

Oregon Hurdles Fresno State, Beavs

By John Healy
Of the Emerald

It was "business as usual" for the Oregon men's track team Saturday at Hayward Field.

That meant a pair of easy dual-meet victories over Oregon State and Fresno State, two schools that traditionally have had problems with the Ducks.

In the process of crushing Oregon State 108-55, Oregon extended its win streak over the Beavers to 10 straight years, while the 92-71 whipping of the Bulldogs was the Ducks' seventh consecutive win over the California school.

"I'm very proud of this team and its record," said Oregon coach Bill Dellinger after watching his Ducks improve to 5-1 on the year. "I thought we competed well, and I can't think of an event where we really fell down."

The pair of wins probably clinched a second consecutive runner-up spot in the dual-meet rankings to Washington State, the defending dual-meet titlist. The Cougars handed the Ducks their only loss of the year, a 94-69 mauling in Eugene in late March.

This was a day where Oregon pummeled the Bulldogs (33-3) and the Beavers (25-11) in the distances. At the same time, the Ducks were decimated by Fresno State in the sprints (29-3) and in the weights by Oregon State's Ron Schmidt.

There were a few outstanding marks, too, including senior Lamar Hurd's NCAA-qualifying time of 13.81 in the 110-meter high hurdles and sophomore Harold Kuphaldt's 8:46.80 in the steeplechase, which just missed the NCAA mark but was a lifetime best by more than 12 seconds.

Hurd didn't take up collegiate hurdling until he was a junior at Oregon. Instead, he'd concentrated on the triple jump, where he established himself as the best triple jumper in Oregon history with a record of 51-11½.

But last spring, Dellinger

needed a high hurdler in dual meets, and he turned to Hurd, an ex-Washington prep high hurdles champion. Hurd went on to finish third in the conference, but it has been this spring that he has made a real name for himself in the hurdles.

"He can definitely run faster," said Dellinger. "I think he can get down to the 13.6 range."

Hurd's time, fastest in the Pac-10 this year, also broke the school record set by Phil Bransom in 1979 for fully automatic timing.

Hurd professed himself pleased at Saturday's results, although he says he has a lot of room for improvement in the hurdles.

"I hit a couple of hurdles, and that slowed me down," said Hurd. "Plus, my hamstring has been bugging me. I was going to run the intermediates, but Bill decided not to enter me because my leg was sore."

Hurd will concentrate on the hurdles for the rest of the year, focusing mainly on the highs but running the intermediates to help his strength.

Moving to a new event and then doing well in it isn't the sole domain of Hurd. Kuphaldt, a high-school all-American in the 1,500, 3,000 and 5,000, was moved into the steeplechase his freshman year and performed solidly, if not spectacularly, clocking 8:58.99.

But Saturday, the sophomore from Fair Oaks, Calif., broke from the pack on the first lap and kept pushing the pace.

"I just went after getting the (NCAA) qualifying time today," said Kuphaldt. "I knew I would have to do it myself. But I planned to run hard today no matter what event I was in."

Kuphaldt, who won the prestigious prep Golden West mile as a high school senior, got kind of lost in his first year in Eugene among the herds of distance runners that form the

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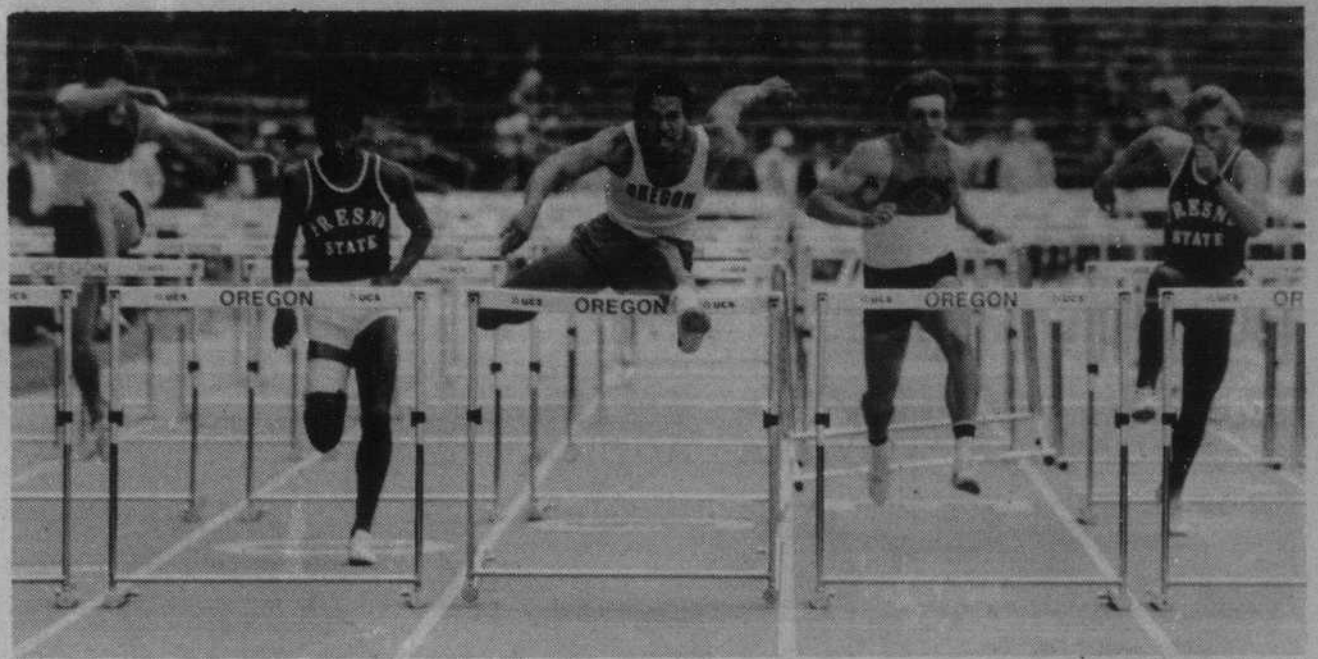


Photo by Brian Erb

Oregon's LaMar Hurd (center) galloped over the high hurdles in an NCAA-qualifying 13.81 seconds Saturday at Hayward Field.

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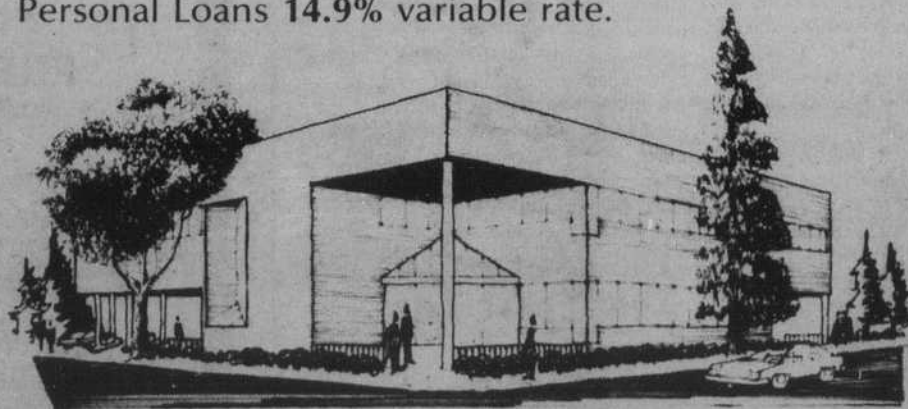
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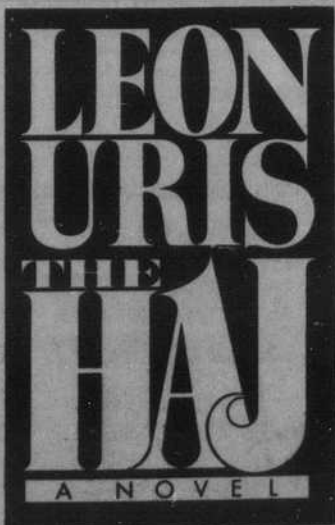
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