

Ogard a new double threat for track team

By MARK STEWART
Of the Emerald

Jon Ogard was beaten in his specialty, the long jump, in the Washington meet by teammate Anthony Berry. But instead of wandering off to a corner to sulk, Ogard got mad at himself, then went out and beat teammate Jan From in From's specialty — the high jump — and qualified for the Pac-8 meet in the process.

Last Saturday, after uncorking his best long jump of the season, Ogard high jumped 7-0 and then watched as UCLA's Dwayne Joseph missed three times at that height. With Ogard's jump and Joseph's misses, Oregon was guaranteed victory.

Before the season opened, Jan From was to be Oregon's only entry in the high jump, but he's got a real battle on his hands trying to jump higher than Jon Ogard.

The fact that Ogard has beaten From twice this season is no real accident. Ogard jumped 6-7 in high school and fooling around in practice has jumped 6-4. So before the Washington meet, Ogard and coach Bill Dellinger decided to enter Ogard in the high jump to pick up some points. The entry has paid off handsomely.

The high jump was Ogard's favorite event in high school.

"I went six-feet as a sophomore," said Ogard. "That was my main event. I did the long and triple jumps in high school because no one else did."

"As a sophomore and junior I was not too into track. I did all right... occasionally I did good, but it was not a regular thing.

"My senior year I went to state.... At state I choked in the high jump. I was pretty upset. If I was going to do anything it would have to be in the long jump."

Representing Portland's Parkrose High School, Ogard jumped 23-6 and ended up champion. Then in the Portland Rose Festival Meet, he jumped 23-11. The next week he received a phone call from Dellinger asking him to jump for Oregon.

Ogard hasn't been very motivated about the long jump since high school.

"I've never been fond of the long jump," said Ogard. "In high school I got virtually no coaching. It was my decision at the time (to long jump). We had no coach in the jump and I'm pretty lazy. Until this year I've had no intensive help until Dennis came. He could have helped a lot."

Dennis is Dennis Whitby, a former English national team hurdles coach who coaches both Oregon hurdle events and the long and triple jumpers.

"He has the potential to go 25 feet," said Whitby. "But I coach four events, so the long jump gets one-fourth of my time. Jon is one of four long jumpers, so he gets one-sixteenth of my time."

"I was doing well in the long jump before Christmas," said Ogard, "but the first week back I got pneumonia. I was out the first half of winter term without coaching. It hurt me."

Beside being in the long and high jumps, Ogard runs the first leg of the 440 relay. "We've lost three of the four original people due to injuries. I did work out with the sprinters at the beginning of the year. They (coaches) said I have good form. I didn't ask to do it, but I don't mind."

"He's a good hard worker," said Dellinger. "He's proving himself a real team man. He's coming up and asking if he can high jump. He has a lot of talent. It's starting to all come together for him."

"It looks like the high jump may end up being his best event."

So far this year the high jump has been Ogard's big event. "I was disappointed after blowing the long jump," said Ogard of his performance in the Washington meet. "It motivated me in the high



Photo by Steve Schneider

John Ogard cleared seven feet in the high jump against UCLA last Saturday, and that might be only the beginning for the Ducks' multi-talented athlete.

jump. Maybe I was afraid of punishment."

"It seems I jump better when I'm upset. It'd been three years and I was anxious to try (the high jump)."

From the running and jumping he did during field days in fifth grade to jumping onto foam rubber cushions in his back yard,

Ogard has become a seven-foot high jumper.

"If I could hit 7-1 I could go to the NAAs and that would be nice."

In his first competitive meet in three years, he jumped 6-10 and a week later, without practice, jumped 7-0. After his winning jump against UCLA, Ogard said he didn't know how high he could jump. "We'll just have to see."

The surprise that he's been so far this season, don't be too shocked if you see the name Jon Ogard on the list of first round high jumpers at Hayward Field, the site of the NCAA track and field championships, this June.

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