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Ex-coach denies probe role

EUGENE (AP) — Bill Bowerman, the former Oregon track coach now working for the Nike shoe company, denied Tuesday that he had any part in launching a controversy over possible eligibility violations by Oregon track and field athletes.

In a news release made public by his lawyer, Robert Lowry of Eugene, Bowerman said the controversy was a "red herring which has been created by University officials to divert attention from their patent mishandling of problems within the athletic department."

The controversy, which arose last week, involved allegations that two athletes received equipment from the Adidas and Nike shoe companies and that a third athlete received a \$450 check from Nike for consultant work. Bowerman is senior vice president of Nike Inc. Present coach Bill Dellinger has a personal services contract with Adidas.

Dellinger and Athletic Director Rich Bay said last week that Bowerman initiated the allegations that Oregon athletes might have violated National Collegiate Athletic Association regulations and eligibility conditions by accepting equipment and money.

Bowerman's news release said he neither complained to the university nor began an investigation concerning possible NCAA violations. The release

also said Bowerman does not believe athletes' receipt of equipment and shoes violates NCAA rules.

The allegations were discussed in a letter written by Curt Simic, vice president for University relations, on Sept. 17. The letter, which was addressed to Bowerman, became public last Wednesday.

The letter appeared to be a response to concerns raised by

Bowerman that Oregon athletes were accepting equipment. The letter indicated that Simic had investigated the matter and discovered several instances of athletes receiving shoes or clothing from the two companies.

Bowerman denied any knowledge of the letter when contacted by the Emerald last Wednesday.

Win may pay Alberto

NEW YORK (AP) — Alberto Salazar and Grete Waitz could receive as much as \$18,000 in under-the-table money for their victories in the New York City Marathon, the New York Times reported in its Tuesday editions.

According to the newspaper, Salazar could receive as much as \$18,000 for his third consecutive title and Waitz \$14,000 for winning the women's division for the fourth time.

The Times attributed the reports to "several prominent running coaches" who were not identified.

Coaches, athletes and officials of the New York Road Runners Club would not discuss the payment structure publicly, since such official recognition could jeopardize the competitors' amateur standing, the Times reported.

Coaches said they were not informed about the specific payment structure until after the event because, they said, race officials told them they wanted to avoid pre-race news leaks or unfavorable publicity that might accompany such disclosures.

The newspaper said as much as \$125,000 in "under-the-table" expense payments may be distributed to the top 15 male finishers and the first 12 women.

Harper released

PORTLAND (AP) — Portland General Manager Stu Inman said Tuesday that forward Michael Harper would be the final player cut from the Trail Blazer roster prior to the start of the National Basketball Association season.

New league

Continued from Page 4B

can't see throwing our people into Pac-10 competition without any funding."

"I think this is a good step, because it's a step up, and yet it's not as high as we want to be," Voelz said.

"We not only enter things, but we try to lead. And I think that Oregon has been a leader in the NorPac Conference," Voelz said.

Sciaraffa agrees. "There is no doubt about the fact that Oregon has stepped forward and taken on a leadership role in the NorPac," she said.

Among the Oregon programs which will lead the way on the field will be Heinonen's cross country squad. But the coach doesn't see any advantage for cross country in participating in a conference championship meet since his team will not be

challenged. "Maybe when we see what a conference trophy looks like it will mean more," he said.

Track, however, will benefit, he said. "It will give us a more viable conference meet (than the NCWSA). It will be a far better meet, which is really good for us because we need a high level of competition."

Heinonen and Heiny, like Voelz, would like to see a Pac-10 for women.

"I want to be in the Pac-10," Heinonen said. "It (NorPac) is a step in the right direction if it's not the final step."

"The Pac-10 is probably the ultimate we could ask for," said Heiny. "It would be simpler for the athletic department to have everyone under one set of rules."

Sciaraffa understands the

desire to be a Pac-10 member, but she doesn't see it as financially viable in the near future. She hopes that the desire to be Pac-10 doesn't take away from the commitment to the NorPac.

"This conference has the potential to have the same level of prestige as the Pac-10," she said. "I would be disappointed if any of our members weren't committed to improving the prestige of this conference."

Voelz isn't about to forget the NorPac. "We hope to elevate the NorPac," she said.

"Who knows how long it's going to be around. It's around for three years great. It's one of those things that ideally, we eventually want to go Pac-10 so that the Pac-10 office can serve us. The Pac-10 name is known."



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