

Relay times drop, but Cougars win

By JOHN HEALY
Of the Emerald

The 400- and 1,600-meter relays haven't been a top priority for the Oregon men's track program the last few springs.

Fast times were a rarity, and the prospect of either relay team scoring at the Pacific-10 championships was negligible.

Until now. Saturday in Pullman, in a dual meet against Washington State, Oregon posted a new school

record of 39.84 in winning the 400 relay and 3:07.66 in the 1,600 relay.

Ironically, the Ducks' 86-77 loss to the Cougars could have been averted if their 1,600-relay team had been able to pull out a win. But David Mack's 45.0 final leg wasn't enough to catch the Cougars' Chris Whitlock (WSU posted a 3:07.47), and Oregon fell three yards shy of claiming their third dual meet win of the year.

The Ducks did get individual

wins from Dean Crouser in the discus (192-1) and shot put (61-10½); Dwight Robinson in the 110 hurdles (14.15) and Don Ward (51.72) in the 400 hurdles; Richard Kermode in the 1,500 (3:44.80); and Alberto Salazar in the 5,000 (14:05.64).

But it was Oregon's relay teams which produced the surprises.

"There is a lot of pride running on the 1,600-meter relay team," says Oregon assistant coach Dennis Whitby, who coaches the 400 relay team and assists head coach Bill Dellinger with the 1,600 squad.

"We have six guys who want to run on the that relay team, so there is a lot of competition."

The three mainstays in the long relay this spring have been

leadoff man Parrish Nixon, anchorman Mack and Don Ward, who runs the third leg. The fourth spot has been bouncing between Nate Harrison and Larry Bradley.

The lineup on the short relay has remained consistent all year, with Nixon, Bradley, Mark James and Jerome Walker doing almost all of the stick-handling.

"In previous years the short relay has never had the feeling of closeness that it has right now," Whitby says. "This is the first year we have had a consistent 400-meter relay team."

Much of the consistency can be attributed to the Ducks' success at passing the baton.

"Our handoffs are probably as good as anyone in the

Pac-10," says Whitby. "We've been working since February for one or two hours a week on the relay. We worked on the mechanics of giving the baton for the first six weeks, and since then we've concentrated on passing in the zone."

But baton-work hasn't been the only key, says Whitby.

"We probably have as good a depth in the sprints as anyone in the Pac-10."

Whitby believes the Ducks could have dipped down to 39.5 in the short relay against the Cougars, but problems on the first and second handoffs lost Oregon "at least three yards, and that's .3 seconds."

There is even more room for improvement in the 1,600 relay. Against the Cougars, Nixon and Harrison contributed 47.4 legs while Ward timed a 47.2 effort.

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Miller dips below 14-seconds; Ducks set top marks in Pullman

Despite a lack of consistent competition from the Washington State Cougars, Oregon's women's track team posted some impressive marks Saturday in Pullman en route to a 89-37 win.

The high point of the meet was Lexie Miller's win in the 100-meter hurdles. Her 13.67 clocking was a personal, meet and Oregon record, and it marked the first time an Oregon athlete dipped below the 14-second mark.

The old record of 14.04 was set by Miller two weeks ago versus UCLA.

Miller's new mark ranks among the top collegiate times this season.

Oregon, which had already qualified six athletes in nine events for nationals, added two more Saturday.

Quenna Beasley took a rest from the shot put to concentrate

on the discus, resulting in a event-winning 158-2 toss. Her effort was almost five feet further than her previous best.

Sally Harmon uncorked a 161-3 throw in the javelin to surpass the AIAW-qualifying mark of 156-0. Harmon's previous best this season had been 153-10.

The javelin, however, was one of only four events in which the Cougars scored a victory. Jackie Henry defeated Harmon with a 165-8 throw. In addition, Laurie Bush led a WSU sweep in the shot put with a 43-5 toss; Cheryl Byers beat Oregon's Sally Hamilton in the 400, 57.44-57.60; and Lisa Wood-

cock took the 1,500 with a 4:37.52 clocking.

Oregon scorers were led by Miller, who also won the long jump with a 18-7¼ effort. Teammate Kris Costello won the 200 (25.41) and took second in the 100 hurdles (14.10) and 100 (12.50).

Lisa Nicholson also tallied several Oregon points by winning the 400 hurdles in a personal-record 1:01.99 and participating in both winning relays.

The Ducks will return to Hayward Field Saturday to face the California Bears, who finished second behind Oregon in last year's dual meet rankings.

Warren nabs 800 win, McDonald claims discus

Oregon sent only a two-person team to the Kansas Relays last weekend, but that was all that was necessary as each recorded a win in her specialty.

Freshman Karen McDonald unleashed a 167-10 throw to win the discus competition Friday. Then on Saturday, sophomore Leann Warren clocked a 2:01.30 to beat four-time Olympian Madeline Manning Mims in the 800.

Both marks were Oregon records. In addition, Warren's time is the best outdoor mark in

the nation this season.

McDonald's effort marked the third time she has broken the Oregon record. Her previous best was 164-6.

The old Oregon record in the 800, held by Warren, was 2:02.58. Warren passed Mims coming into the main straight on the first lap. She went through the first quarter in 57 seconds.

Manning never threatened Warren and finished a distant second in 2:04.576. Manning set the American record of 1:57.9 in 1976.

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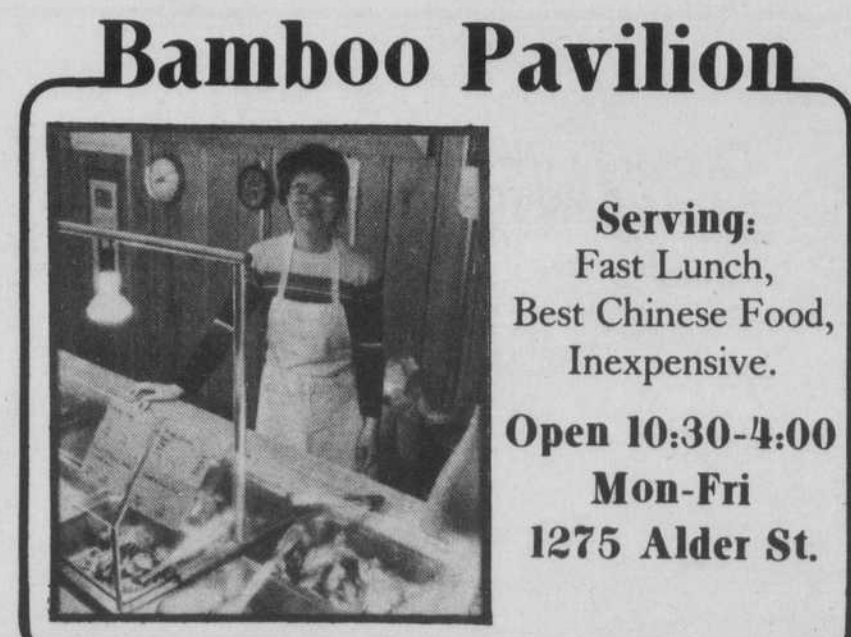


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