

VIVA LA REVOLUCIÓN

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Men's

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while the crowd was silent for the start of the 100, and the consequent uproar from the crowd disrupted the sprint.

The starter "was holding for days," Montgomery said. "Everybody was really tense."

The delayed start of the 100 came after two false starts by Jon Drummond, one of the favorites in the race, who was disqualified because of the two fouls. The sprinters also had to deal with Maurice Greene, the Hayward Field crowd favorite who attended the meet but didn't compete. Greene stood camped at the finish line, and Montgomery said the gamesmanship bothered him.

"I haven't had a chance to see him sprint yet this season, but now he's seen me," Montgomery said. "But maybe (the slow time) was good, because now he'll say 'Hey, I can beat these guys.'"

The race itself was exciting to the finish, where Montgomery edged Kim Collins by only 0.01 seconds.

In the 110 hurdles, Johnson had a similar showdown with Terrence Trammell, but their race got off clean on the first try. Johnson, the American record-holder in the event, edged Trammell by 0.01 seconds, though his time was 0.04 seconds slower than the Pre Classic record.

In the meet's final race, the mile, Moroccan El Guerrouj came into Sunday's meet with high hopes to wow what he called "a public that understands athletics so profoundly." El Guerrouj broke the mark for the fastest mile on American soil at the 2001 Pre Classic, and had spoken of breaking that record again.

But wind and a lack of preparation hampered the "King of the Mile," and his winning time of 3:50.89 was 0.97 seconds slower than his 2001 time.

"It was the first time I raced all season," El Guerrouj said through an interpreter after his race Sunday. "So I didn't have a rhythm. Still, I'm very satisfied with my race."

El Guerrouj echoed his sentiments from last year, saying the Hayward Field crowd is one of the most knowledgeable and inspirational crowds in the world.

"He says that this is one of the best crowds," El Guerrouj's interpreter said. "He says he will come back here every year until the end of his career."

So if the day didn't belong to the track stars, it must have instead belonged to the field athletes. The shot putters started that trend, but it was carried out by the high jumpers, who staged a thrilling competition of their own. Five athletes hit 7 feet, 6 1/2 inches, but only one, Charles Clinger, cleared the next height of 7-8 1/2. Clinger's clearance at that height gave him the Prefontaine Classic and Hayward Field record in the event, breaking the mark held by American record-holder Charles Austin.

In a pole vault competition that lasted long after all the track events finished, Tim Mack outlasted three other vaulters at 19-2 to win the event. Many fans stayed for the duration of the vault, despite the absence of any other events.

Saturday's Pre Classic may not permanently change Eugene's famous nickname, but for one day at least, Track Town turned into Shot Put Town.

E-mail sports reporter Peter Hockaday at peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com.

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