

He's miles ahead of big brother

Dave Warth man to beat in 800, 1,600 this spring

By LEO ROTH
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Whenever McQuaid track coach Bill Quinlisk looks at Dave Warth, his mind does a few laps back in time.

He thinks of Tom Warth, Dave's brother who now runs for Notre Dame and was one of the area's premier milers three seasons ago. He thinks of Tom's time of 4 minutes, 19 seconds, the Section 5 indoor record.

When Quinlisk stops daydreaming, he looks at Dave Warth and shakes his head.

"Sometimes I think he's afraid of how good he could be," Quinlisk says. "He could be twice the star Tom was. He has the footspeed Tom never had and the strength Tom did."

A long pause.

"I think it's a lack of confidence," Quinlisk adds. "He has to realize he's as good as the best. One day, it's going to all click."

That day may be here.

WITH THE START of the season this week, Dave Warth is the man to catch in Section 5 in both the 800 and 1,600 meter runs.

He became the target during the indoor season, where he matched his brother's feat of winning the 1,000 and 1,600 meters and running a leg on McQuaid's winning 3,200 meter relay team at the Section 5 Championships.

Dave's time in the 1,000 meters (2:33.2) broke Tom's record. In both the 1,000 and 1,600, Dave beat his competition by a decisive three seconds. McQuaid's 3,200 relay time (8:19.8) was also a record.

In addition, Dave, who was a member of McQuaid's state championship cross country team last fall, placed fifth in the state meet and third at the Yale University Invitational in the 1,000.

Has the promising star risen?

"Compared to any other season, I'm more confident," Warth insists. "The indoor season did a lot for me."

WARTH NOT ONLY professes to be confident, he says he is finally ready to give running the attention it deserves. Unlike his brother, he has never been accused of practicing too hard.

"Tom worked harder than me," Dave says. "I take a more relaxed attitude. Track is very important to me but I'm not as dedicated as a lot of guys . . . I admit I haven't worked as hard as I should have in the past. This year is going to be different."

If that's true, Quinlisk will be doing cartwheels over a row of high hurdles.

Of course, there is one other hurdle to get over with Warth. While his teammates and coaches are all telling him what a good 1,600-meter man he can be, Warth focuses most of his attention on the 800 meters, specifically, taking on defending Class A champ Jim Andolsek of Webster.

"My brother was a miler and they think I can be that good, too," says Dave, whose brother Tim also ran at McQuaid and whose sister Kathy runs for Brighton.

"I like the event, it's just that I like the half mile more. It's the speed mostly. I just love running the laps fast. In the mile you don't have that. It's all pace. But in the half, that last lap, you gut it out. I love it. You burn inside and there's nothing like it."

WARTH BEAT Andolsek last year in the Meet of Champions state qualifier by three-tenths of a second (1:56.0 to 1:56.3). He wants to run 1:52. The Section 5 and McQuaid record is 1:51.4 by Tom Horton (1976).

"What Dave doesn't know is that Dave is a miler," Quinlisk says. "That's the problem. Dave thinks he's an intermediate man. But his best event outdoors is the mile. He can go after his brother's and (Grant) Whitney's times. He has the potential."

Tom's fastest outdoor time was 4:18.5. Whitney, Tom's rival from Penfield, ran around 4:15.0. The Section 5 record is 4:11.5 by Alfred-Almond's John Tuttle (1977). The McQuaid record is 4:09.0 by Chris Horton, set in 1973 when McQuaid did not compete in the sectionals.

Dave Warth isn't completely turned off by running the 1,600. He knows that will be his event in college. The 90-average student plans on following Tom and a sister, Patty, to Notre Dame.

"Everyone knows, and maybe I know, that I'll be the best miler in the area this season," says Dave, whose goal is to run 4:16. "But the half mile is not so clear cut. That will be a lot more challenging."

The 6-1, 140-pound Warth has the classic runner's body. He developed it beginning his freshman year, the day he was cut from the soccer team and gave cross country a try. His secret to success is simple.

"IT'S MY KICK," he says. "I've never run a good race where I've led from the start."

More than individual races, however, Warth's biggest thrill is anchoring the Knights' 3,200 relay.

Warth is joined by Rob Smillie, Scott Patterson and Steve Rapp on the team that finished third at the indoor state meet. Warth says the foursome, all cross country runners, has set its sights on the state championship.

"The relay, that's No. 1 with me," Warth said. "I don't have to run an individual event to be happy."

□ **TEAM OUTLOOK** — McQuaid is deep in every event and will be the best dual meet team in the area. "We can put any team down by 30 points," Quinlisk says.

Invitationals will be a different story. Rush-Henrietta, boosted by hurdlers Martin and Greg Ellis, is the favorite to win its third straight Class A title.

Others to watch are Penfield, Brighton, Brockport, East and Greece.

Key meets are the Greece Relays April 27, the Brockport-Penfield Invitational May 4, the Batavia Relays and East Rochester Invitational May 10 and the Aquinas Relays May 11.

The sectionals (May 24-25) and state qualifier (June 1) are both at Brockport State. The state meet is June 7-8 at Baldwinsville High in Syracuse.

□ **ATHLETES TO WATCH:**

100, 200, 400 METERS — LaVonne Richards, Terry Richards, Ken Burke, East High; Cornell Walker, Edison Tech; Chris Weist, Hilton; Keith Lucas, Marshall; Tracy Plesums, Warsaw; Chris Townsend, Monroe; Mike Scott, Chris McGuire, McQuaid; Dave Levinson, Brighton; Rob McKnight, Alfred-Almond; Burton Brewster, Greenwood; Jim Nash, Bishop Kearney; George Simmons, Franklin.

800, 1,600, 3,200 METERS — Dave Warth, Rob Smillie, Steve Rapp, Scott Patterson, McQuaid; Dave Redding, Dansville; Tim Heinle, Brett Yost, Phil Levinson, Tom Clark, Nick Tsilbes, Brighton; Bob King, Churchville-Chili; Al Mullin, Hilton; Steve Schultz, York; Alan Smith, Penfield; Jim Andolsek, Webster.

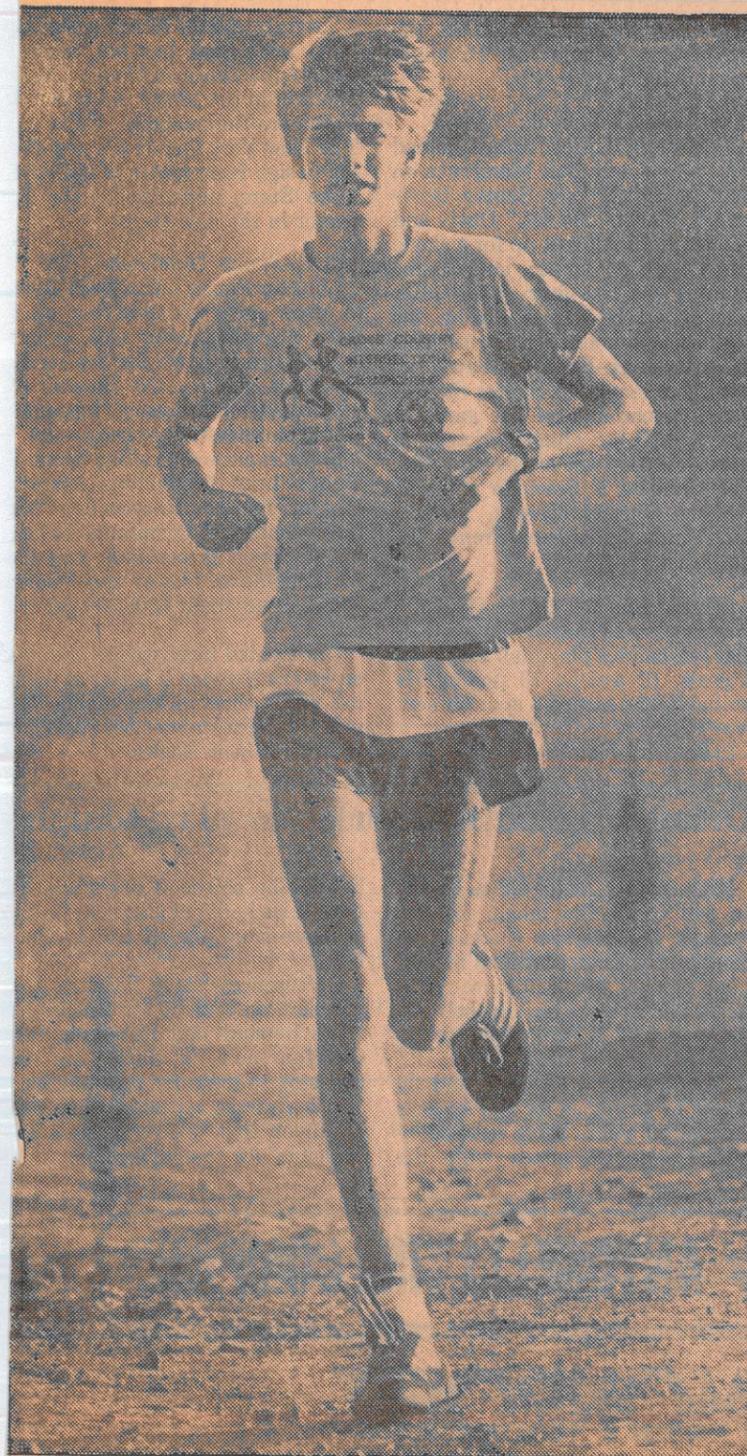
HURDLES — Martin Ellis, Greg Ellis, Rush-Henrietta; Andrew Goodrum, Monroe; Jim Nash, Bishop Kearney; Mike McCarter, Penfield; Tim Delorme, Brockport; Mike Taylor, Alfred-Almond; Bruce Gaynor, Olympia; David Kottwitz, Cuba.

HIGH JUMP — Craig Kerley, Brockport; Mike Lacey, Gates Chili; Ed Hinton, Wayne; Brian Morrell, Sutherland; Bruce Gaynor, Greece; Sam Reynolds, Penfield.

POLE VAULT — Sam Reynolds, Kevin Facinelli, Penfield; Rick Suhr, Dave Scott, Spencerport; John Arthur, Geneva; Matt Houle, Penn Yan; Marty Putnam, Genesee; Mike Fox, Marion; Pete Mondl, Pembroke.

LONG JUMP, TRIPLE JUMP — King Lewis, Lyons; Craig Kerley, Adrian Tyndell, Brockport; Cory Southall, Martin Ellis, Greg Ellis, Rush-Henrietta; Tony Felton, Monroe; Mike Scott, Mike Wilmot, McQuaid; Matt Doward, Batavia; Robert Porscha, Franklin; Rodney Burgess, Penn Yan; Ed Hinton, Wayne; Eric Westrich, Gates Chili; Kirk Sanders, Edison.

SHOT PUT, DISCUS — Wayne Romano, Aquinas; Keith Knight, Bishop Kearney; Rob Rivera, Midlakes; Dean Gilhool, Greece; Pete Beikirk, Rush-Henrietta; Garret Gravson, Monroe; Tim Burm, Newark.



Dennis R. Floss/Times-Union

Warth finishing his daily workout along South Clinton Avenue.