

# Team race to heat up with seven finals today

By Ashley Conklin  
Emerald Sports Editor

Tennessee and Washington State appear to be right where they want to be heading into the final two days of the NCAA Track & Field Championships at Hayward Field.

Both teams got all of their needed qualifiers through Thursday's preliminary rounds as the team race heats up today and Saturday when almost all of the finals will be held.

"We helped ourselves today," Tennessee Coach Doug Brown said. "We advanced everybody we needed to today."

But so did the Cougars, who are still the favorites, Brown said.

Samuel Kibiri won his heat of the 1,500-meter run, Tony Li won his heat of the 110 hurdles, sprinters Augustin Qlobia and George Ogbeide advanced in the 100 meters, as did E.J. Guo in the 5,000 for Washington State.

Brown said Kibiri, who is attempting a 1,500-3,000-meter steeplechase double, could be the difference for Washington State.

"The most important guy on both teams is Samuel Kibiri," Brown said, "and he's looking awesome right now."

No final events were held

Thursday, but finals in four field events and three running events will be held today for the men.

The biggest name not to advance Thursday was Indiana's Robert Kennedy, the defending NCAA champ in the 1,500. He finished fifth in a slow heat, and with only the top four automatically advancing to the finals, Kennedy was stuck in no man's land when seven runners in the second heat ran faster than anyone in the first race.

"The first heat was beautiful," said Georgetown's Steve Holman, who won the second heat in 3:42.06. "I couldn't believe how slow it went with such a strong field."

"So we set it up the first couple of laps, then it became a race," he said. "I think the fast pace benefited me. I got into the groove and it felt great."

After seeing what happened in the 1,500, Oregon's Pat Haller was determined not to let the same thing happen to him in the first heat of the 5,000.

Haller pushed the pace for most of the race, but was out-kicked at the end to finish fifth in 14:04.53.

Haller still made the finals when only seven runners started the second heat, but really didn't want to take a chance on qualifying.

"You saw what happened in

the 1,500," he said. "You don't make those mistakes here (NCAAs)."

Haller was upset with himself, however, for not pushing the pace more.

"I should have taken it out more," he said. "I let it get away from me and allowed those guys to take me to an extra gear."

One Duck who never doubted qualifying for today's semifinals was Bob Gray in the 110-meter hurdles.

Gray cruised into the semifinals by finishing second in his heat with a wind-aided time of 13.75.

"After the first couple of hurdles, I put it on autopilot and shut down," he said. "I didn't attack the hurdles or run aggressively because I knew I was in the top two or three."

Gray did say he won't relax like that in the semifinals.

"Granted, I can't do that in the semis," he said. "I plan to run really fast in the semis and hopefully I'll get a PR."

Oregon's other qualifier to advance was Scott McGee, the NCAA defending hammer champ. McGee had the day's fourth-best throw at 218-2 to advance to Saturday's finals.

After having foul problems at last year's NCAA meet, McGee said he just wanted to get an early legal throw Thursday.

"I wanted to feel out the ring and get a focus," he said.

Southern Methodist's Christophe Elle, who had the top qualifying mark of 234-8, had the day's best throw at 230-8. Elle is picked to dethrone McGee as the NCAA champ.

"I kind of like this better, that I'm not expected to win,"

McGee said. "Just because it's at home, there's people that would like me to win it again. I don't feel any pressure from that."

Oregon's Colin Dalton was suppose to compete in the 1,500 Thursday, but scratched from the competition because of a stomach flu virus.

## QUOTES FROM HAYWARD FIELD

- "I keep seeing these 'Beat L.A.' things all over the place, and I'm thinking 'Is that us or the Lakers?'" — UCLA shot putter and discus thrower Tracie Millett when asked if she was a Los Angeles Lakers fan.
- "Usually you hear footsteps but I didn't hear any today. Maybe it was the way the wind was blowing, but I didn't hear anything." — Texas Christian sprinter Johnny Drummond, who easily won his 100-meter heat in 10.19.
- "There's no rivalry, we're just great competitors." — Texas sprinter Carlette Guidry on the anticipated showdown between herself and Louisiana State's Esther Jones in the 100 and 200.
- "What I'll do is rest these dogs." — Tennessee distance runner Todd Williams when asked what he'll do on Friday after running a 10,000-meter final Wednesday and a 5,000-meter semifinal Thursday before coming back to run the 5,000 final Saturday.
- "I like getting dingy when I throw. I was singing Christmas carols when I was throwing today. I like doing stupid things. I think that helps with me with my throwing." — UCLA thrower Eric Bergreen, a graduate of South Eugene High School.

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