

Controversy erupts around 1500 meters

By ART BUSHNELL
Of the Emerald

The controversy and turmoil that has simmered under the surface of U.S. athletics since the protests at the 1968 Olympics bubbled to the top in the 1972 Olympic Trials Friday.

The subject of disagreement was the redrawing of heats in the 1500 meter race earlier in the day—a pair of redrawings which allowed the pre-race favorites in that contest to face rather easy opposition on their way to the finals instead of eliminating each other in head-to-head competition.

By the end of the day many of the Black athletes competing in the Trials had planned a meeting to discuss the issue. They objected to the special treatment given White runners in the longer race, pointing out that favored Black runners in the shorter dashes have been forced to run against each other early and in some cases forced out of competition before the Finals.



Andrews

At the center of the controversy was Cal State-Hayward coach Mal Andrews, who spent the day telling anyone that would listen—and some that didn't want to hear—that the 1500 was a "racist race."

At one point in the afternoon, Andrews was escorted from the stadium by a Eugene police officer after making an obscene gesture at the crowd in the east grandstands.

Once outside, he and about 20 other persons debated with two policemen for several minutes. Although one of the officers said it was his understanding that Andrews had been removed from Hayward Field for the day, the California coach was back inside discussing the issue later in the afternoon. (See story page 12.)

The 1500 semi-finals won the dubious distinction of being the most controversial of the many events held in Eugene. It wasn't just the redrawings that became controversial, but also two disqualifications.

The first disqualification came in the first heats Thursday, but became an item of discussion Friday when Oregon graduate Jere Van Dyk, the disqualified runner, was reinstated in the late afternoon before the semifinals.

The second disqualification to throw the 1500 into turmoil was that of semi-final heat winner Howell Michael, who was accused of cutting in on North Carolina's Reginald McAfee. Michael's disqualification, which allowed West to enter the finals as the third man from the third heat, brought criticism from a number of fans still remaining in the stadium when the decision

was reached (after officials viewed films of the race).

Former decathlete Bill Toomey was one of those outraged by the decision to eliminate Michaels, one of the favorites for a berth in Munich.

"What are you trying to do, ruin the Olympic team?" he asked one meet official. "Do we want to send the best team to Munich or not?" (See story on disqualifications page 10.)

While controversy in the three-and-one-half lap race stole the spotlight, white-capped Dave Wottle and steady, kicking Jim Ryun won the day's other two 1500 semifinal heats and headed the list of entrants advancing to the finals tonight. (See story page 9.)

The day's other running events went a little easier than the 1500. But like the longer race they held the promise of outstanding contests in this week-end's finals.

In fact, competitors in the 110 high hurdles, the 200 and the 400 were talking "world record" as they discussed their prospects for making the Olympic team.

While many people were talking about hurdler Rod Milburn in terms of breaking the 110 meter record (including Milburn, who had said he could do so here), Arkansas State's Tom Hill equalled the world mark in the event—streaking out a wind-aided 13.2 second timing. (See story page 16.)

Strong fields also emerged in the 200 and 400 meters. The shorter distance saw speedsters Larry Black (20.4), Harrington Jackson (20.8), Larry Burton (20.5) and Ben Vaughn (20.8) win their second round heats and lead a strong field into the finals.

Advancing to Saturday's finals in the 400 meters were Fred Newhouse (44.2), Vince Matthews (44.8), John Smith (45.2) and Maurice Peoples (45.3) from the first semifinal and Wayne Collett (44.8), Lee Evans (45.0), Tommie Turner (45.2) and Curtis Mills (45.2) from the second heat.

Times were a full second lower Friday than they had been the preceding day and many of the contestants were talking about going down another second Sunday. (See stories pages 14 and 15.)

Perhaps the most surprising event was the long jump, where Bouncy Moore (unable to come back from an injury), NCAA second-place finisher Al Lanier, Phil Shinnick (with the fourth best legal jump in the nation this year, 26-5 3/4), Jerry Proctor (fifth best in the U.S. at 26-3 1/2), Jeff Bolin (eighth best jump in the U.S., 26-2 1/4) and 26-footer Stan Royster all failed to qualify by either the top twelve or jumping more than 25-7.

Added surprises in that event had come before competition got under way when three-time Olympic medal winner Ralph Boston and 26-footer Tom Chilton (26-2) scratched from competition without even taking a jump. (See story page 8.)

Biggest surprise in the shot put was the failure of UTEP's Fred DeBernardi to qualify for the finals. DeBernardi came into the competition with the fourth best throw by an American this year (68-7 3/4), but couldn't even make a qualifying 62-4. (See story page 7.)

The most unsurprising event of the day was the hammer throw, where big Al Schoterman led with 229-8 and George Frenn and veterans Al Hall and Hal Connolly all qualified with ease. (See story page 13.)

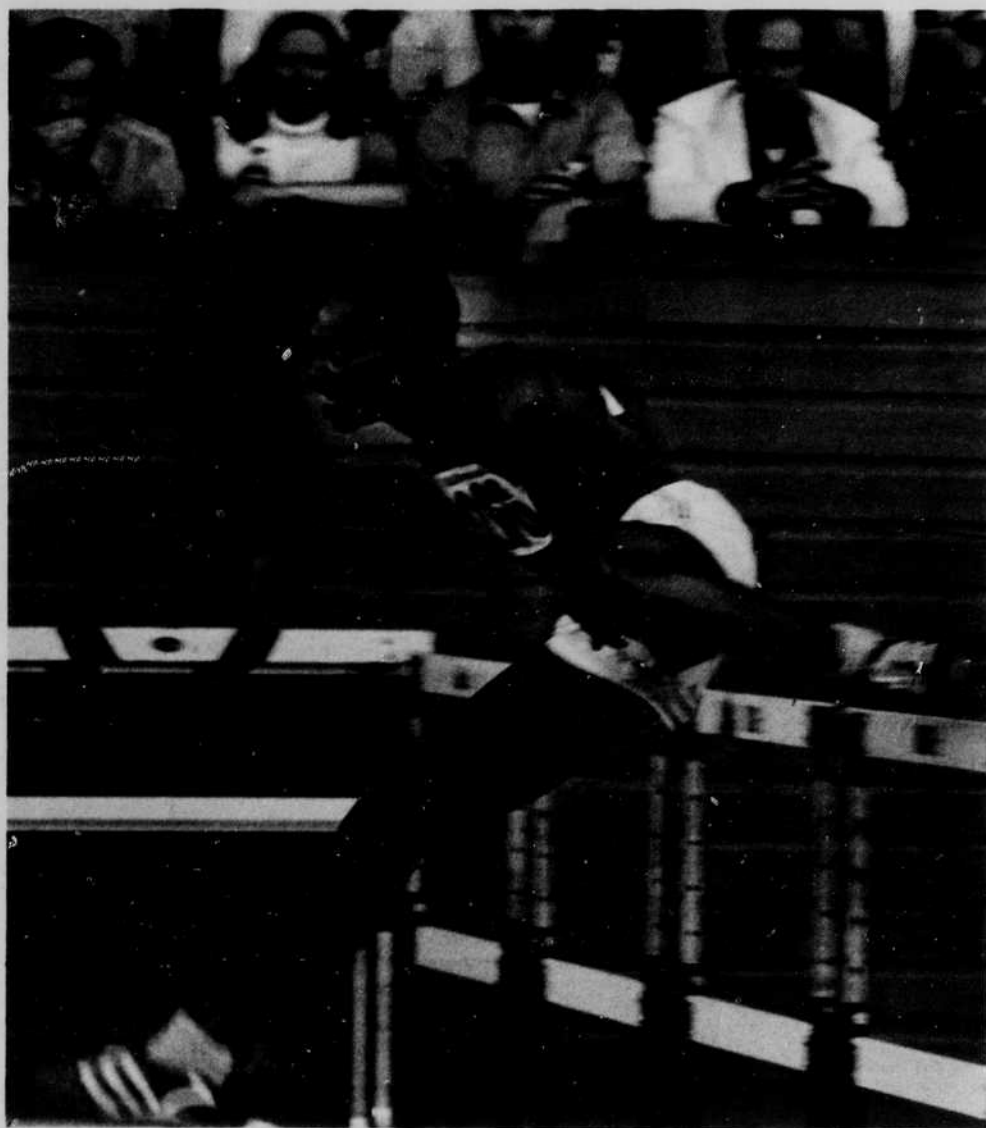


Photo by Malt McCormick

Tom Hill raced to a wind-aided tie of the world's record in the 110 meter high hurdles (above), while controversy engulfed the 1500 meter race and Cal

State-Hayward coach Mal Andrews was removed from the field by a police officer.



Photo by Phil Waldstein