

It Goes Down to the Wire: Trojans Win on Last Event

BY MAL FLORENCE

Times Staff Writer

CORVALLIS, Ore.—USC survived two disqualifications Saturday to win its fifth straight Pacific 8 track and field championship at Wayne Valley Field.

The Trojans figured to win by a large margin, but as it turned out, they had to get a lot of points in the 1,600-meter relay, the concluding event, to clinch the title.

They did, winning in 3:05.3. So the Trojans wound up with 126 points, just holding off surprisingly strong Oregon, which had 119. UCLA was third (113) and Washington State fourth (109½).

The Trojans lost 20 points when Billy Mullins and Rayfield Beaton were disqualified after winning the 400 and 800 meters, respectively. Mullins was cited for repeatedly stepping on the line bordering his lane. Beaton was set down for cutting off Oregon's Greg Walton and causing him to lose his balance.

"I can't look," said USC coach Vern Wolfe before the start of the 1,600-meter relay. Then he shielded his eyes with his hands.

Wolfe had reason to be concerned. His Trojans trailed the Ducks, 119-116, at the time. Although USC figured to get no worse than second in the four-lap relay, the way things were going nothing was certain.

Beaton staked USC to about a five-meter lead on the second leg and then Mullins, running anchor, out-kicked UCLA's Donn Thompson to retain the margin at the finish.

As the race unfolded, Wolfe kept pointing to the struggling Oregon runners laboring in last place. "That's all I'm interested in," he said, meaning that if the Ducks were shut out (they were), the Trojans could get fourth and still win the meet.

Some unexpected points that USC got early in the meet turned out to be meaningful. Tim Walker and Dennis Smith were second and third in the high jump (14 points) and Rich Graybehl was a surprise fourth in the 110-meter hurdles. He also won the 400-intermediate hurdles (49.98), his spe-

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cially, after finishing third once and second twice in previous years.

Clancy Edwards retained his sprint titles, as expected. But he was almost caught napping in the 100 meters. Edwards was left in his blocks and then surged in the last five meters to beat Oregon's Don Coleman and Andrew Banks. He was timed in 10.34, one of six Pac-8 meet records set Saturday.

Edwards came back strong in the 200. He blasted out of the turn and won in 20.06 (another Pac-8 record). He was chased to the tape by teammates James Sanford and UCLA's Greg Foster, who had lifetime bests of 20.24 and 20.40 in finishing second and third. USC's Joel Andrews placed sixth, so the Trojans picked up 19 points in the 200.

The Trojans got their other win when the 400-meter relay team (Kevin Williams, Mullins, Edwards and Sanford) won in 39.27.

The high jumpers and Graybehl got clutch points for the Trojans and so did David Omwansa, who ran a lifetime best of 3:39.5 (equivalent to a 3:57 mile) in finishing second to Oregon's Rudy Chapa (3:39.0) in the 1,500 meters.

Chapa and two of his teammates, Matt Centrowitz and Bruce Nelson, set a blistering pace in an effort to burn off California's Andy Clifford, the defending champion. The strategy worked as Clifford lost contact and drifted to the rear.

But Omwansa, the Kenyan who is better known as a competent half miler, stayed with the Oregonians. Chapa took the lead just before the last lap and held it, although Omwansa made up some ground on him in the stretch.

"I think I can run 3:36," said Omwansa, who plans to run the 1,500 in the NCAA meet June 1-3 at Eugene, Ore. Obviously, the pace wasn't too fast for him even though Centrowitz had a 55.8 opening quarter and was timed at 1:55.2 for the half mile.

Other noteworthy performances on a clear, 80-degree afternoon were:

—UCLA's Greg Foster winning the 110-meter hurdles by five meters in 13.63. His teammate, James Owens, scratched from the event because of a pulled leg muscle.

—The Bruins' Willie Banks taking the triple jump at 54-11 to successfully defend his title.

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—Washington State's Henry Rono setting a relentless pace the last mile to win the 5,000 meters in 13:20.2—an excellent time but not close to his world record of 13:08.4. Rono, like Edwards, was a double winner. He won the 10,000 Friday after dropping out of the 3,000-meter steeplechase because of a heel injury.

The Cougars didn't score as many points as expected, but Rono and his African teammates, Joel Cheruiyot (second), Joshua Kimeto (third) and Samson Kimombwa (fifth) put on an impressive distance running show in the 5,000.

Mullins was disconsolate and Beaton perplexed after they learned of their disqualifications. Mullins "won" the 400 easily in 45:26 and was reclining on a training table when it was announced that he wasn't a winner.

"If I'm going to be disqualified, why don't they tell me right away," said Mullins. "Yes, I may have stepped on the line, but I didn't go out of my lane."

Mullins was so distressed, according to assistant coach Ken Matsuda, that his heart wasn't in the 200. Neither were his legs. He slowed up coming off the turn and finished last.

Beaton just held off a surging Conrad Suhr of UCLA to "win" the 800 in 1:48.8. But three officials (from the Oregon Track Club) flagged him down on the last turn.

They said he veered from lane one into lane two and impeded Oregon's Walton.

"I didn't come close to anyone," Beaton said. "I didn't cut him off. He knocked himself off stride."

Wolfe had no complaints about the disqualifications. "An official told me that Billy stepped on the line six times," the USC coach said, "and I wasn't in a position to see what happened to Pepe (Rayfield Beaton). You have to accept things like this. They happen."

It was USC's 12th Pac-8 title in the last 19 years and the strength of this year's team is evident. The Trojans threw away 20 points and still won.

100 METERS—1. Edwards (USC), 10.34 (meet record, old mark, 10.39, Edwards, 1977); 2. Coleman (Oregon), 10.39; 3. Banks (O), 10.56; 4. Andrews (USC), 10.60; 5. Williams (UCLA), 10.64; 6. Williams (USC), 10.77; 7. Nelson (Stanford), 10.82; 8. Krause (Washington), 11.04.

200—1. Edwards (USC), 20.06 (meet record, old mark, 20.13, Edwards, 1977); 2. Sanford (USC), 20.24; 3. Foster (UCLA), 20.40; 4. Laffan (S), 20.82; 5. Banks (O), 20.84; 6. Andrews (USC), 20.92; 7. Kabilan (Washington St.), 21.40; 8. Mullins (USC), 22.90.

400—1. Thompson (UCLA), 45.96; 2. Sanford (USC), 46.07; 3. Hassan (Oregon St.), 46.26; 4. Goldston (UCLA), 46.26; 5. Sarnsey (Washington St.), 47.78; 6. Barnes (OS), 47.95; 7. Sheets (S), 48.63; Mullins (USC) finished first in 45.36 but disqualified for lane violation.

800—1. Suhr (UCLA), 1:48.8; 2. Walton (O), 1:49.2; 3. Johnson (USC), 1:49.4; 4. Radford (W), 1:50.1; 5. Brown (Cal), 1:50.3; 6. St. Pierre (WS), 1:52.3; 7. Omwansa (USC), 1:52.8; Beaton (USC) won in 1:48.8 but disqualified for lane violation.

1,500—1. Chapa (O), 3:39.5 (meet record, old mark, 3:40.3, Hailu Eba, Oregon St., 1973); 2. Omwansa (USC), 3:39.5; 3. Nelson (O), 3:41.8; 4. Centrowitz (O), 3:44.5; 5. Favell (W), 3:47.8; 6. de la Torre (OS), 3:47.5; 7. Obsinger (S), no time; 8. Clifford (Cal), nt.

5,000—1. Rono (WS), 13:20.2 (meet record, old mark, 13:25.4, Samson Kimombwa, Washington St., 1977); 2. Cheruiyot (WS), 13:34.8; 3. Kimeto (WS), 13:38.8; 4. Chape (O), 13:44.4; 5. Kimombwa (WS), 13:51.2; 6. Clary (O), 14:07.2; 7. Centrowitz (O), 14:07.8; 8. Sarnsey (O), 14:07.9.

110MH—1. Foster (UCLA), 13.63; 2. Turner (WS), 14.17; 3. Bruce (WS), 14.18; 4. Graybehl (USC), 14.32; 5. Smith (Cal), 14.54; 6. Pratty (Cal), 14.59.

400H—1. Graybehl (USC), 49.98 (meet record, old mark, 50.04, Tom Andrews, USC, 1976); 2. Pratt (Cal), 50.49; 3. Smith (Cal), 51.23; 4. Susac (OS), 51.37; 5. Fields (OS), 51.39; 6. Sarnsey (WS), 52.02; 7. Young (UCLA), 52.54; 8. Bell (O), 52.60.

400 RELAY—1. USC (Williams, Mullins, Edwards, Sanford), 39.27; 2. UCLA, 39.75; 3. Stanford, 39.96; 4. California, 40.18; 5. Washington, 41.53; 6. Oregon St., 41.77.

1,600 RELAY—1. USC (Andrews, Beaton, Sanford, Mullins), 205.3 (meet record, old mark, 205.6, UCLA, 1972); 2. UCLA, 206.4; 3. Oregon St., 208.0; 4. Stanford, 208.1; 5. California, 208.1; 6. Washington St., 208.0; 7. Washington, 213.0; 8. Oregon, 218.7.

HIGH JUMP—1. Joseph (UCLA), 7-1; 2. Walker (USC), 7-0; 3. Smith (USC), 7-0; 4. tie between Darnielle (WS) and Allen (WS), 6-10; 5. Edwards (OS), 6-8; 7. Ogard (O), 6-8; 8. Littleboy (S), 6-4.

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200—1. Edwards (USC), 20.06 (meet record, old mark, 20.13, Edwards, 1977); 2. Sanford (USC), 20.24; 3. Foster (UCLA), 20.40; 4. Loffon (S), 20.83; 5. Banks (O), 20.86; 6. Andrews (USC), 20.92; 7. Kabian (Washington St.), 21.60; 8. Mullins (USC), 22.90.

400—1. Thompson (UCLA), 45.96; 2. Sanford (USC), 46.07; 3. Hassan (Oregon St.), 46.20; 4. Goldston (UCLA), 46.26; 5. Samsay (Washington St.), 47.79; 6. Barnes (OS), 47.95; 7. Sheats (S), 48.63; Mullins (USC) finished first in 45.26 but disqualified for lane violation.

800—1. Suhr (UCLA), 1:48.8; 2. Walton (O), 1:49.2; 3. Johnson (USC), 1:49.4; 4. Radford (W), 1:50.1; 5. Brown (Cal), 1:50.3; 6. St. Pierre (WS), 1:52.3; 7. Ormansa (USC), 1:52.8; Beaton (USC) won in 1:48.8 but disqualified for lane violation.

1,500—1. Chapa (O), 3:39.0 (meet record, old mark, 3:40.3, Hailu Ebba, Oregon St., 1973); 2. Ormansa (USC), 3:39.5; 3. Nelson (O), 3:41.8; 4. Centrowitz (O), 3:44.2; 5. Favell (W), 3:47.0; 6. de la Torre (OS), 3:47.5; 7. Obsinger (S), no time; 8. Clifford (Cal), nt.

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110HH—1. Foster (UCLA), 13.63; 2. Turner (WS), 14.17; 3. Bruce (WS), 14.18; 4. Graybehl (USC), 14.33; 5. Smith (Cal), 14.34; 6. Pratty (Cal), 14.59.

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1,600 RELAY—1. USC (Andrews, Beaton, Sanford, Mullins), 3:05.3 (meet record, old mark, 3:05.4, UCLA, 1972); 2. UCLA, 3:06.4; 3. Oregon St., 3:08.0; 4. Stanford, 3:08.1; 5. California, 3:08.1; 6. Washington St., 3:09.0; 7. Washington, 3:13.0; 8. Oregon, 3:18.7.

HIGH JUMP—1. Joseph (UCLA), 7-1; 2. Walker (USC), 7-0; 3. Smith (USC), 7-0; 4. tie between Darnielle (WS) and Allen (WS), 6-10; 5. Edwards (OS), 6-8; 7. Ogard (O), 6-8; 8. Littleboy (S), 6-6.

400CUS—1. Forrester (O), 196-6; 2. Eider (USC), 182-1; 3. Schilling (OS), 181-8; 4. Montgomery (USC), 178-1; 5. Kurrasch (USC), 177-10; 6. Jensen (WS), 177-3; 7. Buss (S), 174-5; 8. Swan (O), 173-5. Others included: 11. Wells (UCLA), 153-10.

TRIPLE JUMP—1. Banks (UCLA), 54-11; 2. Harlow (Cal), 53-4 1/2; 3. Campbell (WS), 53-0 1/4; 4. Joseph (UCLA), 51-7 1/4; 5. Benson (UCLA), 50-7 1/4; 6. Assef (USC), 49-8 1/4; 7. Jackson (USC), 49-8 1/4; 8. Dobbins (Cal), 49-7 1/4.

DECATHLON (final 10-event scores)—1. Larsson (OS), 7,622; 2. Allen (WS), 7,483; 3. Johnson (OS), 7,414; 4. Canfield (Cal), 7,276; 5. Wheeler (UCLA), 7,274; 6. Gefro (W), 7,088; 7.

Doyle (O), 6,986; 8. Ilpo Paananen (USC), 6,974. (Individual)—110HH—Canfield, 14.7 (881); Wheeler, 15.1 (837); Larsson, 15.3 (817); Paananen, 15.8 (767). DT—Gefro, 138-8 (729); Larsson, 128-7 (670); Wheeler, 126-5 (656); Paananen, 120-8. PV—Allen and Doyle, 14-8; Larsson, 13-11 1/4 (876); Paananen, 13-0 (767); Wheeler, 12-8 (769). JT—Gefro, 222-5 (854); Paananen, 220-4; Larsson, 213-3 (821); Wheeler, 195-9 (757). 1,500—Wheeler, 4:19.7 (662); Larsson, 4:26.0 (617); Paananen, 5:12.4 (343).

FINAL TEAM SCORES—USC 126; Oregon 119; UCLA 113; Washington St. 109 1/2; Washington 60; Oregon St. 56 1/2; California 37; Stanford 28.