

Sports

Oregon snaps Cougars' streak

By **Jasen Emmons**
Of the Emerald

Dan Nelson epitomized an eager and uncertain Oregon men's track team Saturday when it upset Washington State University, 86-77, and ended the Cougar's 58 dual-meet victory streak.

Nelson, the 124-pound steeplechaser with a lifetime best of 8:57.64, warmed up before the event pumping a fist in determination whenever fans yelled encouragement. He was ready to race.

"It's a big meet, it's always been a big meet, and I wanted to get the crowd into it," Nelson said. "I hope I did."

When the steeplechase started, Nelson immediately followed WSU's Nathan Morris, who has run 8:33.2 this season. Nelson alternated between staying just off Morris' shoulder and directly behind. For six laps he looked eager to pass, but unsure when to do so.

Finally, with 300 meters to go and the East Grandstand fans on their feet yelling and clapping, Nelson passed Morris on the inside and briefly took the lead. Morris pulled even until the two

went over the waterjump and Morris gained a stride. Nelson caught up over the final hurdle, and they sprinted to a photo-finish in 8:39.38.

Nelson succeeded in igniting the crowd, as well as cutting 18 seconds off his time and qualifying for the NCAA meet. Suddenly, it felt as though Oregon had a chance to win the meet.

The 400-meter relay was run half an hour later, and WSU was favored. The two teams were even until the third leg when Oregon's Mark Dannis ran an excellent corner to give anchorman Gary Uribe a two-stride lead. It was up to Uribe to hold off WSU's Gabriel Tiacoh, the 1984 Olympic 400-meter silver medalist. Uribe did, and Oregon won in 41.22 to WSU's 41.33.

The 1,500 meters followed and was expected to be a battle between Oregon's Dub Myers and WSU's Julius Korir, the 1984 Olympic steeplechase champion. Korir was originally scheduled to run the steeplechase, but WSU head coach John Chaplin apparently had decided that

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Photo by Karen Stallwood

Oregon's Gary Uribe held off WSU's Gabriel Tiacoh in the final leg of the 400-meter relay as the Ducks broke the Cougars' 58 dual-meet winning streak Saturday with an 86-77 win at Hayward Field.



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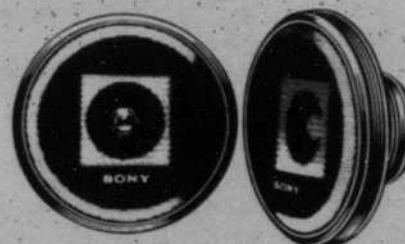
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