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Site updated Friday, July 29, 2005 05:05 PM

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SPORTS



Michael Matsumaru/TIMES
Jamie Clark, 15, will be competing in the 1500m and 3000m races at the Legion National Track and Field Championships.

Teen goes the distance

Racing the 800 metre event at the 2005 B.C. Track and Field Championships in Richmond a few weeks back, Jamie Clark knew there was absolutely no pressure on him; he had already qualified for the nationals in the 1500m and the 3000m races.

The 15-year-old Clark found his mom before the race and asked if it was necessary for him to run the race.

It had never entered his mind that he had a streak on the line; six wins in a row at the provincials in the 800m for his age category.

After being told by his mother, Veronica, that he needed to run the race, Clark went out and lined up against his rival Oren Hanscomb.

Clark, a member of the Golden Ears Athletics since he was nine, had already won the 1500m race the day before in a personal best time of 4:11.92.

Hanscomb, a member of the Campbell River Comets, had finished in second spot, four seconds back.

Clark had also followed up the 1500m win with an easy victory in the 3000m, giving him two berths in the 2005 Legion National Track and Field Championships, August 4-11 in Alberta.

Hanscomb had been shut out and needed a win in the 800m in order to qualify for the nationals.



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Before the race, Hanscomb's coach Dale Trenholm had been told, "no one ever beats Jamie Clark," reported the Campbell River Mirror.

By the time Clark had reached the 200m mark it looked as though that prophecy might come true.

Clark led the race until about the 50m mark when Hanscomb jumped in front.

The two went almost step-for-step in the last few metres, but in the end Clark lost a photo-finish by five tenths of a second.

"I didn't really care too much because I had won the other two races," said Clark, who has been racking up gold medals ever since he started training with the Athletics.

This will be Clark's first trip to the nationals and it may not necessarily have been a bad thing only having to run two races.

Believe it or not, Clark's strongest race is usually the 1500m.

"It's really exciting for me," said Clark. "I've been looking forward to this for quite a while, being able to compete for B.C."

Clark is the only athlete from the Ridge Meadows area to qualify for nationals.

published on 07/29/2005

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