

## USTCA revamps competition for Tar Heel meet

■ Unlike other track meets, the Regional Cup will keep team scores.

BY T. NOLAN HAYES  
STAFF WRITER

Americans want action, and they don't want to wait for it.

The United States Track Coaches Association realized this fact and developed a new way to promote collegiate track and field throughout the nation.

In order to fit an entire meet into just three hours, the USTCA made several changes. Men's and women's field events will take place simultaneously, and athletes will take four attempts instead of the customary six tries.

In addition, all events are finals, and only three athletes from each team are permitted to compete in a given event.

The USTCA will put its new product on display Saturday in the Regional Cup at North Carolina as Georgetown, N.C. State, Penn State and St. Augustine's visit the Tar Heels. As part of the 20-meet U.S. Collegiate Track & Field Series, the competition at Belk Track and Fetzer Field will start at 1 p.m. and conclude by 4. Admission is free.

The meet will be televised on ESPN2 and will air Monday at 12:30 a.m. on delay.

"We're trying to show people that they can enjoy a good track meet in three hours just like a baseball game or a basketball game," UNC coach Dennis Craddock said. "Track meets don't always have to be a 10-hour marathon."

There is another fundamental difference between Saturday's action and standard regular-season meets — score will be kept. The top-10 finishers in each event will earn points based on a sliding scale that gives 12 points for a first-place finish and one point for a 10th-place finish. Only two competitors from a team may score in a single event.

"I'm one of the coaches who's been pushing hard for scored meets and complete teams," Craddock said.

"So many college teams just have all distance runners or all sprinters — not a complete team. I believe track and field is supposed to be a complete team sport, so I'm happy to see every event scored."

UNC's teams will look to show the home crowd and national TV audience just how complete they are. Several of the most talented Tar Heels will make their season home debuts in the meet.

Among those is senior Milton Campbell, one of the nation's fastest men. Campbell finished second in the 200-meter dash and fourth in the 400 at this year's NCAA Indoor Championships. He holds the collegiate record in the indoor 200.

He suffered a sprained ankle early last week and missed the Texas Relays but expects to compete Saturday in both the 200 and 400.

"I won't be 100 percent, but I'll be 80 to 85 percent, which is good enough right now," Campbell said. "I still expect to run fast and qualify for NCAAs."

Campbell will be challenged by St. Augustine's Jerome Young, who clocked 44.50 seconds in the 400 at last year's World Championships. N.C. State senior Alvis Whitted, who owns school records in the 100, 200 and 400, is also expected to compete.

UNC senior Eric Bishop, a two-time national champion, is the meet's big-name performer in the high jump.

On the women's side, seniors LaTasha Colander and Monique Hennagan lead UNC in the track events. Hennagan, returning to competition after a bout with mononucleosis, is one of the nation's top runners in the 400 and 800. Colander has won three consecutive ACC Most Valuable Performer awards while specializing in hurdles.

The record-setting jump trio of LaShonda Christopher, DeAnne Davis and Nicole Gamble should produce high point totals for the Tar Heels in the field events.

Both Georgetown and N.C. State figure to challenge the Tar Heels. NCSU's men won the ACC outdoor title in 1996, and its women have a strong distance core. The Hoyas finished fourth in the NCAA women's indoor meet this year. The men rank top-20 annually.

Although the Regional Cup boasts many great athletes, it is not strictly a track meet. The East Coast Bicycle Stunt Team will perform ramp jumps, and door prizes will be awarded throughout the day.

UNC Olympians Allen Johnson and Tisha Waller will be available 30 minutes prior to the meet for autographs.

"It's going to be very interesting," Campbell said. "I'm anxious to see this happen, and I really hope it works."

## Wake Forest's Odom mentioned for Texas coaching job

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN, Texas — The search for a basketball coach at the University of Texas may be expanded, a high-ranking university source said Wednesday.

The search, which has included Utah's Rick Majerus, Oklahoma's Kelvin Sampson and then centered on Washington coach Bob Bender, could be expanded to include Wake Forest's Dave Odom, said the source, who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity.

On Tuesday, members of the Texas screening committee had focused their attention on Bender.

Longhorns athletic director DeLoss Dodds had indicated he wanted to hire someone by Wednesday, if possible, because it marked the first day of the national signing period for high school recruits.

But a group of UT officials on Wednesday pushed for an interview with Odom, who has been at Wake Forest for nine years and took the

Demon Deacons to seven consecutive NCAA tournaments before narrowly failing to make the tournament this year, the source said.

Odom is a proven coach of big men, having been credited with developing former star center Tim Duncan, now with the San Antonio Spurs. The Longhorns' offensive figures to form around 7-foot center Chris Mihm over the next few seasons.

UT officials, however, were unclear if Odom would agree to meet with them.

Odom has expressed that he's happy at Wake Forest after signing a new contract two years ago. He is a native of North Carolina and also has two sons who coach in the area — at East Carolina and at Furman.

Odom's secretary said the coach was out of the office Wednesday. Wake Forest athletic director Ron Wellman also was out of the office and didn't return a message left by the AP.

Meanwhile, in Seattle, Bender held a news conference to say that he hadn't

been offered the job at Texas and didn't know that he would take it if offered.

"I would hope this is decided as quickly as possible," Bender said. "But I don't think this is something that's going to happen in 24 hours. They're going to need some time."

"They have not offered me anything and I don't know what my final decision would be," he said. "Texas is a place where you can win a national championship and Washington is a place where you can win a national championship."



UNC sprinter **MILTON CAMPBELL** finished second in the 200 meters and fourth in the 400 at the NCAA Indoor Championships.

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