

NSU runs strong, Johnson vaults 19 feet at Penn Relays

PHILADELPHIA — Norfolk State, competing against many Division I programs, won the 800-meter and 400-meter relays and Brian Lewis, who ran on both winning teams, added a 100-meter dash win Saturday at the Penn relays.

Lewis ran the 100 in 10.24, easily beating out Elgin Gordon of St. Augustine's. Malcolm Watts, Tim Montgomery, Lewis and Ramon Clay won the 400 relay in 39.27, and Watts, Montgomery, Lewis and Chris Duncan took the 800 in 1:22.12, beating out Texas Christian and East Carolina teams.

"It really wasn't a Division I versus Division II thing," said NSU coach Steve Riddick. "We don't get caught up in who the competition is, we just try to run the best race we can."

Tennessee's Lawrence Johnson came close to breaking the college pole vault record of 19 feet, 2¾ inches, missing three times at 19-3 before settling for the meet record at 19 feet, high above the 17-8¾ of runner-up Wayne Guidry.

"This morning, when I opened my pole case, I discovered that two of the poles I had planned to use on my opening jumps were broken during the travel here," the former Great Bridge High standout said. "I was kind of happy with the result."

After two days of cool, windy, damp weather, 45,419 showed up for Saturday's final day of the meet; three-day attendance was 86,032.

DRAKE RELAYS: In his 1996 outdoor debut, Michael Johnson put up a 44.51, the fastest time in the world this year, and set a meet record in winning the 400 meters in Des Moines, Iowa.

Arizona sophomore Bob Keino held off Pac-10 rival Karl Keska of Oregon to give the Wildcats their second consecutive victory in the distance medley relay. The son of Kip Keino repeated the feat of his older brother Martin, who anchored the Arizona victory last year.