

Sports

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An emerging program

Javelin thrower Mary Osborne and distance runner Ann Wotherspoon (inset) have helped bring national recognition to Stanford University's three-season-old

women's varsity track program. Both won their events in the Stanford Women's Classic Friday. Details, D-2.

Times Tribune staff photos by Joe Meloni

Building a program at Stanford

Women's track team
can compete nationally

By Keith Peters
Times Tribune staff

STANFORD — It was only a few years ago that many women's collegiate track and field programs were a bad joke.

The punch line sounded like it belonged to Rodney Dangerfield: "Hey, I get no respect."

There also was not enough money, athletes or recognition. Fortunately for the future of the women's programs, time and Title IX changed the bad joke into a good story.

One of these stories is being unfolded at Stanford University.

Before 1979, women's track at Stanford was on a club level. As priorities go, it ranked right up there with club lacrosse and intramural darts.

Since obtaining varsity status in 1979, Stanford has raised its women's team to where it now can be competitive on a national level.

At present, five Stanford women have qualified in seven events for the AIAW Championships, May 28-30 in Texas. All but one competed in Friday's first Stanford Women's Classic, an event in which

Track

two Stanford Stadium records fell.

Deanne Johnson of the Stanford Track Club broke her own stadium mark in the 400 hurdles, clocking her 1981 best of 1:00.7. Stanford freshman Ellen Lyons clipped 38 seconds off the other, lowering Kim Schnurpfeil's 10,000-meter school and stadium standard to 34:10.

Lyons, whose time is fourth-best in the nation, according to Track and Field News, has met the AIAW qualifying mark in three events. She is one of the keys to Stanford's future as a prominent track school.

While all his nationally-ranked women are either freshmen or sophomores, head coach Brooks Johnson isn't sitting idle. Among next year's incoming freshmen is Cici Hopp of Greenwich, Conn., the current national prep leader in the mile at 4:45.09 (indoors).

According to T&F News, Hopp ranks fourth in the nation at 1,500 meters, second at 3,000 meters and third at two miles.

Also coming to Stanford in the fall is Buchser High's multi-talented Margaret Demorest, who placed in both hurdle events Friday.

Other top marks included a 145-3 javelin throw by Reno High's Heidi Iratcabal (No. 5 nationally for preps), a 2:13.5 victory in the 800 meters by West Valley's Diana Figliomeni (No. 2 in the state for JCs), a javelin throw of 167-6 by Stanford's Mary Osborne and teammate Carol Cady's 166-9 discus triumph.

Both Cady and Osborne are



Times Tribune staff photo by Joe Melena

Stanford's Carol Cady won the shot put and her specialty, the discus, Friday at Stanford.

ranked among the top 10 nationally in their respective events, Cady ninth in the discus and Osborne fourth in the javelin.

In Los Angeles this weekend, the renewal of a somewhat mellowed rivalry between high hurdlers Renaldo Nehemiah and Greg Foster will be among the highlights of Sunday's UCLA-Pepsi track meet.

Nehemiah set the world record of 13.00 in the 110-meter hurdles in the meet two years ago, but lost to Foster in the 1980 meet at UCLA's Drake Stadium.

Previously, the two have taken verbal swipes at each other on occasion, but that apparently is finished.

"We're much more friendly now," Foster said. But he added that he was anticipating Sunday's duel, saying, "I am ready and really looking forward to it."

In the loss last year, Nehemiah was running just his second race after coming back from a lengthy layoff with an ankle injury.

Also on tap for the meet is a men's 100-meter dash featuring James Sanford and Stanley Floyd, and an outstanding mile field that includes America's Steve Scott, New Zealand's John Walker and Ireland's Eamonn Coghlan.

The meeting between Sanford, the world's top-rated sprinter in 1979, and Floyd, No. 1 in 1980, will be their first outdoors this year. Also in the field are Ron Brown of Arizona State and Pac-10 leader Eric Brown of UCLA.

A redshirt this season at USC, Sanford was clocked in 10.02 seconds at this meet in 1980, the best 100 meters ever at sea level. He also had a wind-aided 9.88 in last year's UCLA-Southern Cal dual meet.

Jimmy Hines set the world record of 9.95 in 1968 at Mexico City.

In Provo, Utah, Texas-El Paso took a runaway lead Friday in the first of two days of competition in the Western Athletic Conference track championship, while Brigham Young's Tito Steiner bettered his own WAC meet record by accumulating 7,928 points to win the decathlon.

The 1981 Pacific Coast Athletic Association finals will be held May 15-16 at Long Beach State.

Among those favored for individual titles are San Jose State's Bo Breigan in the 800 (1:48.44) and former College of San Mateo standout Michael Smith of Long Beach. Smith, the PCAA's top shot putter at 63-4, already has met the qualifying standard for the NCAA meet.