Hayward Field.

## U.S. Uncovers New a Steeplechase Threat in Gerber

By MAL FLORENCE, Times Staff Writer

EUGENE, Ore.-Farley Gerber says that he gets

advice and inspiration from Henry Marsh, the American record-holder in the 3,000-meter steeplechase. Gerber is also emulating the veteran Marsh on the track. The 24-year-old athlete from Weber State upset Julius Korir of Washington State Friday evening to win the steeplechase in the NCAA track and field meet at

He jumped the Kenvan runner with about 800 meters left and went on to win in the time of 8 minutes 19.27 seconds, best ever by an American collegian. Gerber also became the second fastest American at the distance

behind Marsh's 8:12.37. Korir is regarded as a contender in the steeple in the

Summer Olympics at the Coliseum. Now Gerber is in the picture

Gerber was cheered loudly by a pro-Oregon crowd that not only appreciates fine performances but anyone who can beat someone from Washington State.

The Cougars were favored to win the team title, but

they're fading and the Ducks are coming on strong.

Oregon fans also cheered one of their own as Brazil's Joaquim Cruz, who is a gold medal prospect in the 800, won that event in 1:45.10. He had to surge in the last 300 meters as Alabama's William Wuyke tried to steal the

race with a 49.9 seconds first lap.
This is a meet in which USC and UCLA once figured prominently. Not this year. But the Bruins' John Brenner, who is more renowned as a world-class shotputter, was the upset winner in the discus with a

lifetime best throw of 208 feet 1 inch. Brenner will try to become a double winner today when he takes on SMU's Michael Carter, who has won seven straight (four indoor) NCAA titles in the shotput. It wasn't a good day for prominent African runners

Korir lost and Tanzania's Gidamis Shahanga, the defending 10,000 meter champion from Texas El Paso. offernding 10,000 meter champion from Texas &t Paso, was a straggler in eighth place. Winner in a race that has been dominated by Africans in NCAA competition. He became the first American to win the 10,000 since Penn State's Charles McGuire did it in 1973.

And Gerber was only the third American collegian to win the NCAA steeplechase in the past 10 years. "I didn't want to kick with him (Korir)," Gerber said

"So my race plan was to conserve energy and try to move with 600 meters to go. I took off at 800 with a hard,

Korir couldn't catch Gerber, although he made up some ground at the end and finished in a creditable 8:19.95, a personal best for him.

"Yesterday's race in the 5,000 trials made me to be slow," Korir said. "If I had not run that race, I think I could have out-sprinted him.

Shahanga, who was third in the 10,000 at the world championships last August in Helsinki, Finland, had obviously worn himself out before Friday's race. He had competed in a 20K race last Sunday in Philadelphia, then ran a 10K Monday in Boulder, Colo.

Marsh is noted for following the pack in the steeple and then kicking at the end of the race. But Gerber, who knocked five seconds off his previous best time,

wouldn't compare his style to his friend. "Henry has more leg speed and he wouldn't take off

as soon as I did," Gerber said.

Gerber, from West Jordan, Utah, said that he frequently visits with Marsh, a lawyer from Salt Lake

City.
"We're good friends," said the slender blond runner.

He is my biggest fan and I'm his biggest fan. Gerber, a senior, has been running the steeple since he was a freshman but he interrupted his running career

for a while to go on a Mormon mission in Chile. Brenner said that he wasn't surprised that he threw the discus as far as he did. But he was surprised that he

"I thought I could throw 208 feet, but I figured it was only good for third or fourth place," he said. "I always improve by about 10 feet in the discus late in the season.

But I can also die out just as quick."

Brigham Young's Stefan Fernholm was favored in the event, but he finished second at 207-2. USC's Hank

Kraychir was in ninth place with a throw of 198-7. Now Brenner, who has thrown the shot 71-31/2 this year-second best in the world-must get himself psyched up to meet Carter.

'It would be fantastic if I could do it (beat Carter),' said the UCLA senior. "I'm just going to go back to my hotel, get something to eat and go to bed. I'll start getting nervous by noontime tomorrow."

Crus, the smooth striding Brazilian, is also going for a double win. He'll be in the 1,500 today and will try to become the first runner to win both the 800 and 1,500 in an NCAA meet since Villanova's Don Paige pulled it off

"I like the 800 better than the 1,500 because it is shorter and you don't suffer as much," said Cruz, an Oregon sophomore, who was the NCAA 800 winner last

Cruz went by Wuyke on the backstretch of the second lap after the Alabama runner had bucked a brisk north wind for the first quarter. Wuyke faded and finished fourth while Earl Jones of Eastern Michigan had a strong kick to finish second in 1-45.79. Cruz, who has his own personal coach, Luiz Oliveira, said he isn't certain whether he'll run for Oregon next

There were other oustanding performances on a

windy but clear day. For example —Mike Conley of Arkansas, who'll try to win the triple jump today, won the long jump at 27-0¼. USC'S Ed Tave was fourth at 26-4¾. All jumps were wind

-Houston's Kirk Baptise, who could win the 100 today, took the 200 in 20.16. He was helped along by a wind reading of 3.82 meters per second.

-Danny Harris, a freshman at lowa State and a defensive back on the football team, lowered his world junior record in the 400-intermediate hurdles with a time of 48.81. Harris, former Perris High star, could be a factor in the U.S. Olympic trials June 16-24 at the

-Randy Givens of Florida State won the women's 100 in a wind-aided 11.06 and Oregon's Claudette Groenendaal and Wisconsin's Cathy Branta set meet records in winning the 1.500 (4.14.31) and 3.000 (8:59.57), respectively.

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