

Sports

Men's track advances 4 to finals in first day of NCAA title chase

By Jack Millikin
Emerald Sports Reporter

The first day of competition at the NCAA Track and Field Championships in Provo, Utah, ended on a positive note for the Oregon men's track team Wednesday, as four Ducks advanced to event finals to be held Friday and Saturday.

Junior Danny Lopez and freshman Rick Mestler qualified for Friday's 3,000-meter steeplechase final after two others, long jumper Latin Berry and discus thrower Jose deSouza, had moved through preliminaries as well.

For the other four Ducks who competed in Wednesday's preliminaries, however, the warmth of the spotlight will have to wait another year. Their party in Provo is over.

Lopez and Mestler, competing in the same qualifying heat, finished fifth and sixth, respectively, with Lopez posting a time of 9:00.21 and Mestler right behind him at 9:00.22. The top time of the day came from Nebraska's Joe Kirby, who hit the tape in 8:54.05.

Lopez finished second in the Pacific-10 Conference meet a week ago with a season-best time of 8:39.73. He needs to finish among the top

eight to score points for the Ducks, as the meet will be scored on the 10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 system.

Of the non-qualifiers, all were considered longshots to score in the meet.

The lone upperclassman of the quartet, senior javelin thrower Jack Byrne, finished third in his flight with a throw of 216-6, but failed to make the cut for the finals. The same fate was suffered by fellow javelin tosser Art Skipper. Skipper, a freshman, threw just 218-5 to finish fourth in his flight.

In addition, Brian Wright finished fourth in his heat of the 400-meter hurdles with a time of 50.88, behind USC's George Porter (49.66), but did not reach the finals.

Pole vaulter Brian Cullen repeated his performance at the Pac-10 meet by failing to clear the opening height, which was poised at 17-2 1/4.

Berry, who captured the Pac-10 long jump title with a leap of 26-4 1/4, qualified for Friday's long jump final with a top mark of 25-1 1/2, finishing third in his flight and ninth overall.

Berry, a junior, is expected to score for the Webfoots in both the long and triple jumps after

Turn to Men, Page 12

Williams stymied in 200, other Webfoot women still on track

By Ashley Conklin
Emerald Sports Reporter

Rosie Williams found out just how tough the sprinters at the first day of the NCAA meet are Wednesday in Provo, Utah.

Williams, the school record holder at 100 and 200 meters, finished fourth in her heat of the 200 with a 23.69 clocking, but failed to advance to the Friday's finals.

Williams was 13th overall, as five sprinters dipped below 23 seconds. Leading the way was Texas Southern's Mary Onyali at 22.67.

Other Ducks fared much better during the opening day of the 68th annual meet.

Stefanie Hunter competed in the first four events of the heptathlon, and was ninth overall with 3,304 points. Hunter will have to move up a notch on Thursday, as only the top eight score under the 10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1 system. Hunter came up with some fine individual efforts in only her third heptathlon competition.

Hunter was second in both the 200 and shot put, after finishing 17th in the 100-meter high hurdles and the high jump.

In the 200, Hunter raced to a 23.75 clocking, breaking her old personal record of 23.77. Hunter had another PR in the hurdles, hitting the tape in

14.89. She also threw the shot 42-9 1/4, her second-best put ever.

Hunter will finish the heptathlon today with the long jump, javelin and 800-meter race. Jolanda Jones, the favorite in the event from Houston, was the first-day leader with 3,602 points.

Meanwhile, Liz Wilson, the only Oregon athlete entered in two events, did not have to run a trial heat in the 3,000 meters. Wilson will be in the 5,000 trials today, if one has to be run.

The other Duck athlete who competed Wednesday was long jumper Jenni Grasley.

Grasley failed to qualify for

the finals, as the top 12 advanced. No mark for Grasley was available at press time.

Five other Oregon tracksters will open competition today in trial rounds.

Leading the way will be the Duck javelin trio of Jill Smith, Brooke Allen and Kim Hyatt.

Smith is the defending NCAA champion in the javelin, but suffered an injury to her throwing elbow at the Pacific-10 Conference meet, and although she will throw, she still must be considered a question mark.

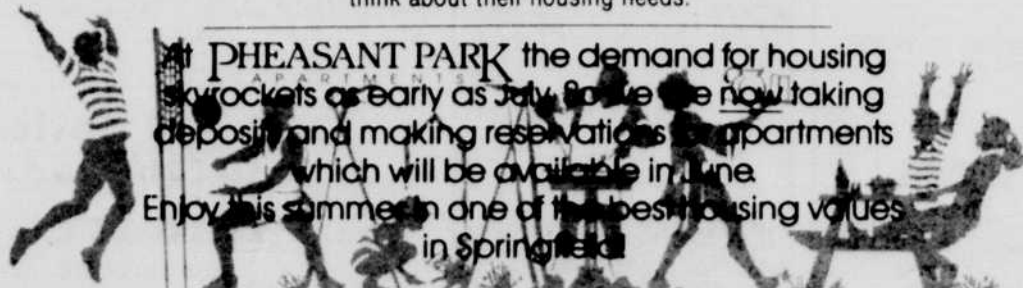
Allen was an All-American

Turn to Women, Page 12

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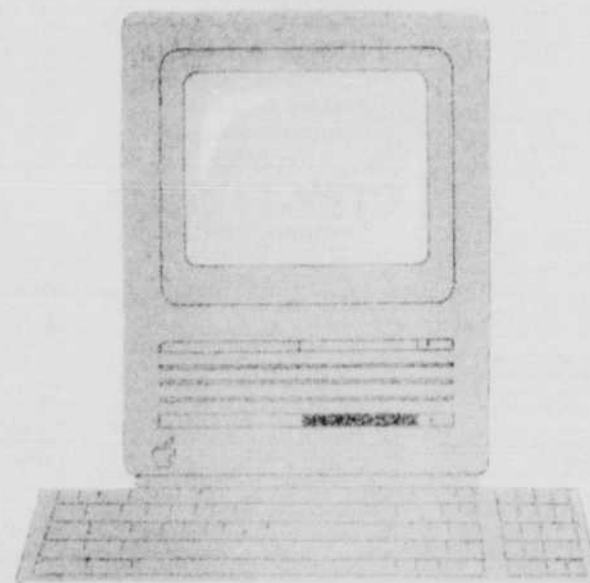
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