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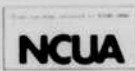


Photo by Martin Thiel

Oregon's Bob Gray (199) finished second in the 110-meter hurdles at the Oregon Invitational track meet Saturday. Gray's time of 14.03 was his second fastest ever.

Salazar wins race at Invitational

By Ashley Conklin
Emerald Sports Reporter

For three track athletes, their outdoor debuts in Saturday's Oregon Invitational could be the most significant of their careers.

In the case of distance runner Alberto Salazar, who began his

comeback in the meet, 1990 could be the end of his career. Hammer thrower Lance Deal, at the peak of his career, hopes for his best season yet.

And then there is Muhammed Oliver who showed what a promising future he has in store.

All three individuals grabbed the spotlight Saturday, but it was Salazar who received the most attention.

Salazar won the 10,000 meters in 29:31.73 which was off his goal of a TAC qualifying time of 29:06, but he was still pleased with the effort in the cold and windy conditions.

"It was fun," Salazar said. "29:30 is nothing to write home about, but whether it's an all-comers meet or whatever, it's definitely a thrill to win at Hayward Field. It's a win and I'll take it anyway I can get it."

Co-owner of the Oregon Electric Station, Salazar will turn 32 this summer and plans to take time off from work to concentrate on his running.

"If I can't get under 29 (minutes) this year I'll probably retire," he said. "It's a make-or-break year for me. I'll give it 100 percent and see what happens."

Suffering from a viral condition, Salazar said he thought about running the 5,000 which would have given him more competition, but decided on the 10,000.

"Other than Chad Bennion, I didn't know if there would be anyone around 29 minutes," Salazar said. "I decided I had to get my feet wet eventually and run a 10K."

While the 10,000 was the fi-

nal event of the meet, Deal got the meet started on a good note in the hammer, throwing 244-3 to surpass the 1984 meet record of 240-8 by Matt Mileham of Fresno State.

The hammer was a contest of Stewart Togher-coached throwers as Jim Driscoll was second with a throw of 232-6 and Oregon's Scott McGee grabbed a personal record by exactly three feet, tossing 223-6 to move into third on the all-time school list.

Deal, who set the Hayward Field record twice last year, has been working on a new technique this spring and wanted to throw in the "low 250s."

"We're just changing some stuff," Deal said. "It's too technical to get into. It's a great technique and it's the next step up. Technique is an evolutionary step and we're trying for a higher level."

Despite not throwing as far as he had hoped, Deal said it was beneficial to throw against Driscoll and McGee.

"Right now this is the first competition of the season for me, Mike (Fritchman) and Jim, and Scott is in the middle of his competitive season," he said. "This is a stepping stone for us because our technique is pretty much solidified and we're trying to build on that."

For McGee, the top collegiate thrower who had been unbeaten until Saturday, it was important to get some competition and throw a PR.

"It was fun to throw with these guys since they train with Stewart," he said. "I feel like

Turn to Track, Page 13

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