

Aztec track team improves

By Tracy Tucker

There is a general theory in sports that says to become a winner, you must seek to better yourself.

The Aztec track team advocates this theory, and they have the facts to prove it.

At the non-scoring Long Beach Relays last Friday and Saturday, the tracksters bettered their previous week's marks in every event, and in addition, notched a win in the mile relay. Others in the field included Cal Poly Pomona, United States International University, California State University, Long Beach, and University of Southern California.

"We don't have a real strong quality type of depth, but the depth we have has been producing better marks each week, and that's what it's all about," said Aztec coach Dick Hill. "This team is going to go a long way."

The idea of continuing improvement was typified by the Aztec's mile relay performance. The team consisted of Brian Donahue, Garry Greene, Quentin Wheeler, and Harold Williams.

Donahue led off the race with a lap of 49.7 seconds. After Greene's second lap of 49.1 seconds, the Aztecs were in third place. However, after a third lap time of 47.7 by Wheeler, San Diego was only a step behind leader USC. The Aztecs finally won in a last lap that saw anchor-man Williams again lose and regain the lead, posting a time of 47.2 seconds, and a total time of 3:13.7 seconds. At Irvine Feb. 22, San Diego ran the same race in 3:15.7 seconds.

Hill attributed the improvement to the running of Williams and Wheeler. Wheeler ran a 48.2 second lap at Irvine, and Williams was not in the event at all.

Hill also noted that the mile relay is a little more meaningful than other events.

"The mile relay never fails to provide sparks," said Hill. "It enables you to leave the field with an air of triumph."

The only event that the Aztecs did not better was the distance medley, simply because they had nothing to better. San Diego had not run in the event before last Friday.

Despite this, the Aztecs still finished second, behind USC. The Trojans ran the race in 9:50.2 seconds compared to the Aztec's 9:52.8 second mark. The race featured Odie Huffman, Earl Robinson, Alan Hazard, and Williams.

"Earl gave up the mile on the third lap," said Hill, referring to Robinson's running of the mile portion of the relay. One runner runs 440 yards, one 880 yards, one 1,320 yards, and the last a mile. "He led the mile until then. We were hanging right on top."

Another battle that went to USC was the two-mile relay. Steve Wulf, along with Robinson, Huffman and Donahue, turned in an Aztec time of 7:35.8 seconds, matched against SC's 7:32 flat.

"The two mile was a little disappointing," said Hill. "We were in it all the way until we lost contact on the first lap of the anchor leg."

With each runner taking an 880 yard run in the above race, Huffman came through with the most impressive time, a 1:51.8 second run. At Irvine, Huffman ran 1:53.3 seconds.

For the second week in a row, it was USC who gave the Aztecs trouble. But according to Hill, the

Trojans and Aztecs have a type of competitive comradery going.

"We didn't go to get wrapped up with USC, but we just seem to gravitate with one another," said Hill. "The teams sit with one another, and talk with one another. It's always been that kind of thing. It's a different kind of deal with SC. I can't quite put it into words."

"Despite running against SC, we did a great job. We were running as well as anticipated in almost every race. Huffman and Wheeler have consistently improved, and 75 per cent of the team has reached their lifetime best mark."

And they're only three weeks into the season.