

In 200-meter dash today

Sprint favorites Black, Burton await final

By MERLIN MANN
Of the Emerald

Two favorites, Larry Black and Larry Burton, are alone on top of the sprinters after the first two rounds of the 200-meter dash Friday.

Two other favorites, Steve Williams and Willie Turner, are conspicuously missing from the semi-final heats scheduled for today at 5 p.m.

Williams and Turner both missed the cut on their initial races and neither made it to the second round Friday evening.

Williams, the freshman sensation from Texas-El Paso, was never in the race. In the final heat of the first round Williams appeared to start with the pack coming out of the blocks, but quickly lost so much ground on the curve he never had a chance to improve on his last place.

He finished the trip in 21.7—just behind Turner who made the trip in 21.3.

Turner came off the turn in good shape, though, and lost the race down the home stretch. "I got a good start but just didn't have it coming down the stretch," he said.

Turner, surprisingly calm and collected after the race, explained, "I really didn't think I'd make it through the Trials, but I was hoping."

Turner then told of his hamstring muscle pull that sidelined him from action for twelve days, and greatly hindered his training schedule. He pulled the muscle in May at the Cal Relays and admitted, "I wasn't as sharp as I could have been out there today."

Nevertheless the loss, especially so early in the competition, came as a surprise to many. Turner was the 220-yard dash champion in the NCAA in 1971 running at Oregon State.

The loss of Williams, the Western Athletic Conference 400-meter champion and freshman national record holder with a 45.2 time to his credit, and Turner decidedly takes some of the potential sting out of the 200-meter semis and finals today, but a review of the times turned in Friday indicates the pair wasn't missed.

In the first heat of the first round, AAU champion Chuck Smith burst past everyone, including—of all people—Larry Black, to tie the Stevenson Track record of 20.4. Smith got a fantastic start, was in front coming out of the turn and was never caught.

Smith let up at the finish or he may have broken the track record set in the 1971 AAU meet by Don Quarrie. The race was also run down the home stretch into a head wind.

Black galloped home in 20.7 in second place. He made up for the loss by blistering the Urethane track in 20.4 in his second round heat to equal the mark Smith had tied earlier in the day.

Black, the North Carolina Central 20-year old, said, "I just had to get one in my favor. It wasn't my best race, though."

Larry Burton was impressive, winning two heats by easy margins. He ran a 20.8 in his first round race, but chopped it to 20.5 in the second round. "I was just running to qualify," he said. "Time don't mean anything until the finals."

In the best 200-meter race of the day, Black printed to his 20.4 time ahead of Willie Deckard and Marshall Dill. Black burst away from his rivals at the start of the straight and coasted home the final 30 yards. Deckard made it across the finish line in 20.9 with Dill third in 21.1.

The other 200-meter heat was won by Harrington Jackson, UTEP (20.8) ahead of Dennis Walker (20.9), Harold Williams (21.0), and Oregon's Al Hearvey (21.1).

Black, who said it may take a time below 20 seconds (19.8 is the world record) to win the final, tonight at 5, named Smith and Dill as his strongest competitors but he could be surprised by Burton in the finals. Burton's 20.5 time was easy.

Leon Brown should get to the finals and present stiff competition for the favorites. He also coasted home for a 20.8 clocking behind Burton in the second round.

With the field beginning to tighten up with the much stiffer competition, Black and Burton may feel the pressure that could drive them to near-world record performances.

The makings are all there.



Photo by Phil Waldstein

Larry Black

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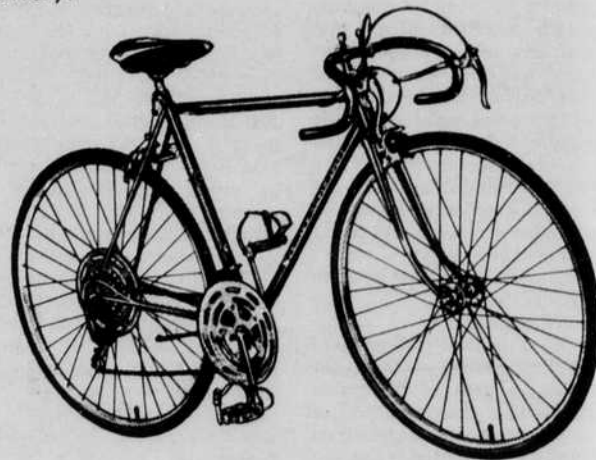
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