

Snyder touched the lives of everyone

Brighton and other area communities are mourning the death of former Brighton High track star Todd Snyder, after he was killed in an automobile accident early Sunday morning.

Having written about his All-State, All-League, all-everything accomplishments during the past year and running with him on occasion, I developed a friendship with the recently graduated 18-year-old. Naturally, I was as shocked as most people when I heard about his tragic death.

Here was a kid who was just beginning what probably would have been a very successful life—not that he had not been successful already. In the past few months, he became the Midwest and Class A state champion at 800 meters (Brighton's first-ever track state champ), he set and helped set numerous school records and he had just accepted an athletic scholarship to attend Purdue University this fall.

By watching Todd run and talking to others, there was always mutual agreement that he had the makings of being an outstanding athlete at the collegiate level.

But Todd's athletic side was only a small facet of his being. For those who didn't know him well, he'll always be remembered for his grace on the track. But friends and family will also remember the humanity of Todd which touched them so deeply.

One thing about him was his friendliness toward all. His coaches, family and friends all said that Todd had very few enemies. And how could he have enemies with his light-hearted personality and ease of living?

Further evidence of how far that friendship extended was displayed on Monday afternoon at the pre-funeral visitation at Herrmann Funeral Home in Brighton.

I was there for less than an hour and a steady stream of weeping students and teachers from Brighton High were continually passing through. During that time, his former track rivals and coaches from Lakeland, Milford and Novi also made appearances. And they, too,



Todd Snyder claimed the 800-meter championship at this year's Class A track finals

had tears in their eyes and sorrow in their voices.

The fact that that latter group of people showed up really hit home with me because if even his so-called "track foes" came to pay condolences, it was all-the-more obvious that Todd was loved by virtually all.

Todd Snyder touched the lives of scores of people, yet there was an honest humbleness about him which would force him to downplay his effect on them. If he were alive to see so many people in sorrow at his funeral, he would most probably slide out the door because of sheer embarrassment.

But that was to Todd's credit that he was like that and a big reason so many liked him. He never bragged about his accomplishments, just did the job he was intended to do.

While Todd's physical presence has left the Earth, his spiritual presence will continue to live on and we who are left here should dwell in that.

All the good times we shared with him should repeatedly be remembered. Don't recall the death and loss of him, recall the happiness and friendship he shed upon us.