

NCAA Cross-country

Ducks third

HOUSTON—Bill Dellinger's surprising Oregon cross-country team finished third in the NCAA championships at Houston Monday.

The Ducks, who went into the meet without defending individual winner Steve Prefontaine, were third with 159 points.

Tennessee, a team that just managed to survive its district competition, ended up winning the team title behind Doug Brown's second place finish. The Vols had 135 points while East Tennessee was second with 149.

If Prefontaine would have run, and taken first place, Oregon would have taken a second straight NCAA title by over 20 points.

As it was, Randy James was the top Duck finisher on the damp Glenbrook Golf Course layout as he came in 9th. James ran a 29:09 over the six-mile course. Rick Ritchie was 22nd with a 29:37, Pat Tyson was 32nd with 29:49, and freshman Gary Barger was 41st with a time of 29:55.

Washington State, the Pac-8 champion, finished behind Oregon with 167 points. In fifth place was Miami (Ohio) with 174 and Bowling Green was sixth with 175. Oklahoma St. was seventh with 226 points.

Neil Cusack, the ace runner on East Tennessee's all-Irish team, took the individual title after leading most of the way. He ran a 28:32 to edge Tennessee's Brown, a steeplechaser in the Olympic Games, who ran 28:44.

Women take one game in hockey tournament

The University women's field hockey team won one game, tied another and lost two during their play in the Northwest College Women's Sports Association tournament in British Columbia Friday and Saturday.

The Oregon team defeated the University of Idaho 4-1 in the second game of the two-day tourney in Vancouver. Freshman Monique Trainor scored two goals in that game. Diane Smith and Geri Lagusis made one point each.

The University of Washington and the Oregon teams tied 0-0; Central Washington State College defeated the University 0-1. The University of British Columbia topped the UO 8-0.

The tournament concluded this year's field hockey play for the UO women. The team finished with 11 wins, two losses and three draws for the year. That record which includes practice, official and tournament games.

Freshmen Lois Mellem and Trainor led the team in scoring throughout the season. They were both named to the Willamette Valley Field Hockey All-Association team named earlier this month. In addition teammates Mary Blenkinsop, Smith and Lagusis were also chosen to the all-association squad.

Gymnastics to begin Saturday

The Oregon Open dawns the opening of the gymnastics season on the west coast this Saturday at Mac Court.

The open meet also kicks off Oregon's promising "Flying Duck" season that culminates with the NCAA Championships in Eugene in April.

Oregon coach Bill Ballester expects 100 entrants when action opens beginning at 2:30 Saturday afternoon. As of Monday 50 entries were already received, including four full teams.

Ballester stressed, however, that the competition was totally individual. No team scores, or team awards will be presented.

Prospects for an outstanding year for Ballester's Ducks is already quite evident. Despite the number of entries in each event reaching 25-30, Oregon stands a chance of nearly sweeping the meet.

The returning champions are Greg Maxwell, Oregon co-captain for this season, on the high bar and Kevin Cornelius on the rings. Both will be favorites to defend their crowns.

Joe Percival is returning to top shape on the pommel horse. He was a state champion at South Eugene before serving in Viet Nam. He'll be a favorite in that event.

Making his debut with a good shot at the free exercise title is freshman Steve Roskam. He was the Illinois state all-around champion last year, and is rated with a good chance in vaulting also.

John Lehmann, an NCAA finalist last year who owns the Oregon record in vaulting, will also compete in the meet. Maxwell will add to the Ducks strength in vaulting.

Warren Weiseth, the other co-captain of the "Flying Ducks" will challenge Maxwell on the high bar.

The Ducks are very strong this year, and are blessed with tremendous depth, as a result of Ballester's recruiting success last spring.

The Oregon Open, although possibly dominated by the Ducks, certainly won't be an all-Oregon affair. Full teams have been entered from Washington State, San Jose State, and Portland State. Other entries have been received from Washington, the Pacific-8 champions, and other universities on the west coast, including the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, B.C.

The coach of the U of BC team, Arno Lascari, has even entered himself, calling it in his words, "a mini-comeback" into active competition. Other entries may come from Chico State, Stanford, and perennial power California.

The Washington State team boasts two outstanding competitors in Jim Holt and Dubi Lufi. Lufi will easily be installed as the favorite to win the all-around title. He placed in the top ten in the NCAA meet last year. He took third in the Pac-8s. He came to Washington State two years ago after competing on the Israeli team in the world championships.

Holt is expected to give Oregon's Cornelius a stiff challenge on the rings. He placed fourth in the national AAU meet last year. Holt specializes in a double flyaway dismount, which is basically a double-somersault leaving the rings. Particularly outstanding about the feat is that Holt does the landing despite his handicap of just one leg.

The preliminaries start at 2:30 with the finals Saturday night at 8.



BILL BALLESTER

"We could sweep every event," Ballester said. "Our only weak event is the parallel bars. We have two returning champions and solid contenders in every other event."

The Oregon Open will also serve Ballester's freshmen standouts into public view for the first time this season.

JVs beat OSU too . . .

By STEVE HENDRICKS
Of the Emerald

The Oregon JV football team won the mini-civil war and gained revenge for an earlier loss by trouncing the OSU Rooks 20-7 Friday. An inspired defense that caused six turnovers fired the Ducklings to their second consecutive win, giving them a season record of 2-3.

Oregon and Oregon State played a battle of field position for most of the first half. With 2:08 remaining in the second stanza, quarterback John Nehl found Kevin Culligan in the endzone with a 28 yard strike.

The extra point gave the Ducklings a 7-0 bulge, then Gary Taylor picked off a Tom Hickey pass to set up another touchdown with only 53 seconds left in the half. John Nehl's one yard plunge and Mike Holme's second extra point extended the lead to 14.

Both defenses played well in the third quarter, and it wasn't until there was 9:49 left in the game that Nehl spotted his favorite receiver, Greg Bauer, about five yards ahead of his defender and connected on a 52-yard scoring bomb. The kick was blocked.

Oregon State avoided being shutout when Hickey hit Mark Whitney on a 24 yard aerial.

What was the difference between this game and another three weeks prior? "We won," responded Coach Rich Schwab. He later elaborated, "I think we as coaches were better prepared. I think the kids just got into the spirit of this game. They really wanted it."

Schwab figured the season was, "Pretty good. By winning the last two games I'm inclined to overlook the losses, but I'd rather win the last two than win the first two and lose the rest."

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