

Mac misses his mark

By MARK STEWART
Of the Emerald

Oregon alumnus Mac Wilkins, the world's best discus thrower, wanted to set a new world record at the Prefontaine Classic Wednesday evening, but had to settle for a new Hayward Field mark instead.

Wilkins, the current discus world record holder and now competing for the Eugene-based Athletics West club, set the field mark on his fourth attempt, with a throw of 231-3, besting the old mark of 224-2, which he set in 1976.

When asked if he thought he could have set a new world record, Wilkins said, "I sure did. I thought especially the last throw would do it. It was the best, it just didn't have enough juice on it.

"That's the best I've thrown all year," Wilkins said about his six throws, only one of which was under 220 feet. I just couldn't throw a few more inches for the people here."

Wilkins' series of 217-4, 222-1, 226-5, 231-3, 227-8 and 231-0 was his best of the year, and he said the crowd had had something to do with it.

"It (the crowd) helped my concentration, surprisingly," he noted. "My throws improved as the series progressed."

Wilkins said he wasn't disappointed that Al Oerter did not show up for him to compete against. "When things are going well I know I can throw well."

Wilkins' Athletics West teammate, Al Feuerbach, won the shot with a put of 66-6¼, and was pleased with his winning effort.

"I'm pleased for myself with the back strain," Feuerbach said. "I found it easy to throw 66 with no hip drive. I'm trying to protect my back. I felt good about the six throws. But I had to protect my back for the AAU meet (next weekend) and Europe this summer. To have thrown hard now and hurt it would be foolish. At least I haven't lost the ability to throw well."

The highjumpers never did get far off the ground, and winner Dwight Stones said he knows why.

"The weather was a joke," he said after jumping just 7-3. "There are two reasons (for not jumping well), the pollen and the wind."

Stones didn't seem to like anything about the conditions, even the newly designed runway. "I don't like the area. It's thin in places. I broke six spikes, two while warming up and four during the competition.

"But the wind made it brutal. With no wind I could have gone 7-6. Tom (Woods) only went 7-0 and Rory (Kotenik) went 6-10. That's an indication there's something wrong."

Martí Liquori won the 5,000, after sprinting past Athletics West's Craig Virgin with one lap to go after the two left the rest of the runners at the mile-and-a-half mark.

"It wasn't a hard pace all the way," Liquori said after running the event for the first time this season. "I'm pretty sick, I don't know if it's the pollen or a cold."

Liquori, who will run against Henry Rono later this summer in Stockholm, said he's amazed at the Kenyan who runs for Washington State. "He's changed my plan. 13:13 isn't easy, but I thought it would be a good time. But he ran a 13:08. It tells guys like myself that we better have second thoughts about our races."

Javelin — 1, Rod Ewaliko, Club Northwest, 257-10. 2, Sam Strickland, Club Northwest, 243-4.

Women's high jump — 1, Sherri Felton, CNW, 5-10. 2, Maggie Garrison, CNW, 5-8. 3, Julie Crosgrove, CNW, and Tammy Coleman, Oregon Track Club, 5-8.

Hammer throw — 1, Rich Perkins, OTC, 215-0. 2, Eric Hohn, OTC, 142-3.

Men's shot put — 1, Al Feuerbach, Athletics West, 66-6¼. 2, Pete Schmuck, Tobias Striders, 63-9¼. 3, Russ Vincent, CNW, 62-7½.

High School sprint medley relay — 1, District 4 (Jerry Edwards, Brian Jordan, Dan Hammit, Fred Spraul) 3:30.23. 2, District 8, 3:33.53. 3, District 5, 3:33.7 (hand timed).

Women's 3,000 — 1, Debbie Quarter, Falcon Track Club, 9:33.9. 2, Eryn Forbes, Portland Track Club, 9:45.99. 3, Irene Griffin, unatt., 9:51.09.

Sleepingchase — 1, Doug Brown, Athletics West, 8:36.7. 2, Mike Roche, Athletic Attic, 8:39.2. 3, Don Timm, Athletes in Action, 8:48.5.

Women's Discus — 1, Lorna Griffin, FTC, 180-3. 2, Lynn Wimbler, OTC, 173-3. 3, Julie Hansen, FTC, 172-10.

High school mile — 1, Chris Lattig, Portland, 4:17.19. 2, Tom Rothenberger, Portland, 4:18.04. 3, Phil Brock, San Francisco, 4:18.30.

1,500 — 1, Bob Mapiestone, CNW, 3:43.42. 2, Phil Kane, Athletics West, 3:43.44. 3, Paul Cummings, Pacific Coast Club, 3:44.55.

400 — 1, Adrian Rogers, Tobias Striders, 45.62. 2, Maizie Parks, AIA, 46.23. 3, Ron Thomas, Central Arizona College, 46.76.

Women's 800 — 1, Franice Larrieu, Pacific Coast Club, and Lee Ballinger, University of Colorado, 2:03.7. 3, Debbie Campbell, BC International, 2:04.7.

Pole vault — 1, Earl Bell, PCC, 18-0. 2, Jeff Taylor, CNW, 18-0. 3, Dan Ripley, PCC, 17-8.

Triple jump — 1, Paul Jordan, unatt., 53-9¼. 2, Gary Lacy, University of Oregon, 50-4. 3, Brent Fogner, Vancouver Olympic Club, 50-4½.



Mac Wilkins uncorked a 231-3 effort in the discus, the third best ever.

Intermediate hurdles — 1, Tom Andrews, Tobias Striders, 50.32. 2, Sam Turner, Cal State-Long Beach, 51.55. 3, Phil Mills, New Zealand, 51.87.

Women's shot put — 1, Maren Seider, San Jose Stars, 58-2. 2, Carly Van Pelt, CNW, 49-5½. Marcia Macklenburg, FTC, 47-0¼.

Men's discus — 1, Mac Wilkins, Athletics West, 231-3. 2, Ray Burton, OTC, 193-10. 3, Howard Barich, OTC, 191-9.

Men's 800 — Heat 1 — 1, Mike Boit, Tobias Striders, 1:47.31. 2, Rick Brown, Tobias Striders, 1:48.66. 3, Greg Walton, 1:48.70.

Heat 2 — 1, R. Gingrich, Rica, 1:48.46. 2, Rich Musgrave, Colorado Track Club, 1:48.73. 3, Carl Shaw, OTC, 1:49.40.

200 — 1, Adrian Rogers, Tobias Striders, 20.4. 2, Don Merrick, Florida Track Club, 20.5. 3, Chris Braithwaite, OTC, 20.7. (all times wind aided).

High jump — 1, Dwight Stones, Desert Oasis Track Club, 7-3½. 2, Tom Woods, 7-0. 3, Rory Kotenik, PCC, 6-10. 5,000 — 1, Martí Liquori, Athletic Attic, 13:37.7. 2, Craig Virgin, Athletics West, 13:40.7. 3, Jeff Wells, Athletics West, 13:55.5.

Commentary Mike Marino

Trying to shake spring luck

Maybe it's just typically rotten spring luck, but even when there's blue sky not everything is sunny.

If you're like me and have been popping allergy pills like jellybeans, then you probably can relate.

But for those who're connected with the NCAA track meet here, namely the Oregon athletic department, there's a new headache. One that Allerest won't cure.

The University's new scoreboard at Hayward Field was supposed to be unveiled at last night's Prefontaine Classic, but spring fate didn't cooperate, unfortunately. Rather, a few engineers were trying to break human endurance records to get the thing ready.

Crews from Texas spent until 3 a.m. Wednesday morning trying to ready the scoreboard for the Pre meet. It was to have been a grand sight, with the mammoth structure beaming out messages for all to see. But now, it seems, another technician will have to be flown in from Dallas to figure the machine out.

Oh well, at least the track itself is ready. Decked out with fancy markings and "OREGON" on both straightaways, Stevenson Track, as it's formally called, looks beautiful under the bright sky.

But don't forget spring luck. Even though most people were pretty pleased with the new surface, there was dissent. In this case, the "pollen" was Dwight Stones, the loquacious high jumper. After winning his event with a mediocre (for him) leap of 7-3½, Stones had his own thoughts of the revamped Hayward Field jumping area.

"It was a perfect day for every event except the high jump," Stones whined. "Right when you come off your turn, the wind hits you right in the face. And I broke six spikes today on that surface. I don't like it — it's very thin in some places, like jumping off cement.

"There's two things that I don't like about having the

Olympic Trials at this place — the wind and the pollen. And I'm going to be here for five days with ABC. I can just see me getting in front of a camera with my eyes watering."

Fortunately for the fans Wednesday evening, there were more important things than gripes and camera appearance. Instead, the 6,008 people who were there had their minds on the field — and discus thrower Mac Wilkins.

The world record holder and Oregon grad was primed for this meet, admittedly in the best shape of his life. Out in the infield, 232 feet, six inches away, was a blue flag signifying Wilkins' world mark, the one he hoped to break.

And the fans knew it.

From the moment he stepped into the ring, the stomping and clapping began in the old East Grandstand. As Wilkins' throws progressed, the beat spread to the West stands, and soon the whole place wanted Wilkins to do it for them.

It was a funny crowd then. Probably the only crowd in the country that could sigh at a toss of 227-8. But on his farthest throw, a 231-3 job that ranked as the world's third farthest ever (Wilkins also holds the second farthest), they exploded. And when the big guy closed with a 231 even, a throw he admitted afterwards was "my best of the night," they cheered again.

There were no complaints from Wilkins.

"Actually, it caught me by surprise the first time up," he said. "But it helped me keep my concentration and focused my attention."

It also helped Wilkins toss a pretty fine series — 217-4, 222-1, 226-5, 231-3, 227-8 and the 231 at the end. "It's my best all year," he said. "I'm just disappointed that I couldn't throw it a few more inches for the

people here.

"If you're an Oregon track man, about the best thing would be to get a world record in Eugene."

No doubt Wilkins will settle for the Hayward Field record — for the moment. Until he can get a shot to break that mark, he'll be on the tour with Athletics West, a Eugene-based club. The road leads to next week's AAU nationals at UCLA (one of Wilkins' other favorite places to throw) and then it's on to Europe.

But unlike the past two years, when Wilkins "jetted around everywhere," things will be a bit more relaxed this time. "There's no way you can perform at top level that way," said Wilkins of his wanderlust past. "Athletics West allows me to plan my competition around May training. I can compete when I feel like it, and I'm ready to compete now."

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Which brings us to the NCAAs today, tomorrow and Saturday. No doubt the umpteen-hundred athletes who made the trek here are ready to compete. Henry Rono for instance, Washington State's distance star, is entered in three events. Whether he'll run in all of them is another question, but he's a guy that could win an unprecedented triple in one NCAA meet. It would be a feast for track addicts, who'll have gotten a pretty good fix of the sport after this weekend.

The athletes are ready, the fans are ready, the track is ready. Now please, spring, let the damn scoreboard work, too.