

Women strong second in Pac-10

Wilson and Wessell lead

By Ashley Conklin
Emerald Sports Reporter

SEATTLE — It looked like the days of old for the women's track team at the Pacific-10 Conference championships Saturday and Sunday.

The Ducks got individual wins from Liz Wilson in the 3,000 meters and Stephanie Wessell in the 10,000 meters on Saturday and used that distance strength to finish second in the meet behind UCLA. The Bruins won with 116 points while Oregon had 103 points.

The two distance wins, a 2-3 performance from Wilson and Wessell in the 5,000 meters and a win from Paula Berry in the javelin set Oregon up for more than coach Tom Heinonen expected before the meet.

"There's nothing more we could have done," he said. "We made it so much closer than I ever thought we would. We scored more points than last year and we had 100 last year without Arizona State in the meet."

Wilson started the onslaught Saturday when she won the 3,000 meters in 9:26.19, her first-ever Pac-10 track title.

"I'm a happy camper that I got it done," Wilson said. "I wanted to get down and say thank you, thank you, thank you. I'm real pleased with myself and I felt strong the whole way."

The race was expected to be a

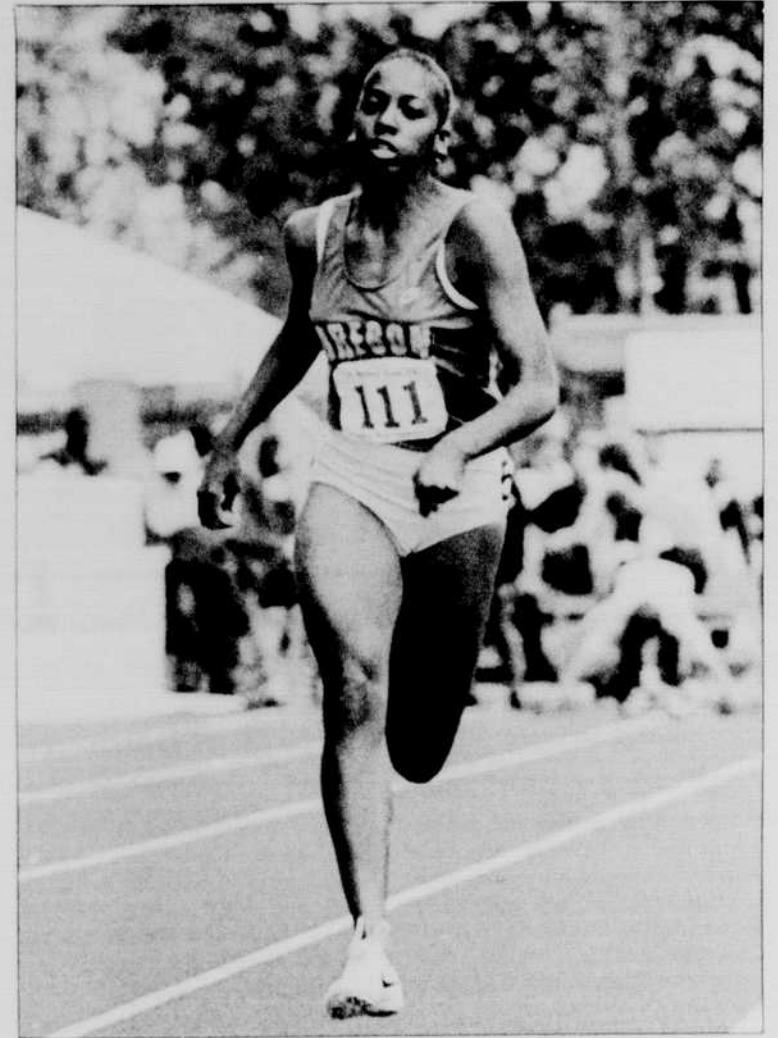


Photo by Martin Thiel

Sprinter Rosie Williams came back from mid-season injury to take third place finishes in the 100 and 200 meter races in this weekend's Pac-10 meet in Seattle.

battle between Wilson and Washington State's Jennifer Robertson, last year's winner, but Wilson broke from the pack with about four laps to go and

never left the outcome in doubt.

"With these tactical races I knew everybody always messes these up," Wilson said. "We had four laps to go and nobody was doing anything. I thought I kept them around enough and I said I've got to go."

Wessell later gritted it out in the 10,000, running alone the whole race and winning easily in 34:25.42 in her first-ever 10,000-meter race.

Although Wessell's time was short of the NCAA automatic standard of 34:18.00, it was the fifth-fastest time in school history and the sixth best mark in Pac-10 history.

"I've never run this race before and so I kind of raced in a different sort of way," Wessell said. "I'd figured I would get through the halfway point, 5,000 meters, and go from there."

"Being mostly a 1,500-3,000 runner, I really didn't think about moving up (to longer distances), but it does feel more natural," she said. "It's so much easier than a 1,500 where you're just hammering the entire way."

Teammate Julia Saul was also running her first-ever 10,000 and finished third in 35:29.79.

While the distance aces continued to grab attention, Paula Berry finally made the breakthrough she was waiting for in the javelin.

Berry took the early lead in the javelin with a season-best 172-5 in the second round and then came back with a toss of 178-1 on her fifth throw.

For the junior from tiny Dayville High School in Eastern Oregon, it was the first time she set a personal record in college after throwing 174-11 as a high school senior. The new PR for Berry also broke the NCAA

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

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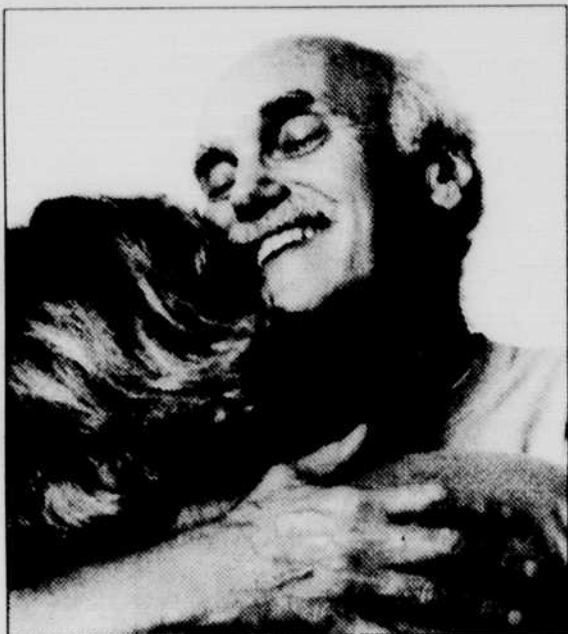
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