

Southern Cinder Invasion

By RANDY GALLOWAY

At 5-foot-5, Robert Gonzales doesn't exactly stand out in a crowd but that's never been a problem for the sensational Falfurrias miler. When he's running his specialty he has the track all to himself.

No schoolboy in the state and few in the nation can challenge Gonzales in the mile, but when he makes his North Texas debut in Saturday's Jesuit Relays, meet director Herb Sheaner hopes a couple of area entrants can at least make things interesting.

And so does Falfurrias coach Richard Lewis.

"WE ARE looking forward to the Dallas trip and some new faces," said Lewis, whose team usually just competes on the South Texas circuit. "Since we don't get a chance to see the teams up that way much, the change in competition should help our boys."

And that's what Gonzales needs more than anything — competition.

He ran his best time of the season at Corpus Christi last week — a 4:11.3 — after turning in a 4:11.6 earlier.

"The Corpus Christi meet was the first where he's been pushed even a little bit this year," stated Lewis, "but Robert was still 10 seconds ahead of second place.

"It's gotten to the point where he just steps out on the track at a meet and runs around four times. Of course, this doesn't help him and he's never going to be able to get down to a time that I think he's capable of unless he gets more competition."

Lewis feels Gonzales could run a 4:03.0 this year "if he can get a combination of three things working on the same day."

"IF THE weather is good, the kid feels right and he gets pushed, then he'll hit that mark," believes his coach.

The Jesuit meet has two divisions but Sheaner has planned an open mile so that all comers can challenge Gonzales. The best in that group will be Ron Hendricks of McKinney and Jesuit's Ken Shaw. Hendricks has a best time of 4:26.3 and Shaw has done 4:28.3, but both of their coaches think that those marks will be greatly improved since Gonzales sets such a fast pace.

Robert sprints for four laps instead of the usual jog that most high school milers use at least the first two times around.

"Right now he's trying to get that last lap under 60 seconds," Lewis said. "When he ran that 4:08.0 (his career best) last year, he did the final lap in 58 seconds but he hasn't been able to approach that this season."

Lewis is bringing only three boys and he'll enter only two events, but both will be among

the meet's top attractions. Besides Gonzales, a pair of standouts in the 880-yard run, Andres Martinez and Johnny Mayfield, will compete for Falfurrias.

Martinez, a sophomore, has the fourth best time in the state with a 1:53.1 and Mayfield, a junior, is fifth with 1:54.5.

CINDER DUST — Area track teams scatter to the four winds this weekend . . . Bryan Adams and Kimball will battle for the team title at Tyler's Rose Relays and Grand Prairie is one

of the favorites for the team title at the Texas Relays in Austin.

Richardson takes off for Armarillo and the Tascosa Relays but two of the Eagles top performers, shotputter John Swords and pole vaulter Larry Mumaw will fly back for the Jesuit meet Saturday.

Closer to home, Lake Highlands and Plano will also host meets Saturday.

The city negro schools, Roosevelt, Pinkston, Washington, Madison and Lincoln will have their city meet starting with the prelims at 4 p.m. Thursday at P. C. Cobb Stadium. The finals are set for 6:30 p.m. Friday.

Here's the weekend rundown:

JESUIT RELAYS
Prelims — track, 11 a.m. Finals — field, 11 a.m., track 2:30 p.m. Teams entered are: Class AAAA — Samuel.

Woodrow Wilson, Irving, Thomas Jefferson, R. L. Turner, Grady Spruce, South Oak Cliff, North Dallas, Mag Arthur, Hillcrest, Richardson, W. J. White, Highland Park, Sunset, Dallas Carter, Adamson, Class AAA — McKinney, Sulphur Springs, Jesuit, Fort Worth Nolan, Bishop Dunna, Bishop Lynch, St. Mark's, Falfurrias.

LAKE HIGHLANDS RELAYS
Prelims — 2:30 a.m.; Finals — 4:45 p.m. Teams entered are: Duncanville, Diamond Hill, Ennis, Terrell, Wichita Falls Hirschi, Waxahachie, Weatherford, Azle and Lake Highlands.

ROSE RELAYS
(Tyler)
Prelims — Field, 11 a.m.; track, 12:30 p.m. Finals — 7 p.m. Teams entered in Division I are: Athens, Bryan Adams, Lufkin Dunbar, Garland, Kimball, Mesquite, Tyler Scott, Fort Worth Tech, John Tyler, Tyler Lee.

PLANO INVITATIONAL
Prelims — 2:30 a.m. Finals — 2:30 p.m. Teams entered in Class AA are: Plano, Jackboro, Kaufman, Seagraves, Rockwall, Nocona, Wilmer-Hutchins, Soto and Cooper. Class A has 21 schools entered.



Robert Gonzales . . . makes Dallas appearance at Jesuit Saturday.