



PAC-12 CONFERENCE

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2016 Track & Field Championships Quotes

Seattle, Wash. – Husky Track

OREGON HEAD COACH ROBERT JOHNSON

Q: How did it feel to see your teams win both championships today?

A: We did a fantastic job today, starting out of the gates. Really excited how the kids responded on day 2.

Q: What was the catalyst for the men? Was it the 1500m?

A: It started with the 4x100 for the men, then moving to the 1500 meter. You could see the momentum starting to shift for them.

Q: Did you have a point in the meet where you felt like the men had the meet in hand?

A: Probably at the 5,000. The 5k is when we started to breathe easy a little bit.

Q: What about on the women's side? When did you feel comfortable and comment on the performances of Devon Allen and Hannah Cunliffe.

It was definitely a lot earlier. It was a great day for Hannah. This is sort of a homecoming for her being from Federal Way. We had been talking about this all along with Devon, maybe months out, knowing that this would be the plan and the preparation that goes along with that. For them to come out here and execute what we put on paper long ago is always exciting.

Q: Thoughts on the sprinters on the women's side?

I saw some stat about the Oregon sweeps that was pretty impressive. And to have our names associated with that, in that event group area, and being where we're from and it being Oregon, is definitely special.

Q: Coming into the meet, did you think they could accomplish that?

We thought we had a pretty special group of female sprinters. Overall a good team. So for them to actually make it happen is all that much special.

Q: What's head this year?

We'll go home and take care of our bodies, dip in ice and see what happens here over the next couple of weeks.

WOMEN'S HAMMER THROW – MAGGIE EWEN, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Q: How did it feel to get the victory?

A: It's been three years in the making. I've put in the practice and it is really starting to pay off. All the trust I have in coach is really showing now.

Q: Is it there an adjustment to this climate?

A: It's a little bit of an adjustment, but I am from Minnesota so this is how my whole high school career was pretty much. We threw in the rain, the sleet and the snow. This feels like home a little bit.

Q: Does it take a toll on you competing in three events?

A: They are not too taxing. It is not like a running event where you are giving 100 percent of your body's effort. It is more 100 percent of your technical effort. Doing three events is a little exhausting, but it's not too bad.

MEN'S 1500 METERS – IZAIC YORKS, WASHINGTON

Q: How was that 1500 meters?

A: This is my track and where I run all the time, went out there and ran wire to wire to send a message out there to the NCAA. I have no problem doing that, they couldn't hang and that was okay.

Q: How much pride was there when you were leading the race the whole way?

A: It was a pleasure to be out there in front of all the fans and the alumni, we don't have big meets here very often so that was awesome to do.

Q: How is the training for the Olympics going?

A: I think it's going really well. I have to give it up to my coaches for prepping me for this, the start of the season was a little bit slower but now we're into really hard stuff and I think this will be a good season for me.

Q: How much does having the aerobic background help you?

A: I think that's been a huge thing, all my running has been from aerobic power and then just adding the speed behind it. It makes a big difference because my recovery is so much better between races.

WOMEN'S TRIPLE JUMP – ISABELLA MARTEN, CAL

Q: How was the competition?

A: It was great, great competition. I started with a personal record of 13.31 m. When I did my warmup I had shin splints so I had to pass my last two jumps.

Q: How did it feel today with the conditions?

A: It was good, I really like the track because it is really soft and bouncy because I'm a speed jumper and there was great competition.

Q: How did you decide to come to the US?

A: When I was competing in the World Championships in Oregon two years ago for Germany, and I got recruited there.

Q: How's it been here so far?

A: I really like the US, I would like to stay here because it's been really good for my career.

Q: What's it like being on a college team and being in these championships?

A: It's a little different than my club sports in Germany but it's more comparable to competing for the German National team, but I love the team experience and you have the push to better because you're supporting the whole team and not just yourself.

MEN'S HIGH JUMP – THANE PIERSON

Q: What does this mean to you?

A: Oh it's an honor for sure, Pac-12 is definitely one of my favorite meets. I never really performed as well as I liked in the past and I just tried to get as ready as I could this year.

Q: How was your mark in compared to what you're hoping to get?

A: I tied my PR, but I definitely think I have a couple more bars in me this year. The top mark in the nation is 7'5 and I'd like to get to 7'6.

WOMEN'S 100, 200, 4x100 METTER– HANNAH CUNLIFEE, OREGON

Q: Does this meet your expectations?

A: Yes, we got the one and then we all supported each other and of course we all want to win and we were glad it was all three of us on the podium.

Q: Is there competition between you guys?

A: Oh yes, but it's not like if she beats me I'm not going to talk to her. It's more like she beat me I'm going to get her next time.

Q: What does it mean to have two individual titles?

A: It's great, I did not go into this thinking we were going to get all three, I just wanted to execute the race. It was great to be in my hometown and have my family support.

Q: Are you surprised at all at how well you have done?

A: I think there are definitely people surprised, especially our coaches. We out did their expectations.

Q: How do you feel now?

A: I feel more confident because I have been really consistent in my races and even a PR.

WOMEN'S 100 HURDLES – SASHA WALLACE, OREGON

Q: Did you realize you had won when you crossed the finish line?

A: I knew that it was going to be close because the last few races have been very close so all you can do is lean at the line which is what I have been practicing with my coach so I'm happy I got the win today.

Q: Were you happy with your time?

A: I really wanted to go sub 13, but the time was coming sooner than later so I'm just happy I got the win today. That's all that matters at conference meets is put your team in a good position to win the championship.

Q: How does it feel to be so far ahead in this meet with your team?

A: I actually haven't had a chance to look at the points, but coming off of day one coach said we put ourselves in a good position so all we can do is try to keep putting the points up there.

Q: Did you think that you had this dominate of a team?

A: Well I knew that we had really strong sprinters and distance runners and field event people, that gives us a lot of confidence to come out for the win. We have to focus as an individual, but also as part of a team.

WOMEN'S 400 HURDLES, 4x400 METER – JAIDE STEPTER, USC

Q: This was your first time victory in the hurdles how does it feel?

A: It was really exciting, an ugly race. It just came down to having a will to win and you know my training of course to come back and win after a bad three quarter of the race.

Q: How was it to close out the meet with a win in 4x400 relay?

A: This is my last Pac-12 championship and I wanted to close out strong and my team gave me a big lead and I wanted finish for them.

MEN'S 400 HURDLES – CJ ALLEN, WSU

Q: How was the race today?

A: We just really wanted to focus on putting a good race together. The training had been incredible the past few weeks, we're strong enough, fast enough, and it was a matter of putting it together on the right day and I think we had a good rhythm today. We're very excited for the future.

Q: What the difference with your pretty consistent fast times this year?

A: After today, it was probably the temperature. As we progressed there was definitely different conditions.

Q: What does it mean to you to come and win again?

A: I pride myself on working hard all the time, it means a great deal. It is definitely one of those things and really compete again and see the progress we've made.

WOMEN'S 400 METER, OLIVIA BAKER, STANFORD

Q: What did you do to get the strength on the last 100 and how did you not get discouraged?

A: Staying within striking distance. Going into the last 100 I felt like she was in striking distance and being an 800 runner, I knew that the strong part of my race was going to be the back-end. Even if people went past me in the front-end, I knew I could be one of the strongest finishers on the field.

Q: Do you pay attention to how many meters you made up?

A: Yeah, I just dig and dig and never give up, knowing that the race isn't over until you run the full 400 meters.

Q: What does it mean to you to win this?

A: It means a lot. I am so thankful and so blessed, thanking God for giving me the strength to be able to run and win a Pac-12 Championship

Q: What was your philosophy going in to the race?

A: Just want coach always says the first 200 is about execution and the last 200 is on racing, I was just focused on the first 200 strong and composed and the last 200 was a fight to the finish.

MEN'S 800 METER – COLLINS KIBET, ARIZONA

Q: How was the race today?

A: The race went very well, by all means the goal was to win.

Q: You had to watch the leader instead of lead this time?

A: Yeah it was easy for me to run like that, but then I couldn't see and I had to be careful while passing.

Q: What were you thinking right at the end of the battle?

A: The goal was to not go too fast and to not go too slow, getting between and not like the guys behind me get close to me.

Q: How does it feel to be a Pac-12 Champion?

A: This is the best moment for me after years of working.

MEN'S DISCUS THROW– NICHOLAS SCARVELIS, UCLA

Q: How was the competition today?

A: It was great, started off strong. The ring was wet and everyone was struggling a bit, my warmup wasn't very good but then I changed my shoes and I was able to start really strong.

Q: What's clicking to make this seasons to make it so successful?

A: It's my last year at school and I thought to make the most of it. I approached the off season strong and wanted to have no regrets about how I trained, competed and slept. Been extremely focused this year so this is exactly what I expected.

Q: How was having your sister on the team?

A: It's awesome. Having my sister on the team means that the whole family is more involved at UCLA and she's great to have her training partner every day. She's going to have a great career here.

Q: What are you excited about in Western Regionals?

A: I think that if the conditions are good or even if they aren't, I feel like I could throw the same or maybe even further. I have great expectations and would love to make it to Nationals.

MEN'S 110 HURDLES, 200 METER – DEVON ALLEN, OREGON

Q: What impressed you the most about what you were able to do today?

A: I'm just glad that I performed well in general. I wanted to better in my 100, but third place wasn't bad at all. Two events back to back is tiring but I train for it in practice, it's just tiring. I am happy that we came out with a team title.

Q: Were you concerned about not winning the title?

A: We talked about it in the team meeting because coach makes everything real dire. Of course we want to run PRs but the goal is to come home with the team title. Now we have to move on the the big picture team title.

MEN'S 400 METERS – MARCUS CHAMBERS, UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Q: How did running a season best feel?

A: Coach Johnson and I have a great game plan. I wanted to start with good momentum going into the back stretch. As you could see, everyone started to go past me, but I wanted to make sure I ran my race. I knew when the time was right, I'd be able to kick at the end. Once it got to about 140 or 150 meters, I started to pick it up and give it everything I had the last 110 meters. It was a great gameplan and it worked out.

Q: Did you have a time in mind today?

A: At a meet like this, it's really for points to get the team title. That's why I am doing a few different things like the 200 to make sure we get the team title. The times are going to come with the better weather, the better competition, so I am not worried about that. Coach Johnson knows when I have to run fast at the right times so I have all my trust in him. He'll make sure I run fast when it counts.

MEN'S TRIPLE JUMP – DARIAN BROOKS, STANFORD

Q: What does it feel like to win three consecutive Pac-12 Championships?

A: It feels good, a little bittersweet because I didn't get the PR. But it was nice to be home and have the whole family be here in the stands. Great groups of guys out here, pushing forward to regionals. Glad I took a fifth year.

Q: Was it different this time to not have so much pressure?

A: Yeah it was different, I came in with a little bit more confidence. But again the field was tight so with that confidence there is a little bit of fear with it. I have to put on a face that I can do this or I will scare my mom to death.

Q: Is there anything about your jumping that's helping you?

A: Just staying healthy and also now my landing it helping me.

MEN'S 5000 METER – COLBY GILBERT, WASHINGTON

Q: Did you have a lot left so you made the move?

A: It seems that way yes, it was rare but it was nice.

Q: Added speed it year?

A: Running lower mileage and staying healthier has really helped my speed. Running 75 (miles), and not 90 like the summer.

Q: Stress fracture in the fall, how was that?

A: I was out for about two months, but could use the gravity treadmill and after fall I was back to normal.

WOMEN'S 5000 METER – KAITLYN BENNER, COLORADO

Q: What was the goal today?

A: The goal was just to go out there and place the highest that we could and score the most points we could for the team, stay in the mix and tuck in on the rail and not use too much energy at the beginning.

Q: What did it feel like being 1 and 2 with Erin?

A: Awesome! Erin knows the feeling of being a champion as an individual and it just made it better being one two with a teammate and friend.

Q: What's next at regionals and nationals?

A: I think we have a really good chance at both of them and staying with the plan of training.

MEN'S 4x400 – JACKSON SHUMWAY, STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Q: How did it feel to get the victory?

A: The first three legs gave us a great lead so I felt pretty confident and then at about 200 I saw Myles Parish from Arizona coming up on me. I figured we had not won this event since 1954 so I was not about to let it go at the end.

Q: How does it feel to be a Pac-12 Champion?

A: It feels pretty good. I was second in the hurdles earlier today and second in the hurdles last year. I have been right on the cusp a couple times, so it feels good to get one – especially with these three guys. We broke the school record a couple weeks ago, so it's been a great team to be a part of. I am lucky to have a team like that.