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Duck runners victorious

By Marcus Prater
Of the Emerald

If Saturday's Garrie Franklin Classic is any indication of how successful Oregon's cross country program will be this season, there should be few worries.

Oregon's Jim Hill easily outdistanced Oregon Track Club's Chris Hamilton for the 10,000 meter crown while Rosa Gutierrez set a new record on the Lane Community College's 5,000 meter course with a 17:02.5 clocking in taking the womens title.

Hill, able to run cross country for the first time in two years, battled with Hamilton the first 5,000 meters before grabbing an insurmountable lead over the final half of the course. Hamilton is a transfer from the University of Portland who is red-shirting this year before becoming an Oregon runner next season.

Hill was both happy and surprised by his finishing time of 29:32.2, considering his fastest previous was a 29:22 on a track and this was the first meet of the year.

"I feel pretty good. Last time I ran (cross country) I wasn't in too good of shape," Hill said. "I'm in shape now and this kind of race is a good thing to start with."

Hamilton's second-place time of 29:46.9 was 30 seconds better than Oregon runner Greg Erwin, who is nursing a slight hamstring injury. The Oregon duo of John Zishka and Mike Blackmore were fourth and fifth, respectively.

"A meet like this is hard to evaluate," coach Bill Dellinger said of his team's finish. "I don't think the competition was that strong, but all of

our runners looked really good.

"We just went out there and ran. The purpose of something like this is to find out who's what and where. There were no big surprises," Dellinger said.

Sophomore Gutierrez clipped five seconds off the previous course record on her way to an easy victory — 25 meters and four seconds ahead of runner up Martha Cooksey from Alder State T and Gourmet TC.

"I ran a lot of road races all summer and even though this wasn't that big of a meet, I was pumped up and felt ready," Gutierrez said.

Oregon's Eryn Forbes, a senior, was third with a 17:14.1 while Duck runners rounded out the top six. Kim Roth, Allison Snow and Claudette Groenendaal finishing fourth, fifth and sixth for the Ducks.

The Ducks were running without their top two runners, Leann Warren and Kathy Hayes, who are both injured. Warren has a strained tendon in her knee which may require surgery. Hayes has a strained achilles tendon and should be back within two weeks. "With Kathy and Leann on hold, it leaves a big question mark," said coach Tom Heinonen.

However, Heinonen was still pleased with the Oregon runners that did compete.

"We ran some impressive times. This is the only race where we can compare times from last season. This year's were much faster. This isn't the most important event of the year, but it was something good to start with.

"I liked the way Rosa attacked at the end. I can't believe how fast the pace was and she just broke away," Heinonen said.

Warren out for the year?

Leann Warren, Oregon's All American distance runner who finished second last year at the NCAA cross country championship, may miss the entire 1982 cross country season because of a knee injury.

Warren suffered what women's cross country coach Tom Heinonen described as a strained tendon in her knee when she began training after the summer break. Heinonen said Warren is currently undergoing treatment for the problem and that it will be determined within two weeks whether surgery is necessary to repair the damage.

Should surgery be required, the Duck women's cross country team will lose Warren.

"There is a distinct chance that she will not be able to compete this season," said Heinonen.

"I think it will eliminate us from a chance at the NCAA title," Heinonen said of the effect of Warren's absence. "We will still have a strong team, but I think it would put the NCAA title out of reach."

According to Heinonen, the injury is the same as the one that sent former University of Texas-El Paso star Suleiman Nyambui and Oregon Track Club's Tom Byers to the operating table.

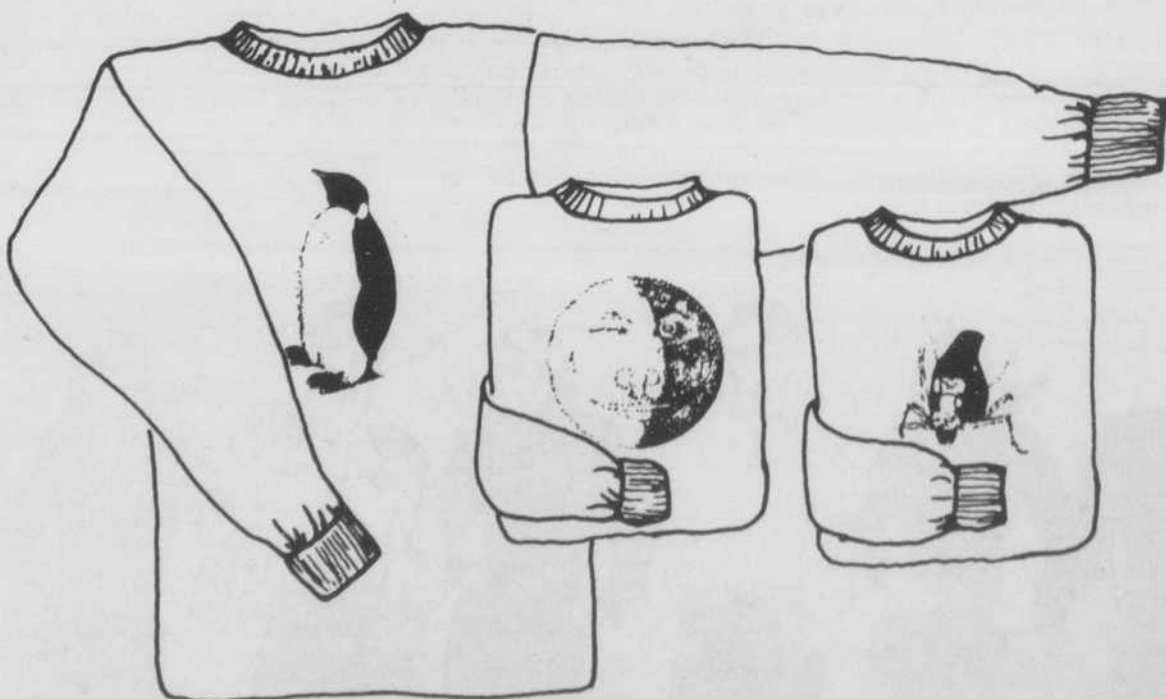
Byers underwent the surgery earlier this summer and was able to come back and win the mile at Saturday's Oregon International Track and Field Meet.

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