

EMERALD Sports

Duck Tracks

By Jerry Claussen
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Oregon track fans, who already get an eyeful watching their own Ducks in action are in for a big treat May 27-28. That weekend the Pacific Coast conference track meet will be held here on Hayward field as the first big home meet for Oregon since the PCC-Big Ten meet in 1951.

There will be many outstanding performers here from the nine conference teams—but one in particular should have the fans really talking. There is a certain USC athlete who should give a performance that will come close to providing the thrill given by world javelin champion Bud Held here a few weeks ago here. The Trojan's name is Ernie Shelton.

Anybody who follows track probably recognizes Shelton's name and knows his achievements. He happens to be the defending NCAA and PCC champion in the high jump and has vowed to clear the magic 7' mark and go even higher before hanging up his spikes. Last year at Ann Arbor, Mich., the scene of the NCAA meet, Shelton captured the high jump with a mark of 6' 10 1/4". It was a good showing, but Shelton was disappointed.

Davis Holds Mark

Shelton had his heart set on topping 7'. Walt Davis, now a professional basketball player, holds the world's record for the high jump with 6' 11 1/2". Shelton wanted to beat that mark as well as the NCAA mark set way back in 1941 by Oregon's own Les Steers at 6' 10 3/4".

The wind was blowing very hard when Shelton tried to better the 7' height at the meet and the 6' 2" jumper just nicked the cross-bar enough to let the wind knock it down. His best all-time leap came last summer in an open meet in Pasadena where the handsome art student, originally from Kansas, topped 6' 11 1/16".

Aside from being the world's best active high-jumper, Shelton is known as a real character at USC. Take the way he practices for a meet when not out on the track. He puts a piece of adhesive tape, colored black and white like a cross-bar, on his wall 7' above the floor and then thinks about how to jump over it.

Defeats Mental Barriers

He and his coach, the famous Jess Mortensen, say that this is all part of doing away with any mental barrier to leaping the magic height. Shelton is not only aiming for 7' but beyond. His goal is 7' 2" by mid-summer. He even carries a steel tape measure around with him to measure off 7' on school doorways and walls and then mentally leaps over it.

And there are other Shelton idiosyncracies, all performed in the hope of becoming the first man to best the magic mark in high-jumping. He tap dances in order to achieve balance and timing. He only wears one shoe, his left one, in order to keep his right leg lighter to kick over the cross-bar in his belly-roll. He practices as hard as possible before a meet to get finer muscle tone instead of conserving energy as do most jumpers. He even writes notes to himself and studies them just before jumping.

But these somewhat unorthodox methods have paid off for the USC senior. Through last season he hadn't been defeated in 56 meets. This season he has won every meet in his specialty, several times clearing 6' 10". By the time he gets to Eugene, the quiet but friendly 22-year-old should be at his peak and should remind several old-time fans of Steers, who was the talk of the country himself back in 1941.

Future Olympic Champ

Shelton's future goal in track, aside from beating 7' in the high jump, is to make the 1956 U.S. Olympic team in the decathlon. In his first try in this event, a track marathon in which each man competes in 10 different events for points based on his performance, Shelton defeated both Bob Richards, former national decathlon champion, and Fortune Gordien, the world discus record-holder.

Thus Eugene will be treated to a real show when Ernie Shelton comes to town. He not only has the best high-jump mark in the nation this season but appears likely to become the first man in history to beat the golden mark in that event. Oregon may not win the meet, but watching Shelton should make the day worthwhile.

Beaver Track Squad Visiting Saturday

Making their final assault on Northern Division dual meet records, Oregon's distance-strong track squad plays host to the ND winless Oregon State Beavers on Hayward field Saturday as part of Spring Sports Day activity.

Webfoot Coach Bill Bowerman may set up another mile duel to highlight the ND dual closer. Last Saturday at the Vancouver, B.C. relays Bowerman put Australian distance ace Jim Bailey against NCAA mile champ Bill Dellinger and the pair turned in two of the best miles recorded in the nation this year, with Bailey winning in 4:15 and Dellinger trailing at 4:15.4.

Bowerman will make his final decision this afternoon on whether to pull Bailey out of the 880-yard run for the mile.

Bailey has topped the half mile meet record in the Ducks' three ND dual meets this year, but the OSC-Oregon mile mark is also invitingly low at 4:19.3, set by Al Martin for the Webfoots in 1953. Both Dellinger and Bailey are expected to go under the time Saturday.

Veteran middle distance ace Doug Clement will probably make a try at the 880 record of 1:54.2 set in 1952 by the Webfoots' Jack Hutchins.

Other marks which may fall against the Beavers are the two mile, broad jump and shot put standards. Ken Reiser will be out to surpass his 9:30.3 record set last year in the two mile; Martin Pedigo has a good chance to top the 15-year-old broad jump mark of 23' 8 3/4" held by Ehle Reber of Oregon, and if Jack Moad continues improving he can easily smash the 49' 2 3/8" shot

put effort of Bill Foskett of the Webfoots in 1937.

Coach Hal Moe's Beavers are currently in a slump as far as track is concerned. The Oregon Staters have lost the last five consecutive dual meets to Oregon and this year have not won a Northern Division duel. The Beavers' only cinder triumph was in a three-way meet with Lewis and Clark and Portland university earlier in the year.

Leading the OSC thinclads is 1954 javelin champion Jerry Church, who was fourth in the national collegiate standings last year.

Ernie Warren is the Beaver workhorse, having consistently entered five events, including both hurdles, high jump, pole vault and 100-yard dash. The versatile Portland State transfer has done well picking up quite a few points in each meet.

OSC Net Varsity To Host Oregon

Coach Hilbert Lee's varsity tennis team will conclude its dual meet schedule of Northern Division action Saturday when the Webfoots play the Oregon State Beavers at Corvallis.

Currently holding down second place in ND net standings, the Ducks are fresh from twin triumphs in the Inland Empire. Idaho and Washington State fell before the Webfoots last Friday and Saturday.

In an earlier match, the Ducks edged out the Staters, 4-3 on a last-minute victory by the second doubles team of Dick Gray and Dick Hamilton.

Sophomores Norman Merrill and Bob Jensen top Irwin Harris' Orange squad and are backed up by veterans Pete Overton and Dick Jacobson.

Favorable Conditions Seen for Santee Try

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Wes Santee "will be given every chance in the world" to run his first four minute mile Saturday, the director of the West Coast relays at Fresno said Tuesday.

"If he's going to do it the conditions Saturday will be perfect," J. Flint Hanner, relays director, told the San Francisco Touchdown club at its track luncheon.

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