North Carolina, on March 1 (FSU Track Office Files, 1 March 1952). The occasion was the Atlantic Coast Conference Indoor Championship. FSU landed only two places. The mile relay team composed of Woody Parker, Dick Slade, Richard Mize, and John Poston finished second behind the foursome fielded by the University of Alabama. Meanwhile, Carlos Fraundorfer scored the first points of his athletic career at FSU with his second place finish in the shot put throwing a respectable 40' 4-1/2".

The Seminoles did not have another meet until the Florida Relays in Gainesville on March 29 (FSU Track Office Files, 29 March 1952). The prestigious relays proved tough competition for the Tribe. The Seminoles managed to place in only three events. The sprint medley relay composed of Woody Parker, Richard Mize, John Poston, and Bill Wagoner finished behind powerful Duke and Loyola Universities and just ahead of Florida. John Poston captured the fourth place slot in the

100-yard dash, while Joe Fracassi grabbed off third in the pole vault.

The Seminoles opened the dual meet schedule against Davidson College on April 5 in Davidson, North Carolina. FSU built an early lead and then held on for a 72 1/3 to 58 2/3 triumph over Davidson College (FSU Track Office Files, 5 April 1952).

Coach Miller received a glimpse of the quality athlete he had in freshman Carlos Fraundorfer. The slender Tampa freshman bounded 21' 3" in the broad jump for the first of his three wins of the day. A toss of 130' 2" in the discus, and a school-record tying leap of 5' 10" in the high jump netted him top honors in both events. A second in the shot put drove his individual point total for the day to a very creditable 18 points.

John Poston and Bill Wagoner each captured two events that sparked an opening Seminole spurt as the team grabbed off the first five running events. Bill Wagoner showed his potential as he successfully completed the difficult mile and half-mile double. He was clocked at 4:41.5 and 2:03.5, respectively. Wagoner's 880-yard run time ranked him second on the all-time list for Seminole half-milers. John Poston dipped under :10.0 with his winning time of :09.9 in the 100-yard dash. He turned the furlong in a sharp :22.2 and anchored the victorious Tribe mile relay with a sparkling split time of :50.1.

With their six-dual-meet-winning-streak on the line, the Seminoles opened at home against Loyola University of New Orleans. That streak came to a halt as FSU came out on the short end of a 79 to 59 score (FSU Track Office Files, 12 April 1952).

The Seminoles got double wins from Poston and Wagoner, but the only other Seminoles to corral a first in any event were Carlos Fraundorfer and Baker King. Poston gained a measure of revenge over Leithman, the 1952 Florida Relays sprint champion, when he spun-out :10.0 and :21.9 victories in the 100- and 220-yard dashes. Bill Wagoner continued his ironman role by duplicating his mile/half-mile twin victories in the Davidson College encounter with times of 4:36.8 and 2:06.5, respectively.

Only two and three-fourths inches separated Carlos Fraundorfer from the school record when he traversed 21' 9" for his triumph in the broad jump. Baker King western-rolled over 5' 10" to take first place in the jump and become the fifth Seminole to clear that height.

The Seminoles returned to the winning path with their third victory in as many years over Mercer College. The meet was contested in Tallahassee on April 19 (FSU Track Office Files, 19 April 1952).

The Seminoles were sparked to their 78 1/2 to 52 1/2 triumph by twin record-setting victories by Carlos Fraundorfer. The Tampa weightman wrote his name onto the record books with throws of 44' 1/4" and 135' 4" in the shot put and discus, respectively.

John Poston dipped under the magic ten-second mark for the fifth time with his victory snatching time of :09.9 in the 100-yard dash. The Jacksonville senior blazed to victory down the long 220-yard clay straightaway before the home crowd with a new school record mark of :21.5. Poston came back in the final event to team with Jack Koonce, Peter Nimkoff, and Dick Mize to blitz the school record by burning through the mile relay in 3:27.0.

The Seminoles took a giant step up in competition by tangling with two Southeastern Conference opponents, the University of Georgia and Georgia Institute of Technology, in a triangular meet on April 26 in Atlanta (FSU Track Office Files, 26 April 1952).

Undefeated in 1952 dual meet competition, John Poston continued to dominate the sprint events. He flowed through the 100-yard dash in :09.9 and handled the 220-yard dash field with a :21.9 clocking. Bill Wagoner handled the mile run entries by stepping to an easy 4:45.6 victory and returned in the 880-yard run to spin-out an unmatched 2:03.5 effort.

Likeable senior Ed Kucera was undaunted by the competition and carved out a 10:43.0 victory in the two-mile run. This was Kucera's first career victory after four years of track competition at Florida State University. Teammate Ken Jarrett, while running third in the race, was especially pleased that the pleasant and hard working Kucera had finally tasted the thrill of victory (Jarrett, 1975).

Tom Sebring was nipped by Berman of Georgia Tech by only seven and one-half inches as he recorded a personal best of 135' 2-1/2" in the discus. Fraundorfer followed closely in third place with a 133' 2-1/2" effort.

Woody Parker returned to 1951 form by dipping to :49.8 in the 440-yard run. He not only won the event, but became the first Seminole to crack the 50-second barrier in this grueling event. In Parker's words, this race was "a rather interesting one" (Parker, 1975).

I remember that I misplaced my track shoes or they were stolen. I never did exactly know, but I had to go to the Tech coach and see if he could find me a pair. . . . He finally

took me up in some old storage room and pulled out the pile of the worst shoes--these were rejects--that he could find. I barely found a pair that would even fit. This did not really matter as I was happy to get anything to run in. Shortly after I had the shoes, I beat his man in the 440. I remember later on, after returning the shoes, he said, "that's what you get for lending people something."
(Parker, 1975)

A total team performance gained the Florida State University Seminoles a hard earned 66 1/2 to 59 victory over Georgia Tech as the University of Georgia finished third with 45 1/2 points.

On May 3, FSU piled into the bus bound for Clinton, Mississippi, to renew an old rivalry with Mississippi College (FSU Track Office Files, 3 May 1952).

Confident of his team's strength, Coach Miller shook up his lineup. He matched sprint sensation John Poston against quarter-mile school record-holder Woody Parker in the one lap race. Parker edged Poston in the stretch for first with a :50.5 to Poston's :50.6 (Tallahassee Democrat, 4 May 1952). However, Poston turned the tables in the furlong with a :21.7 victory leaving Parker with a creditable :22.5 second place finish.

Carlos Fraundorfer upped his school mark in the shot put with his victory toss of 44' 5-3/4". It was a 16-point day for the versatile performer as he copped the shot put, broad jump, discus, and added a third in the 100-yard dash to his total. Bill Wagoner was given the opportunity to run fresh in the half-mile and responded with a 2:01.5 FSU record setting performance.

The Seminoles strolled to a 86 to 45 win over Mississippi College. The Tribe did not have long to enjoy their victory, however,

as the powerful Miami Hurricanes were blowing into Tallahassee on the following weekend.

The much heralded and long awaited meeting between the Seminoles of Florida State and the Miami Hurricanes took place on May 10 on the west campus red clay oval in Tallahassee (Tallahassee Democrat, 11 May 1952). The first two encounters had resulted in crushing defeats for the fledgling Seminoles, but the Tribe had persevered and were now ready.

The Hurricanes arrived on a very wind-swept and hot afternoon. They were led by the much publicized sprinter Elmer Russell. FSU's John Poston, making his last appearance on the Seminole track, had prepared himself well for this contest.

Russell was out fast in the 100-yard dash with Poston still trailing at 85 yards. Then Poston unleashed a furious finishing drive that carried him to a narrow victory. The watches registered a spectacular new track and school record time of :09.6. The Poston-Russell duel continued in the 220-yard dash. FSU's sprint sensation led all the way to crush his Miami opponent with a magnificent time of :20.8. In doing so, Poston had established another track and school record. Coach Ken Miller felt that his sprint star could have "beaten any sprinter in the country over 220 yards on that particular day" (Miller, 1975).

Bill Wagoner closed out the 1952 dual meet season undefeated in the mile run with his 4:42.5 clocking in the opening event. Following Wagoner's example, Woody Parker was the first man to break the tape in

the 440-yard dash with a new track record of :50.7. Parker's triumph kept him undefeated in 1952 dual meet competition.

The Seminoles split the field events down the middle with the Hurricanes. Carlos Fraundorfer gathered the first Seminole field event victory by hurling the shot 43' 5-5/8". Baker King threw his body over the bar resting at 5' 7-3/4" in the high jump for a first place finish. School record holder Joe Fracassi closed out his successful year in fitting style. The Erie, Pennsylvania, junior captured his specialty with a vault of 12' 6", only one inch short of his school mark.

Florida State led Miami 63 2/3 to 62 1/3 going into the mile relay. The pressure was on the quartet of Jack Koonce, Richard Mize, Woody Parker, and John Poston. The Hurricanes held a slight lead after the competitive first leg. Dick Mize trailed his man until the middle of the final turn when a quick burst propelled him into the lead. Parker maintained the advantage in the third leg and a sterling :50.2 anchor leg by John Poston sealed the mile relay and meet for the Seminoles. The Tribe foursome had hustled through the mile in 3:28.5 to earn the last five points for a 68 2/3 to 62 1/3 triumph over the Miami Hurricanes. Coach Miller summed it all up by saying, "they had not expected to lose to us" (Miller, 1975).

The Seminoles left for the Georgia AAU on May 23 and almost never made it. Charles Durbin was wheeling the Seminole bus down a hill on Highway 19-41 between Ellaville and Butler. When the bus reached the bottom of the hill, the right front axle snapped. Durbin described the bump as being just "a little up and down--wasn't a rough bump at all" (Durbin, 1975). The left front wheel flipped around

taking the air-brake line with it; then, lodged itself between the road and the 55 gallon gasoline tank. This whim of fate saved all aboard from almost certain immolation (Durbin, 1975).

Fortunately, the road had rain gutters on both sides. The first lurch threw Durbin completely out of the driver's seat. However, he was able to retain his grasp on the wheel, and when the bus ricocheted off the rain gutter, Durbin managed to regain his seat (Durbin, 1975). The rain gutters and Durbin's driving skill kept the bus on the road until most of its velocity had been dissipated. The bus finally left the road and without turning over, came to rest in a grove of trees. The bus had traveled 175 yards before coming to rest (Tallahassee Democrat, 24 May 1952).

Smoke from the pinned tire filled the interior as Durbin hustled people off the bus. A last minute check by Durbin discovered a distance runner, who had been sleeping, groping around in the smoke looking for his shoes (Durbin, 1975).

Woody Parker marvelled at Durbin's driving ability. "How that bus driver was able to keep that bus from completely turning over, I'll never know. I tell you one thing--that really shook some people up" (1975).

Coach Ken Miller chartered a Greyhound bus and continued on to Atlanta (Miller, 1975). The accident appeared to be an evil omen as the Seminoles finished a distant fourth (Atlanta Constitution, 25 May 1952).

John Poston was the high point man for the Tribe with eight and one-quarter points. The Jacksonville senior finished third in the

100-yard dash and second in the furlong. Both events were captured by the Southeastern Conference sprint champion, Jackie Creel of Auburn.

The only bright spot for the Seminoles occurred in the final event. The Tribe mile relay team of Harvey Heagerty, Dick Mize, John Poston, and Woody Parker sprinted to a sensational 3:22.4 clocking. They lopped four and six-tenths seconds off the existing school record and garnered a Georgia AAU record that would stand until broken by another garnet and gold quartet in 1958.

Coach Miller described the internal make-up of the relay team in an article for the Athletic Journal:

Last spring at the Georgia Senior AAU Track and Field Championships, the mile relay was won by the Florida State University team in the respectable time of 3:22.4. Nothing about this mark is startling or especially noteworthy except for the fact that it represents a :50.6 average effort from four men, only one of whom had ever approached that time previously. Of the other three team members, only one was actually a trained quarter-miler, and he had been hampered throughout the season by a pulled muscle to the extent that he had placed in but two of six dual meet 440-yard races. The other two participants were both sprinters, and one of these had a background of only one quarter-mile for time previous to this meet.

Another significant fact in connection with this particular race is that one of the opposing relay teams had qualified three men (including the eventual winner) in the 440-yard final earlier that day, while the Florida State squad had failed to qualify any of their runners for this final. In other words, in winning the relay, Florida State defeated a team of better quarter-milers. (Miller, 1953)

John Poston made the Seminole's second appearance in post season national competition on June 6 and 7 in Abilene, Texas. Poston competed in the National Intercollegiate Championship 100- and 220-yard dashes.

Displaying the garnet and gold, Poston sped to a third place finish (FSU Track Office Files, 7 June 1952). Poston's finish was the

highest place ever achieved by a Seminole in national competition. Poston held this distinction until Mike Conley finished second in the 1958 Meet of Champions mile run. The speedster was unable to place in the 220-yard dash.

Summary. The completion of every season brings to an end the collegiate track careers of a portion of the team. The year 1952 was no exception as it tolled the end of John Poston's distinguished track career at FSU. His flashing spikes had carried him to two individual school records and had anchored two school record setting relay efforts.

Coach Miller described him as "a man ahead of his time" (Miller, 1975). His records stand as proof of the statement. Poston's :09.6 clocking in the 100-yard dash against the Miami Hurricanes stood unbroken for 13 years. The Jacksonville sprinter covered the furlong in the same Miami meet in :20.8. No Seminole sprinter was to touch that record until the 1960 season. Both times were run on the same hot May afternoon, after which Poston was still able to anchor the crucial mile relay to victory with a superlative :50.2 split. John Poston was definitely a sprinter ahead of his time at Florida State University.

A quiet and dedicated distance runner was hanging up his spikes at the conclusion of the 1952 season. Senior Ed Kucera was not a man blessed with striking talents as a runner; yet, his determination and willingness to sacrifice made him invaluable to the team (Jarrett, 1975). The endless days of practice paid dividends on April 26 when Kucera outlasted the two-mile field to contribute valuable first place points to the Seminole cause as FSU narrowly overcame the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech.

Florida State University's 1952 track team rewrote eight school records. Poston contributed his 100- and 220-yard dash records and teamed with Harvey Heagerty, Richard Mize, and Woody Parker to lower the school mark in the mile relay by seven and nine-tenths seconds with a fine 3:22.4 effort. The foursome of Woody Parker, Carlos Fraundorfer, Harvey Heagerty, and John Poston composed the 440-yard contingent that established the first school record in that event with a :43.5 clocking in the University of Georgia-Georgia Tech triangular meet on April 26.

In addition to his middle leg on the school record setting 440-yard relay, Carlos Fraundorfer set two new school marks in the shot put and discus. The Tampa freshman blitzed Al Bradford's former school standard with a put of 44' 5-3/4", and eased out Tom Sebring's school record in the discus by three and one-quarter inches with a throw of 135' 4".

Woody Parker became the first Seminole to run under 50 seconds in the 440-yard dash by flashing around the oval in :49.8 against Georgia and Georgia Tech on April 26. Bill Wagoner, as a team man, surrendered his opportunity for maximum achievement in the half-mile by doubling in the mile run for team points. Coach Miller was aware of this sacrifice, so when the opportunity presented itself in the Mississippi College meet on May 3, he ran Wagoner fresh in the 880-yard run (Miller, 1975). Wagoner responded by erasing Peter Frascchetti's name from the record board with a new school record time of 2:01.5.

The Seminoles had concluded their most prosperous season of their short history by winning six out of their seven dual meet

encounters and running their collective dual meet record to 16 and 6.

1953

Coach Ken Miller and his Seminole thinclads faced the 1953 campaign without the services of standout sprinter John Poston. For two years, the slender Jacksonville jackrabbit had consistently handled opposing sprinters, and provided the strong anchor leg so necessary for success in the sprint relay races.

Recruiting was light, but the Seminoles did land a promising hurdler in Weston Minton. Despite a dearth of newcomers, Coach Miller was confidently awaiting the onset of the new season. His optimism was created by the quality of returning lettermen.

Heading the impressive list of returning veterans was sophomore Carlos Fraundorfer. Fraundorfer was the 1952 high point getter and holder of the school record in the shot put and discus. Joe Fracassi, an Erie, Pennsylvania senior, had one more season to put together the elusive 13-foot jump in the pole vault.

The Seminoles were loaded in the middle distance events. Woody Parker, the first Seminole to run under the 50-second mark in the 440-yard dash was returning for his junior season. The mile and half-mile races were in the capable hands of Bill Wagoner. In 1952, Wagoner had won both events in four of the five meets in which he attempted the mile/half-mile double. In the final dual meet of the 1952 season, the talented middle distance runner ran only the half-mile, setting a new school record with a 2:01.5 clocking. The joys and triumphs of the

1952 season were now past and the Seminoles readied themselves for the upcoming campaign.

Florida State University began the 1953 track season with the 10th Annual Florida Relays in Gainesville on March 28 (Tallahassee Democrat, 27 March 1953). The Seminoles were unable to win many places, but the quality of performance was excellent.

Carlos Fraundorfer unleashed a school record toss of 140' 9-3/4" on his first throw in the discus competition. His superlative effort earned him third place. Joe Fracassi increased his own school record in the pole vault to 12' 8" to capture a tie for second place.

Disaster stalked the Tribe in the sprint medley relay. Woody Parker ran the lead-off quarter-mile in an awesome :48.4, only to watch helplessly as a teammate later dropped the baton. The Seminoles were disqualified, and Parker's courageous effort went for nought; however, there was little doubt that Parker was ready to run.

Florida State began the 1953 dual meet season in grand style by crushing Mercer College 85 1/3 to 45 2/3. The meet was staged on the west campus track in Tallahassee on April 4 (FSU Track Office File, 4 April 1953). The Mercer Bears started the meet by taking the mile run, yet after that event only the high jump evaded the grasp of the overpowering Seminoles.

Carlos Fraundorfer tightened his grip on the shot put school record by exploding the iron ball 45' 1", and then added the broad jump to his school record cache by copping that event with a leap of 22' 3-1/2". He won the javelin and discus throws with efforts of 165' 1" and 140' 4-1/2", respectively. Fraundorfer also ran the second leg on

the victorious mile relay. He finished the day with five victories, two school records, and 21 1/4 points.

Joe Fracassi rose to a 12' 10" personal best in the pole vault to register both a victory and a new school mark. Scoring in his first meet as a Seminole, Wes Minton made his home debut a success by capturing both hurdle races with times of :15.7 and :25.0. Both times ranked second on the Florida State all-time best performance list.

Florida State University met their counterparts from the University of Florida in the Florida AAU Championships on April 18 in Gainesville (FSU Track Office Files, 18 April 1953). The Seminoles were swamped by the Gators in what turned out to be a dual meet between the two state universities. The Florida Gators dominated the competition with 165 points while the Seminoles trailed far behind in second with only 26 markers. Jacksonville Naval Air Station finished third with 12 points and the Pensacola Marine Base rounded out the field in fourth with 5 points.

Florida State University did not win a single event, compiling most of their points with second place finishes by Carlos Fraundorfer in the shot put and broad jump, Woody Parker in the quarter-mile, Wes Minton in the 220-yard low hurdles, and Bill Wagoner in the 880-yard run.

The Seminoles shook off the embarrassing memory of the Florida AAU by their second consecutive triangular meet win over the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech in Athens on April 25 (FSU Track Office Files, 25 April 1953). The Seminoles extended their 1953 dual meet winning streak to three as they rode the swift legs of Woody Parker

and the strong arm of Carlos Fraundorfer to a 72 1/2 to 63 1/4 victory over the University of Georgia with Georgia Tech trailing in third with 36 1/2 points.

Carlos Fraundorfer won all three throwing events by tossing the javelin 159' 0", catapulting the shot 41' 10-1/2", and flinging the discus 138' 7-1/2". He completed his day's work by finishing second to teammate Woody Parker in the broad jump.

The busy day of Woody Parker began with the anchor leg of FSU's second-place-finishing 440-yard relay, ending with a 440-yard anchor leg on the winning mile relay. John Kulzer, Robert Jones, and Jack Koonce preceded Parker in the mile relay that ran up a sterling 3:28.8 clocking.

On a whim, Parker petitioned Coach Miller to enter him in the broad jump. With the approval of the opposing coaches, Miller was able to make Parker a last minute entry. The event had already begun, when on his first jump without warm-up, Parker covered 22' 0" for the best jump of the competition (Parker, 1975).

Woody Parker rewrote the FSU quarter-mile mark by flashing to victory with a :49.5 clocking. Parker was pleased with his performance, but had been unaware of the quality of his effort.

The record was a nice thrill. That race was my best official time, although it was strange that it didn't seem fast during the race. There are times when you think you have run a good quarter, but are disappointed when you get your time. On the other hand, there are races where you don't feel you have really performed your best and the time was outstanding. (Parker, 1975)

The Loyola Jesuits duplicated their 1952 defeat of FSU by trimming the Tribe 75 to 55 in Tallahassee on May 2 (Tallahassee Democrat,

3 May 1953). Florida State copped five of nine running events, but were overpowered in the field events. Joe Fracassi cleared 12' 6" for the only Seminole victory in the six field events.

The day was not without its Seminole star. Wes Minton bolted to a quick victory in the 120-yard high hurdles in a school record setting time of :15.2. Minton closed hard in the 220-yard low hurdles to overcome favorite Baradel of Loyola in another school record shattering time of :24.0. His clocking in the low hurdles was five-tenths of a second faster than Tom Bowman's old mark.

Woody Parker captured the 440-yard dash with a time of :50.9, while Bill Wagoner eased to victory in the half-mile with a rather slow time of 2:04.0. Wagoner had finished second in the mile behind Chauvin of Loyola, but turned the tables on the Jesuit distance specialist in the 880-yard run. Kenneth Jarrett won the first race of his career at FSU with his personal best time of 10:46.1 in the two-mile.

The Miami Hurricanes were lying in wait for the Seminoles on May 9 in Coral Gables (FSU Track Files, 9 May 1953). The meet was a thrilling sequel to the encounter of the previous year, in Tallahassee. The competition was hard fought, but the second and third place Miami finishes behind Ken Jarrett's 10:54.4 victory in the two-mile gave the Hurricanes an insurmountable 66-60 lead. With only the mile relay remaining, the Seminole foursome of John Kulzer, Robert Jones, Dick Mize, and Elwood Parker won the last event to narrow Miami's winning advantage to only one point as the final point standings were 66 to 65.

Woody Parker captured both the 440- and 220-yard runs with times of :50.3 and :22.2, respectively. John Poston was the only

Seminole to ever have run the furlong faster than Parker's :22.2 clocking.

The meet turned on two critical races for the Seminoles. The inability of Bill Wagoner, due to high temperatures, to return in the half-mile after having taken second place in the mile, left FSU with only Nimkoff's third, with valuable points irretrievably lost.

The second race was the 120-yard high hurdles. Coach Miller described Wes Minton as "a talented, but erratic hurdler" (Miller, 1975). Unfortunately the Miami encounter was an off meet for Minton in the 120-yard high hurdles. He followed his previous :15.2 performance against Loyola with a third place finish. The winning time turned in by a Hurricane hurdler was :15.9. Minton redeemed himself in the 220-yard low hurdles by blazing to a :24.7 victory. The two races epitomized Coach Miller's characterization of Minton.

Florida State University should have entered their final dual meet of the season with Mississippi Southern College on May 16, in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, as heavy favorites (FSU Track Office Files, 16 May 1953). However, during the two weeks following the Miami meet, an altercation broke out between Coach Miller and several of his key athletes. The dispute led to the voluntary departure of veterans who had been instrumental in the Tribe's scoring all year (Miller, 1975). Thus, the Seminoles entered the contest weakened, but determined to succeed (Jarrett, 1975).

This attitude was best illustrated by Bruce Jacob. Jacob was a field event man, but when the top Mississippi Southern distance runner doubled in the 880-yard run; there were only two men left in the

two-mile field. Jacob agreed to run the two-mile for team points. Ken Jarrett won the event easily, and when the Mississippi Southern runner developed cramps, Jacob went on to finish second (Jarrett, 1975).

Carlos Fraundorfer tried to recoup points lost by winning the broad jump with a leap of 22' 9-1/2", only one-half inch off the school record; the discus with a throw of 141' 2"; and the shot put with a toss of 43' 11-3/8". The Tampa sophomore added a second in the 100-yard dash to run his individual point total to 18.

Julian Hurst won the 120-yard high hurdles with a sparkling time of :15.1, yet his school record claim was spoiled by having a strong tail wind. Joe Fracassi ended his four-year career at Florida State on a winning note with his vault of 11' 6". Ken Jarrett copped the mile and two-mile runs as the Seminoles won nine of 15 events, but succumbed to greater depth by a score of 73 to 58.

The regular season for the Seminoles ended with the dual meet confrontation with Mississippi Southern, but several Seminoles traveled to Atlanta on May 23 to compete in the Georgia AAU Championships (Atlanta Constitution, 24 May, 1953).

Richard Mize garnered the best place for the Tribe with his third place finish in the 440-yard dash. Florida State wound up with seven and one-half points, and a sixth place finish overall.

Summary: The 1953 season began on a positive note with three straight victories, but narrow losses to Loyola University and the University of Miami, coupled with internal strife caused the Seminoles to slide into a 3-3 dual meet record.

The Tribe continued to set new school records at a brisk pace. Carlos Fraundorfer added the broad jump to his growing list of school marks by traversing 22' 10" in the Florida Relays. He improved his shot put mark to 45' 1", while upping his discus record to 141' 2".

In an erratic freshman year, Wes Minton displayed flashes of brilliance. He set school records in both hurdle events by running the quick times of :15.2 and :24.0 in the 120-yard high hurdles and 220-yard low hurdles, respectively.

Joe Fracassi continued his upward trend in the pole vault by establishing a new record when he cleared 12' 10" against Mercer College on April 4. Fracassi chased the elusive 13-foot vault throughout his career at Florida State University, but unfortunately, this dream was never realized by one of the most consistent scorers in the past four years. Searing the quarter-mile in :49.5, Woody Parker shattered a school record against the University of Georgia and Georgia Institute of Technology on April 25.

1954

Prior to the opening of the 1954 season, Coach Ken Miller offered the following statement to the press, "with an outstanding group of freshmen on this year's squad, the future looks bright for track and field at Florida State" (Miller, 1954). The immediate future did not unfold as Coach Miller had predicted as the Seminoles opened with an impressive thumping of Mercer College but then skidded to six straight dual meet losses. It was the longest losing streak in Florida State University track history.

A combination of factors thwarted Coach Miller's attempt to rally his team. The fatal weakness in the 1954 Seminoles was the lack of overall team depth. The unfortunate exodus of quality athletes at the end of the 1953 season and the graduation of key performers, left the Tribe void of seasoned veterans. A more demanding schedule soon exposed the Seminoles' achilles heel.

The Seminoles had the greatest depth ever in its coaching staff. Mike Long, an assistant coach in football and basketball, donated his time to help Coach Miller. Walter Grage served as a graduate assistant for the track program.

Without money to recruit (Athletic Office Budget File, 1953-1954), Coach Ken Miller was very adept at discovering quality athletes. He would identify talented athletes by perusing the result sheets from surrounding state prep track meets (Miller, 1975). A letter would be sent to selected athletes expressing FSU's interest in having the young man attending Florida State, and participating in their track and field program. Within the framework he had to operate, Coach Miller's system worked very well.

The best example of the effectiveness of Miller's recruiting system occurred in the spring of 1953. Coach Miller was scanning the results of the 1953 Georgia State Track Meet, which included a photograph of the finish in the quarter-mile. The picture was an eye-catcher because the winner, Jim Casteel, had stayed in his lane for the entire race. These were the days when the 440-yard dash was not run in lanes. All contestants ran the first curve in lanes, breaking for the inside down the backstretch. A letter was immediately sent to

the young man out of Avondale, Georgia. Coach Miller did not receive a reply to his missive, yet in the fall of 1953, the greatest quarter-miler in Seminole track history appeared on the Florida State University campus as a result of the contact (Miller, 1975).

There were many good freshmen track recruits joining Casteel at Florida State in the fall of 1953. The need was great; as the names on the roll of the missing were impressive. Woody Parker, the school record holder in the 440-yard dash and participant on two school record setting relay teams, had entered military service (Parker, 1975). Bill Wagoner, the FSU record holder in the 880-yard run and anchorman for the record setting sprint medley relay had elected to forego his remaining two years of track eligibility (Miller, 1975). Wes Minton dropped out of school to enter military service, while Joe Fracassi, school standard bearer in the pole vault, Tom Sebring, former school record holder in the discus, and Richard Mize, participant on the school record setting mile and sprint medley relays, had graduated. Six men who had held or helped set nine school records were gone.

The Seminoles began the season with some outstanding performances from a scrappy bunch of freshmen at the Florida Relays on March 27 (FSU Track Office Files, 27 March 1954). The sprint medley team of Jim Casteel, Carlos Fraundorfer, Joe Davis, and Lawrence Hountha battled for a second place finish. This was the highest place for a Seminole relay team, ever, in the prestigious relays. Coach Miller described the Tribe's performance this way:

The sprint medley team, composed of Jimmy "the starving one" Casteel, captain Carlos Fraundorfer, Joe Davis, and Larry Hountha, established a new FSU school record of 3:32.8 in

taking a crowd-pleasing second place to North Carolina which posted a 3:32.5 winning mark. Hountha, 1953 New York City prep 880 champion, lived up to his advance billing with a sparkling 1:57.4 half-mile anchor lap--better than three seconds under the present FSU record for that distance. In this relay event, the Seminole thinclads defeated South Carolina, Duke, Georgia, Florida, Auburn, and Tennessee. Not bad company! (Miller, 1954)

A freshman foursome of Joe Davis, Frank Bright, Charlie Watson, and Jim Casteel raced to the second fastest Seminole time ever, finishing fourth in the mile relay. Their individual splits were Davis (:51.6), Bright (:52.5), Watson (:50.9), and Casteel (:49.5). The total aggregate gave the Tribe a 3:24.5 clocking. Having thought the mile relay team was "out of its class" (Miller, 1954), Coach Miller was very pleasantly surprised with the outcome.

Carlos Fraundorfer was the only Seminole to place in an individual event, as his throw of 133' 3/4" in the discus earned him fourth place.

Florida State began their season with a confidence-building thrashing of Mercer College in Macon on April 3. FSU won 10-15 events while breezing to their 84-47 victory (FSU Track Office Files, 3 April 1954).

Jim Casteel led the Tribe by capturing the 440-yard dash (:50.8), 220-yard dash (:23.0), the broad jump (:20' 9"), and finished the afternoon by anchoring the mile relay to victory.

Lawrence Hountha, in his first open half-mile as a Seminole, broke Bill Wagoner's old school record by striding to victory in 1:59.6. Thus, he became the first Seminole to run under the two-minute mark in the 880-yard run.

On April 17, 1954, the Seminoles participated in the Florida AAU in Gainesville. The Florida Gators captured the team title with 83 points as the Tribe garnered second with 53 markers (Gainesville Sun, 18 April 1954).

Larry Hountha and Jim Casteel set new Florida AAU and school records. Hountha topped the 880-yard run field with a sterling 1:58.0 clocking. Upsetting favorite Jim Crosier of the University of Florida, Casteel won the 440-yard dash in a school record tying :49.5.

FSU had won the first two triangular meetings with the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech held on their home tracks. Now, FSU was the host for the meet on April 24 (FSU Track Office Files, 24 April 1954). Coach Miller confidently expected to complete a grand slam, third consecutive win against these traditional southern powerhouses (Miller, 1954), but fate was not kind to this dream.

The heroics of Jim Casteel were not enough to stem the tide, as FSU finished third in a tightly contested meet. Casteel was one of only two Seminoles to win an event. However, the Avondale sprinter captured the 440-yard dash in :50.2, returned in the 220-yard dash to come from sixth place at the 100-yard mark to win with a fine time of :21.7 (Miller, 1954), and found time to sandwich in a winning leap of 21' 8-1/2" in the broad jump. Competing in his fifth event of the day, Casteel anchored the winning mile relay team as the quartet of Frank Bright, Charlie Watson, Joe Davis, and Casteel turned the mile in 3:28.8. Carl Grenn was the only other Seminole to capture an event as the Tribe pole vaulter topped the field with a jump of 11' 6".

The half-mile was a deciding event for the Seminoles. Larry Hountha, a 1:58.0 winner in the Florida AAU, went unplaced in a slow race won in 2:01.8. The Seminole's failure to score in the half-mile helped pave the way to a Georgia victory. The Bulldogs finished with 60 1/2 points, Georgia Tech was second at 58, and the Tribe placed third with 53 markers.

The pressure on the Seminoles was stepped-up as the University of Alabama and the University of Loyola stormed into Tallahassee on May 1. Florida State wilted under the onslaught as the Jesuits of Loyola devoured the meet with 71 3/4 points, Alabama a firm second with 51 3/4 points, and the Seminoles finished a well-beaten third with only 38 1/2 markers (FSU Track Office Files, 1 May 1954).

The Tribe managed to win only two events. School record setting efforts were required in both incidents. Jim Casteel remained undefeated in dual meet 440-yard competition, erasing Woody Parker's name from the recordboard in the process by striding to a :49.4 clocking.

Carlos Fraundorfer was the other Seminole to join Casteel in the winner's circle. The Tampa native raised his own school record to 45' 3" with his winning heave in the shot put. There was nothing for the Seminoles to do, but learn from their experience and gird themselves for the next meet.

Florida State renewed their annual dual with the Miami Hurricanes in Tallahassee on May 8. The Seminoles enjoyed an eight to seven first place victory margin, but fell to Miami's superior depth (FSU Track Office Files, 8 May 1954).

Jim Casteel continued his steady performance, as he tied his own school record by winning the 440-yard dash in :49.4. On his next appearance on the track, Casteel sped to a :21.4 victory in the furlong. The versatile freshman finished second in the broad jump behind teammate Carolos Fraundorfer. For the second week in a row, captain Carlos Fraundorfer improved his own school record in the broad jump with a winning leap of 22' 10-1/2".

Lawrence Hountha returned to form with a 2:00.3 victory in the 880-yard run. Joe Davis and Warren Strickland were the only other Seminoles to snag victories. Davis's winning time of ten seconds flat in the 100-yard dash tied him with Tom Bowman for the second fastest time in Seminole track history. The top spot in the pole vault was shared by Thomas of Miami and Warren Strickland of FSU at 11' 0".

Despite the combined total of 22 1/4 points scored by Casteel and Fraundorfer, the Hurricanes rode a balanced team scoring effort to a 71 to 60 triumph.

Now the Seminoles had only one more dual meet left on the schedule. With victory on their minds, the Tribe journeyed to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, on May 15. However, Mississippi Southern played the spoiler role on their home track extending FSU's losing skien to six (FSU Track Office Files, 15 May 1954).

The Seminoles received herculean performances from Jim Casteel, Carlos Fraundorfer, Jerry Jacobs, and Lawrence Hountha. Casteel was unbeatable as he raced to victory in the 440-yard dash (:50.0), 220-yard dash (:22.1), and anchored the mile relay consisting of Bright, Watson, Hountha, Casteel to a 3:30.8 triumph.

Carlos Fraundorfer continued his record breaking streak by extending his broad jump record with a winning leap of 23' 3-1/2". The powerful Fraundorfer propelled his lanky frame down the track to capture a very unlikely double with his :10.0 victory in the 100-yard dash. He finished second in his specialities--the shot put and discus.

While Fraundorfer was shuttling between events, Jerry Jacobs was removing the "Splendid Splinter's" (Miller, 1976) name from the school record board in the shot put. Jacobs, starting left guard on the football team, scored his victory with a put of 46' 3-1/4" (Tallahassee Democrat, 16 May 1954).

Lawrence Hountha dipped under two minutes in the half-mile for the third time during the 1954 campaign with his top spot earning 1:59.8 clocking. The Seminoles again won more events than their opponents, but still lost the meet by a 69 to 62 margin. This meet brought to a close the official 1954 season.

One Seminole unofficially competed in the Georgia AAU Championships on May 22. The meet was not officially on the schedule due to the date falling during final examination week, and all school sponsored athletic events were prohibited (Annual Report, 1947-1948). Ron Weaver competed as an unattached participant, winning fourth place in the javelin (Atlanta Constitution, 23 May 1954).

Summary. Florida State University had endured the worst season of its six year history of track and field. The Seminoles finished the campaign with a dismal record of one win and six losses in dual meet competition. However, the future was not all darkness, as the Tribe lost only one meet by a lopsided score, and there were no

seniors on the team. Many impressive performances forecasted a brighter future for the garnet and gold.

Jim Casteel was undefeated in the 440-yard dash in dual meet competition, twice dipping under the existing school record. He first broke Woody Parker's record with his blazing :49.4 effort against Alabama and Loyola on May 1. A week later, Casteel tied that mark in the meet with Miami. Coach Miller stated that his prize quartermiler was "one of the outstanding college freshman runners in the entire country" (Miller, 1954).

Carlos Fraundorfer broke into the 23-foot range in the broad jump with a leap of 23' 3-1/2" against the Southerners of Mississippi Southern College on May 15. While Fraundorfer was setting his record in the broad jump, Jerry Jacobs was besting his shot put record by putting the shot 46' 3-1/2".

The oldest school record on the board went by the wayside when Ron Weaver erased Bill Rodger's old mark in the javelin with a heave of 177' 2-1/2", which Rodger had set in the First Annual Dixie Conference Championship on May 25, 1949. Florida State set a new record at the Florida Relays in the sprint medley relay. The foursome of Jim Casteel, Carlos Fraundorfer, Joe Davis, and Lawrence Hountha finished only three-tenths of a second behind North Carolina's winning time of 3:25.5. The freshmen foursome of Joe Davis, Frank Bright, Charles Watson, and Casteel raced to the second fastest mile relay time in Seminole track history with a time of 3:24.5 at the Florida Relays.

Coach Miller was not to enjoy the blooming of his young athletes. Howard Danford, Director of Physical Education and

Athletics, wanted Coach Miller to assume the position of assistant director of the men's physical education department and to chair the growing graduate program. The chance for professional advancement could not be denied (Long, 1975).

The Seminole program had evolved from Ken Miller's own hand, and had prospered under his guidance. John Thombleson, a former school record-holder in the broad jump and a member of Coach Miller's first team described the beginning, "he built a track program from nothing but his own hard work and I've always admired him for the effort" (Thombleson, 1975).

Under six years of Dr. Kenneth D. Miller's quiet and concerned tutelage, the Seminole track team had won 20 of 35 dual meets and placed two men high in national competition. His decision to accept an administrative position in the men's physical education department at FSU drew to a close the first era in Florida State University's track and field history. With his tenure as head track coach at an end, Coach Miller continued to be a supporter and interested follower of the track fortunes.