



Photo by Bruce Landrey

Pre outlasted doubling Ngeno in three-mile

Brigham takes decathlon

"I was satisfied, really pleased," said Craig Brigham after winning the first Pac-8 decathlon competition ever held. "I think I'm capable of scoring 7800 in the NCAAs, now, if everything goes right."

Actually Brigham took the Pac-8 confrontation with a 7673 point total, 549 ahead of his nearest challenger, Kenny Kring of Stanford. Sam Albanese from UCLA took third at 6852, Bill Hodgson of Washington State followed with 6333 and pre-meet co-favorite Bo Sterner of USC finished in fifth spot at 5978.

"I really enjoyed this decathlon," said Brigham. "The best I've ever had."

"I even liked the competitors who were here." In setting his lifetime decathlon best, Brigham missed three tries at 16-5 in the pole vault, settling for a 15-9 vault. "I had a close shot at that vault," said Brigham. "I thought I had it going over but I didn't and that's the breaks."

Brigham's 15-9 was easily good enough to take the decathlon pole vault, followed by a 14-7¼ for Albanese of UCLA.

Sterner was eliminated from the list of challengers when he fouled three times in the discus ring and could only post a 13-1½ in the pole vault, the meet's next event.

In the javelin, which followed the pole vault, Brigham's best event, Oregon's premier decathlete got off a 190-7½ throw, which, although enough to score 738 points, could not rival a 228-5 mark by Hodgson. Sterner's 197-4 was also a better discus mark but after the pole vault was over, the decathlon was too. Brigham was the inevitable winner.

Before competing in the meet's final event, Brigham had already qualified for the NCAAs and had the victory in the bag. "I went out fast," said Brigham. "It had to be the hardest 1500 meters that I've ever run. It really hurt." Putting an anticlimactic ending to a fine all-around performance, Brigham came home in the 1500 with a 4:47.4 time which was second only to Kenny Kring who clocked a 4:26.9.

Brigham's 7673 is the second best for the country this year and clearly establishes him as a clear contender for the NCAA decathlon crown. Brigham points out that after the Pac-8 meet, "I'll improve at the NCAAs. I've got a lot more experience now and there's even a possibility I could win it."

"I don't think the lack of a partisan crowd will hurt me at the NCAAs," said Brigham. "With two days of competition and ten events, it really doesn't make as much difference as a single race on a single day does."

"My 1500 meters was interesting on Saturday. I leaned for the tape at the end

Oregon distance runners certainly aren't supreme

By MERLIN MANN
Of the Emerald

The nation's track capital is under seige. Until Saturday afternoon, Eugene was the track capital of the country.

Some enthusiastic local track buffs even went to far as to call it the world track capital during the Olympic Trials last summer.

Most specifically though, Eugene has been called the distance running capital, but coming off the performances in the Pacific-8 track and field championships, Washington State is attempting to seize such distinction. (Imagine the distance running capital of the country out in the sage brush and dry rolling hills of out-back Washington.)

Nevertheless, if such title needs many performances to take hold WSU certainly laid solid groundwork last weekend.

Oregon's distance runners, supported by a home crowd, were supposed to offset the UCLA dominance in other areas and make the Pacific-8 championships more than a UCLA warm-up for the NCAAs.

But where were Oregon's distance runners?

Buried under a landslide of Cougar points in the three-and six-mile races.

It had to be very embarrassing to proud Eugene.

Four WSU runners picked up 32 points the first day on a six-mile sweep of the top three places and a second place in the steeplechase. Three bounced back with sparkling doubles the next day and took 2-3-4 behind Steve Prefontaine in the three-mile for another 20 points.

In the end Oregon scored 100 points for

third, UCLA ran away as expected with 156 and USC took second with 111.

Washington State was a close 88 behind Oregon.

Oregon's distance runners in the steeplechase, three-and six-mile scored 21 points for the Ducks, Mac Wilkins scored 20 himself in the discus and shot) while WSU took 52 points in the three races.

John Ngeno, a freshman Pac-8 cross-country champion, led two-time cross-country All-American Dan Murphey and 1971 All-American Phil Burkwest across in the six-mile finish an event expected to be taken by Oregon's Mike Long and Bob Grubbs.

Happy WSU assistant coach John Chaplin said indignantly to the Emerald "Yeh, and according to you guys we were supposed to get lapped out there." (He was referring to the headline in the Emerald's Friday morning special edition distributed at the stadium which proclaimed Long and Grubbs the favorites in the race.)

Long managed fourth behind the WSU trio; Grubbs, a non-scoring eighth.

Dean Clark, another member of WSU's Pac-8 winning cross-country team the last two years, took second in the steeplechase after Oregon's Todd Lathers and Gary Williams hung themselves on the first hurdle on the final lap.

Ngeno, Clark and Murphey bounced back for 2-3-4 placings in the three-mile for very respectable doubles.

Oregon's doublers Grubbs and Knut Kvalheim couldn't finish. Randy James also couldn't finish. Pat Tyson finished tenth for no points.

Kvalheim had a very legitimate excuse. Just an hour before the 3-mile, Kvalheim battled Oregon State's Hailu Ebba in a thrilling photo-finish mile run. Ebba won in 3:57.9, a mark equalled by Kvalheim, but effects on his fast mile on a hot afternoon took their toll in the three-mile.

UCLA coach Jim Bush, worked before the meet, had said, "Oregon can score 100 points in the distances."

And after it was over, another 50 would have made the team chase quite interesting.

One distance race in which Oregon didn't fall on its face was the mile. Mark Feig followed Ebba and Kvalheim across with a 3:59.5, his first sub-four minute mile and Oregon's 12th ever to go under the barrier.

Watching Feig dance across the infield when he found out his time, it was hard to believe him when he said, "It really wasn't that important, but I'm glad I made it now. It takes off some pressure."

Mac Wilkins kept Oregon in the meet, scoring the Pac-8's first double win ever in the shot put and discus. His 63-7 shot heave was nearly four feet farther than his previous best. His 199-9 discus throw broke the meet record.



Photo by James Link

Exhausted Craig Brigham collapsed after winning the grueling decathlon