

Ninth-ranked Ducks in Wichita for classic

By **MIKE RIPLINGER**
Of the Emerald

Revenge may be the theme for the Oregon women's basketball team when they enter the Pizza Hut Classic in Wichita, Kansas this weekend. But if Oregon coach Elwin Heiny's predictions hold true, the Ducks will never get their chance.

Colorado, the only team to beat the Ducks this year will also

be in Wichita and the two teams have a chance to meet if they both advance into the second round of the tournament. Oregon, ranked ninth in the nation, will meet Iowa State in the first round, while Colorado will take on Texas.

Heiny doesn't believe that Colorado (11-1) will make it by Texas (5-3), though. The Lady Buffs will have their hands full

with a tough Texas squad, which Heiny thinks will upend Colorado and destroy any chances the Ducks have of avenging their early season loss. Texas which was ranked in the top ten at the beginning of the season, has had a rocky start, but according to Heiny, has been playing better ball every time out.

Colorado, ranked 13th in the

nation, edged Oregon in the championship game of the California Invitational in early December by a single point. Heiny spoke with relish when asked about the possibility of playing the Lady Buffs again.

"We'd love it! I feel we have a better team and we want to show it. They were very lucky when they beat us before and they knew it. They couldn't go at

the same intensity that they showed before."

Oregon will be out to beat either Texas or Colorado, but Heiny doesn't believe that his squad will be looking past ISU, which is only 4-5 on the year — a meager record when compared to the Ducks' lofty 8-1 mark.

"We will be taking this tournament one game at a time. After the way we played last weekend where we weren't as sharp as we could have been, we'll be working hard to regain our pre-holiday condition," said Heiny. The Ducks beat Drake and Pacific Christian, but weren't particularly impressive and showed the effects of their two week break over Christmas.

Oregon will be without the services of Lisa Vetter, who suffered a stress fracture in her leg and will be out from three to six weeks. The fracture came at a bad time for Vetter, Heiny says.

"She was just working into a starting position and was really helping us," the coach says.

Other teams in the classic are 18th-ranked Kansas (7-3), Oklahoma City (8-4), Wichita State (7-4) and Northeast Oklahoma State (4-5).

Mack returns to University track squad

David Mack, one of the nation's premier middle distance runners, has decided to return to the University and compete for Oregon's track team this spring.

Mack left the University in September, citing a dislike for the climate in Oregon and personal differences with Oregon track coach Bill Dellinger. He planned to enroll at Long Beach State and major in criminology, a degree not offered by the University.

But because Long Beach's fall semester had started before he left Eugene, Mack did not enroll at the California school. Since he never officially transferred, Mack's eligibility to run for Oregon is unaffected.

"I've learned a lot and missed some things that I didn't realize I'd miss," Mack says. "The way I looked at it I just had a long summer vacation. Now I'm just anxious to run for Oregon again."

A two-time Pac-10 800-meter champion with a lifetime best of 1:46.03, Mack will be junior in terms of athletic eligibility. He will need to pick up extra credit hours between now and next fall term to remain eligible for his senior year, though.

While in California, Mack trained with the Santa Monica Track Club, where he strained a thigh muscle about a month ago. Before the leg injury, Mack considered himself to be in the best shape of his life.

Mack, who also anchors the mile relay, has apparently patched things up with Dellinger, who was instrumental in the return of the 20-year-old Los Angeles native.

"I talked to him on the phone several times and told him the door would always be open," Dellinger said. "He's a talented runner and we're happy to have him back."

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