

Oldfield, three others exceed 70 feet in

By Steve Brand, Staff Writer

SAN JOSE — Speed City has become Shot City. In the late 1960s, sprinters such as Tommie Smith, Lee Evans and John Carlos attended San Jose State. This Northern California city earned the nickname of Speed City.

After Brian Oldfield led four shot putters past 70 feet with an American and near-world record 72 feet, 9/4 inches in yesterday's Bruce Jenner-Michelob Light Classic at San Jose City College, the emphasis clearly has changed.

Not that the sprinting in this meet was bad. Carl Lewis ran the fastest 200 meters in the world this year, a wind-aided 20.01, and beat Ron Brown in the 100 with a windy 10.00.

The crowd of more than 9,000 saw several upsets; a handful of big-name no-shows, including Edwin Moses and Evelyn Ashford; and a potential American record long jump of 23-0/4 by Carol Lewis that was erased by a breeze of just more than the limit.

They also were treated to the finest shot putting in history. The only other time two shot putters surpassed 70 feet was when East German Udo Beyer needed a world-record 72-10/4 to beat American Dave Laut in the USA-East German dual meet last summer.

Three other competitors — UCLA's John Brenner (70-10), Laut (70-9/4) and Michael Carter (70-3) — had exceeded 70 feet yesterday before Oldfield, soon to be 39, stepped into the ring for his third throw. Earlier, he had been warming up over the world record, which was marked with a blue chalk line and a large balloon. This time he let loose with a mighty heave and a guttural roar.

When his 16-pound shot kicked up the blue chalk upon landing, the crowd cheered, and Oldfield tossed both hands high in the air in celebration. He jogged out to get his shot and said a few words to the official. Then he tossed down his shot in disgust at having missed the world record by an inch. He was happier when he realized he'd moved out of a

East German meet. When they do that, it's difficult to concentrate again.

"This was his right place and right time. But I'm not worried; I'll have my right place and right time . . . hopefully in the Olympic Games."

Oldfield and Laut almost came to blows in the 1981 national championships in Sacramento when Oldfield said the official mismarked Laut's winning throw. That animosity is history.

"You don't step on Brian's toes," Laut said. "Everyone likes Brian. He's the best personality in our sport. There's a shot-putting clique internationally, and when he's not there something is missing."

Behind Oldfield, UCLA senior Brenner had three throws of more than 70 feet.

Credit for the performances was given to the unique format that saw the meet come to a halt for the shot. An elevated ring on the edge of the football field (to allow the shot to land on the same plane as the ring) was located directly in front of the stands.

The wind spoiled what promised to be a special meet, the last for many of America's top performers before the United States Olympic trials in three weeks at Los Angeles.

Lewis had hoped for a pair of dramatic runs before the trials.

"I'm slightly disappointed," he said of his performances in the 100 and 200. "I was nicked by the wind because I ran close (to breaking 10.0 and 20.0). I know I ran a good technical race (in the 200); I did everything I wanted to do.

"I'm working on running the turn. I'm capable of running 10.20 for the first 100; then I'll just have to hold form."

Experts figure that with the running start of the first 100, Lewis could clock close to 8.0 for the second half of the 200.

Lewis' 100 was aided by a 2.07-meters-per-second wind. The 200 was pushed by a breeze of 2.08. Anything more than 2.0 mps is too strong for record purposes.

His sister, too, was hurt by the wind.

On her second jump, Carol Lewis long jumped 23-0/4, exceeding the listed American record of 22-11/4 by Jodi Anderson. A 2.20 mps wind denied Lewis the record.

"I felt like I was jinxed today," Carol Lewis said. "You have 1/2 minutes to jump after the official drops the flag. I was trying to wait until the wind stopped, and it never did. I'm going to talk to Mother Nature and get the wind shut off."

Mary Decker and Steve Scott breezed to victories, but world champions Greg Foster and Bert Cameron were upset, as was American 100-meter hurdles record holder Stephanie Hightower.

Decker won the women's 1,500 by 40 yards at 4:05.0, and Scott sprinted away from a weak mile field in 3:57.71, his 85th clocking of less than four minutes. "I want to be the first to reach 100," said Scott, who also is finished running until the Olympic Trials.

Foster, who was considered unbeatable in the 110-meter high hurdles, clipped the third hurdle and skidded to a stop before the fourth barrier. Roger Kingdom, competing unattached, won in 13.23, just ahead of Tonie Campbell of Stars & Stripes, who clocked 13.25.

Cameron, the former UTEP athlete from Jamaica who is favored in the Olympic 400, was upset by former Air Force standout Alonzo Babers. Babers ran 45.24 to Cameron's 45.73.

Hightower, the American record holder, was beaten at the tape by Candy Young, who ran 13.17 to Hightower's 13.18.

Moses withdrew after suffering from allergies the past week. Ashford was in attendance but suffered a minor leg injury while warming up.

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He was happier when he realized he'd moved out of a tie with Laut for the American record. The two had shared the U.S. best at 72-3.

"I saw blue smoke, and when the crowd went off it told me it was a good throw," said Oldfield, who once put the shot 75 feet while competing for the professional International Track Association. That mark never has been accepted for record purposes, and his involvement in pro track may prevent him from competing in the Olympic Games this summer, although he is appealing that ban in court.

"The winning throw was very easy; I was surprised to see it go that well," said Oldfield, 6-foot-7 and 265 pounds.

He still had to wait as seven competitors took three more attempts, but Laut said the event was over as soon as Oldfield's big throw came down.

"He did it (reached 72-9³/₄) right before I was going to throw," Laut said. "Beyer did the same thing to me in the