

Top performances make Twilight Meet shine

By Jack Millikin
Emerald Sports Reporter

Consider Saturday evening's Twilight Invitational a night at the theater.

You had your main cast of performers: former Duck NCAA javelin champion Brian Crouser, who dominated the spear throw with a meet record 256-0; Kory Tarpenning, who became the second American to surpass the 19-foot barrier this year in clearing 19-0 $\frac{3}{4}$ in the pole vault; and last year's NCAA steeplechase champion, Karl van Calcar, who finished a good 10 seconds ahead of his closest challenger in 8:44.8.

You had your theme, which focused on the current Duck athletes' attempts to qualify for the NCAA meet in Provo, Utah, May 31-June 3.

But on this day, the supporting cast of current Webfoot athletes earned the bravos by using the ideal weather conditions to record, in many cases, their top marks of the season. A few of those marks were good enough to send three more Ducks to the NCAA meet, and those that did not were enough to catapult the Webfoots into next week's Pacific-10 Conference meet in Palo Alto, Calif., with a surge of momentum.

The number of Duck qualifiers is now 12 in 13 events, with Latin Berry the only double qualifier in both the long and triple jumps.

The three who qualified — Brian Wright in the 400 hurdles (50.81, bettering the NCAA standard of 50.85), Alan Foster in the 1,500 (3:42.12, 3:42.70) and Art Skipper in the javelin (228-0, 225-0) — ended weeks of worry concerning their chances of earning an NCAA berth, and all, with the exception of Wright, did so handily.

Wright was being led by his coach, former Oregon hurdler/quartermiler Pat Lanning, and was closing in on Lanning rounding the curve into the final 100 meters. However, Lanning came down hard on his right ankle and had to stop, leaving the sophomore to finish the race on his own.

"I was just ready to even up with Pat when he went out," Wright said. "I said, 'Oh no, my coach,'

and he just said, 'Go.' I was hoping to run 49 (seconds) today, but there was no one to push me after Pat went out."

"The whole objective was to qualify (Wright)," Lanning said after the race, his foot bulging from the ice underneath his bandaged ankle. "The fact that he went the last 100 meters on his own ... I don't want to put any pressure on him. He's as good as anyone in the Pac-10."

Foster, who came close to qualifying at the Oregon Invitational by establishing a personal record of 3:45.33, demolished his previous best by more than three seconds after passing three runners, including fellow Ducks Jim Peterson (3:42.82) and Colin Dalton (3:43.15), in the last 150 meters to become the first of what head coach Bill Dellinger hopes will become three NCAA qualifiers in the 1,500.

"(Foster) ran with a lot of adrenaline, and I think he can run faster," Dellinger said. "I'm concerned about Colin. We're going to run another 1,500 meters tomorrow to simulate Pac-10s."

Skipper, who last year set a national prep record in the javelin with a 259-10 toss, has been no stranger to frustration this year. Burdened by high expectations since his 227-7 toss at last year's Prefontaine Classic at Hayward Field, Skipper had been within 18 inches from an NCAA berth before a car accident two weeks ago posed a possible threat in his attempt to qualify. Skipper is projected as a ninth place finisher at this year's NCAA championships.

Since the accident, though, Skipper has improved steadily in the javelin after recording a season best of 224-6 at Washington State last week.

"I don't think the accident had anything to do with it. I felt good today," said Skipper, who broke the school record set by Jack Byrne (225-9) against California on April 22. "It's just a matter of when a person feels ready. At the big meet (Oregon State AAA Track Championships) last year, I threw 259, and later at a national meet (Prefontaine Classic) I threw 227



Photo by Bill Haines

The Ducks' Alan Foster has a look of disbelief as he realizes his 3:42.12 time in the 1,500 is good enough for a trip to the NAAs.

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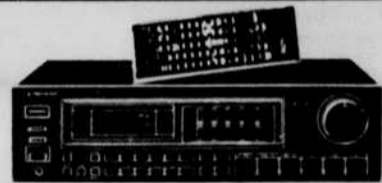


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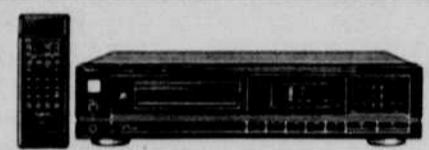


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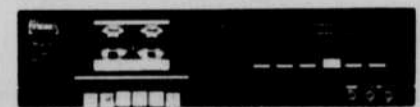


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