RYUN BRINGS OUT BEST IN RIVALS WITH 3:55,9 WIN

Kansan Runs Fastest Mile in World This Season: Seagren, Beamon, Davenport All Impressive Winners

BY SHAV GLICK Times Staff Writer

moved up a couple of notches to post The surest way to run a lifetime best in the mile is get in a race with a 2:01.7.

Jim Ryun.

You won't win, but you'll run your best just to stay in the race.

Ryun emerged from the shadows of an injury-ridden season Saturday night to trounce America's best milers in a 3:55.9 Compton mile, fastest in the world this season.

The Kansas senior, holder of the world record of 3:51.1, was the only one of the first five finishers not to run his all-time best. Running each quarter at a progressively faster pace, Ryun won by six yards from fast-finishing Sam Bair, the tiny ex-Kent State miler, at the Coliseum.

LaBenz Finishes Far Back

Chuck LaBenz, whose 3:58.4 last week in the Kennedy Games had been the world's best, was never a factor in the race. He finished a distant seventh in the feature of the Coliseum-Compton Invitational before 10,269.

Two Villanova runners. Marty Liquori and Frank Murphy, finished third and fourth in 3:57.6 and 3:58.1. with ex-Kansas cross-country star John Lawson fifth in 3:59.3.

John Mason, who faded to sixth at the finish, led the nine-man field through the first two laps in a slow 61.8, then a stepped up 59.5 to pass the 880 in 2:01.3. Ryun trailed in ninth through the first 440, then Murphy led at three-quarters in

2:00.4 with Ryun right at his shoulder. With 250 yards to go Ryun turned on his famous kick and it was like old times, running away from the pack with every stride.

"It really feels good to run under four minutes again," said Ryun, who hadn't in an open race since last August. "I feel especially good because I had been worried about my knee. I had absolutely no problem with it tonight. The only real problem I had was nervousness before the race. I certainly didn't want to start the race and then drop out."

Ryun, whose quarters were 62.3, 59.4. 58.7 and 55.5, praised Mason for

his pace.

"The pace was just beautiful and I'd like to thank the guys in the race for doing such a good job," he said, "I don't like to go out in front unless I have to, but it was just right for me, Before tonight I was apprehensive about this whole season, but now I am looking forward to all the races. If everything goes right it would be nice to run against Kip Keino again."

Keino defeated Ryun in the Olympic Games 1,500 meters in 3:34.9.

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Ryun Returns With 3:55.9 Mile Victory