

Ducks overcome course, Rono to win division title

The men's cross country team won its third straight Pac-10 Northern Division title and seventh in the last ten years Saturday in Pullman, Washington.

Washington State's Henry Rono won the individual title, but Oregon, led by Alberto Salazar, swept the next six places for the team championship.

Rono and Salazar ran stride for stride over much of the race, until Rono won with a better kick down the stretch.

Oregon finished with 20 points and Washington State was second with 49. Washington was third with 58 and Oregon State fourth with 112.

"It was not only an excellent competitive race between Alberto and Rono, but the entire team ran well to take the next six spots behind Rono," Oregon coach Bill Dellinger said.

"Alberto ran a fine race," Dellinger continued. "He set the pace through most of the race and at times was 20 yards ahead of Rono. Rono would catch him downhill and give him 20 yards on the hills."

"The last half-mile was (a) gradual downhill (slope) and Rono passed (Salazar) over the last 200 yards."

The race, run over the Washington State golf course, was closer to eight miles long than the customary 10,000 meters (6.2 miles), according to Dellinger, but he called the mismeasurement of the course by Washington State coach John Chaplin an "honest mistake."

Spikers replay defeats

If it weren't for the University of Nevada-Reno and Portland State, the Oregon Women's volleyball team would have had a perfect weekend at the Southern Oregon Invitational last Friday and Saturday. However, two losses to Nevada-Reno and a defeat at the hands of Portland State relegated the Ducks to a fifth place finish at SOSC's ten-team tournament in Ashland.

"It seems like we've played our whole season against them (PSU and Nevada-Reno)," said Oregon coach Chris Voelz following the tournament.

Indeed, Oregon almost has played its entire season against those two schools. The Ducks have taken on both Nevada-Reno and Portland State five times apiece, losing all ten games.

Oregon started off the tournament with an opening 7-15, 5-15 loss to Portland State, then bounced back to beat Lewis and Clark 15-5, 16-14 and Eastern Oregon 10-15, 15-8, 15-4. Nevada-Reno ended Oregon's two-game victory streak with a 15-5, 3-15, 15-12 decision.

"That (the Nevada-Reno game) was one of the most aggressive and cohesive games we have played this year," said Voelz.

Oregon advanced to the five-team championship round on Saturday by edging Oregon State in percentage of games won in pool play on Friday.

But in Saturday's single elimination round the Ducks quickly exited with another loss to Nevada-Reno, this time by an 8-15, 9-15 margin. All Voelz could say was "We keep getting better against them."

The Ducks return home for action this week against Oregon State on Tuesday, and then Friday and Saturday they hold the Oregon Invitational.

Ducks

(Continued from Page 12)

up the rest of the line and played well, Setterlund recovered a fumble and Kesler contributed a sack.

"The thing was, Washington State was running well on us, but we were still able to maintain such a good rush," Oregon coach Rich Brooks said.

The fine performances on the Oregon defense were not limited to the play of underclassmen alone. The "Busy B's," senior linebackers Bruce Beekley and Willie Blasher and strong safety Bryant, were active all afternoon. Beekley had six tackles and Blasher, who received one of three game balls, had five stops. Bryant, who didn't even start the game, broke up three passes, including one in the WSU end zone with the Ducks ahead 17-7.

The win was especially pleasing for Bryant, who last year was an honorable mention all-American pick, but who this year has not been performing up to expectations. "It was a lot better than I've been doing," he said of his performance Saturday. "I guess that's what they've been expecting of me and I just came across and did it."

"I've come back, the team has come back. I'm doubly elated. It's been a long time since I stood in this locker room this happy."

Oregon's other game balls went to the coaching staff and junior quarterback Tim Durando. Subbing for injured signal caller Mike

Kennedy, Durando guided the Ducks to their highest scoring production since 1973 when they beat Washington 58-0.

The contest also marked the return of a big play performer to the Oregon attack, something that has been missing since Ken Page broke his leg in the third game of the year against Texas Christian. Junior Don Coleman, a 27-year-old sprinter on the Duck track team, showed his stuff as a football player, touching the ball twice for a total of 109 yards and one score. Coleman notched Oregon's second touchdown early in the second quarter when he took a pitch from tailback Ed Radcliff, cut back against the grain and raced 59 yards for the score that put the Ducks on top 17-0 with 10:24 left in the half.

The convincing manner in which Oregon won makes you wonder if maybe something big, or at least better, is really being built by Brooks and his coaching staff. Next year the Ducks will have their entire defensive line and offensive backfield returning, and some people who are starting this season will have to fight for their position next year.

"We need to build it from the bottom up and do it with young, recruited players and then fill in with junior college transfers," says Brooks. "You have to have a backlog of players built up from two or three years, and we've got some very talented players who aren't even playing this year."

Wait'll next year. There may be more of the same of what was seen Saturday at Autzen Stadium.

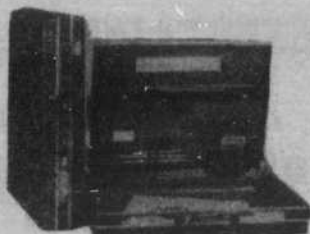
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