

MEN'S TRACK

Bill Dellinger, Oregon men's track coach, isn't sure whether his team can defend its NCAA outdoor track and field championship this year, but he is sure the cupboard isn't bare.

Several factors will make the Ducks' job of repeating as national champions difficult. The first and most obvious is the void left by Joaquim Cruz, Brazilian Olympic gold medalist and double NCAA champion. Cruz has not had a break from competition since the beginning of 1984, and therefore will redshirt this season and rejoin the Ducks in 1986 as a junior.

The second reason Oregon will be hard pressed to repeat their national championship is the fact that the NCAA meet will be held in Austin, Texas, and not Eugene as it was last year.

The Ducks will be minus Cruz and Jim Hill, who finished third in the NCAA 5,000 meters, but they will still be strongest in the distances as the Dellinger tradition continues.

Dub Meyers, a two-time All-American and third place finisher in last year's NCAA 1500 meters leads the way for the Ducks in the middle distances. John Carlotti will add depth

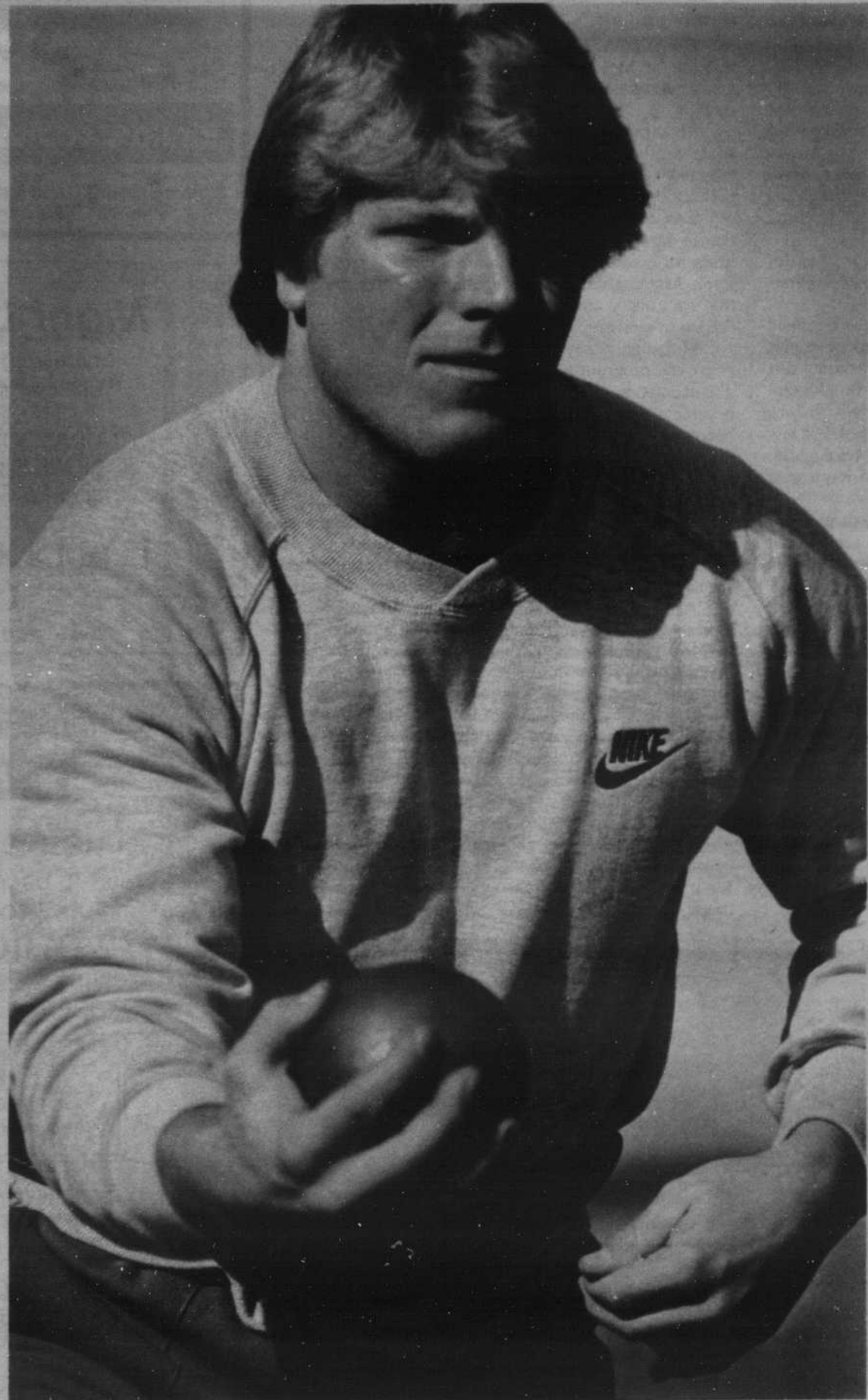


Photo by Michael Clapp

Brian Crouser, the 1982 NCAA javelin champion, returns for his senior track and field season as one of the stalwarts of the Ducks' weight corps.

The Sporting Man's Rite of Spring

Tracksters try harder —

for Oregon in both the 800 and 1500 meters.

John Zishka, Mike Blackmore and Jim Hamilton will lead the way for the Ducks in the 5000 and 10000 meter races. All three have shown flashes of brilliance, but it may be a newcomer who steps to the forefront for Oregon in the longer distances. Highly-touted freshman Tracy Garrison is coming off a good cross country season and Dellinger has high hopes for him.

Other cross country runners who might step to the front of the pack include Doug Benevento, Knut Hegvold, and Rich Bergesen.

The steeplechase may be the event where Oregon has the most talent and depth. The Ducks have NCAA experience back in Matt McGuirk, Harold Kuphaldt, and Will Kimball.

Garth Morrisette has shown the potential to be an effective performer in the steeple. Dellinger is also happy about the prospect of Olympic Trials qualifier Cory Randall returning to Oregon after having some academic difficulties. Randall is enrolled at Lane Community College and should be back in the Ducks' fold by spring.

"The steeplechase is definitely a strong point for us," Dellinger says.

In the sprints, the Ducks should be able to make up some ground in an area where they were weak last year. Kevin Vixie will return after a frustrating year of injuries that kept him out of competition most of last year. Adding depth will be former Oregon state high school champion John Frazier. Football player Elliott Dunning, who finished third in the California state meet in the 200 meters, will also boost the sprint corps.

In the hurdling events, Oregon will be rebuilding with the loss of seniors Lamar Hurd in the high hurdles and Don Ward in the intermediates. Both gave the Ducks solid points in the dual meet season, and qualified for the NCAAs.

J. J. Birden and junior college transfer Rod Green will try to fill the

— to stay Number One

void left by Ward and Hurd in the high hurdles, but the Ducks have virtually no experience in the intermediates.

In the field, the Ducks will also return strength with Kory Tarpenning, 1984 NCAA pole vault runnerup, and Brian Crouser, 1982 NCAA javelin champion and three time All-American. Ken Flax has made early season waves throughout the nation with his incredible 241-2 toss in the hammer throw.

Flax, an All-American last year, shattered the school record with his toss by 11 feet. Flax is now the all-time leader in the hammer among American-born collegiates.

In the jumps, Oregon appears to be strong as they return all three of their high jumpers from a year ago. Todd Post, Walt Reynolds and Keith Washington have all shown they can

compete well, but Dellinger would like to see some more consistency from the trio.

In the triple and long jumps, the Ducks will have returning experience in Birden and Uchenna Agu. Again they will miss the services of Hurd, but Dellinger does not think the gap will be as great as in the hurdles.

"An athlete of Hurd's ability is going to be missed in any program, but we feel pretty good about our prospects in the jumps," Dellinger says.

The weight events will be a bright spot for the Ducks. In addition to Flax and Crouser, the Ducks picked up some fine recruits to bolster their lineup.

Jeff Hultberg is strong in both the shotput and discus. Karl Gates was the top ranked prep javelin thrower in the nation last year. Kevin Carr and football player Greg Aitkenhead will also give Oregon more depth in the weights. Bobby George returns in the javelin.

"We feel that we should be competitive in almost all our dual meets and all the way up to the NCAAs," Dellinger says. "The key as always should be staying injury free and competing to our potential."

Story by Robert Collias

Racketeers show promise

Victory — then defeat. The men's tennis team opened their season last weekend tasting a little of both, with a 6-3 win over Eastern Washington University Friday, and a 9-0 loss Saturday to the University of Washington Huskies.

But the loss doesn't leave Oregon coach Buzz Summers very worried. His enthusiasm about his team is apparent.

"This year's team is much stronger than last year's," he says.

Summers says he owes that strength to the combination of exceptional recruits and three strong returnees — Wade Judy, Murph Dysart and Wiley Smith.

He adds that the emphasis this year is on doubles play, as last year.

"Judy and Dysart are the only tested doubles team we've got. They're the only veterans on the team as far as doubles go," Summers says. "They were 7-12 a year ago and will have that year's experience of playing together."

Dysart, a second-year Duck, agrees with Summers' optimism about the team.

"This year we might come out with a winning record," he says. "Our competition is almost the same as last year and we have a lot of depth."

Smith, who joins with freshman Sean Campbell to make Oregon's number two doubles team, says that the team's winning attitude as well as its stringent practices makes the Ducks' strength.

The loss of two recruits, Mike Ball and Peter Schumacher, for financial reasons, dropped the team from 12 players to 10. The loss may weaken the team, but only for back-ups.

Injuries and academics dragged down

last year's team, but Summers says he doesn't anticipate any problems this year.

"The players this year are much better than last year's," he says.

More practice matches were added to the winter workout schedule, sharpening the players' competitive drive.

"The kids wanted to do it," Summers says, referring to the winter matches. "They're more serious about their games."

Kurt Lidtke, a freshman from Salem, joined the Ducks early last spring and is expected to compete well this year.

Junior college transfer Scott Peery is the team's pre-season number one singles player. Peery suffered an elbow injury Saturday and was unable to compete against the Huskies.

Freshman Chris Brillhante, a number-one doubles player while in Hawaii, will team with Peery this year as Oregon's number three doubles team.

Left-hander Mark Sendelback, a freshman, has done "extremely well" in preliminary matches, Summers says.

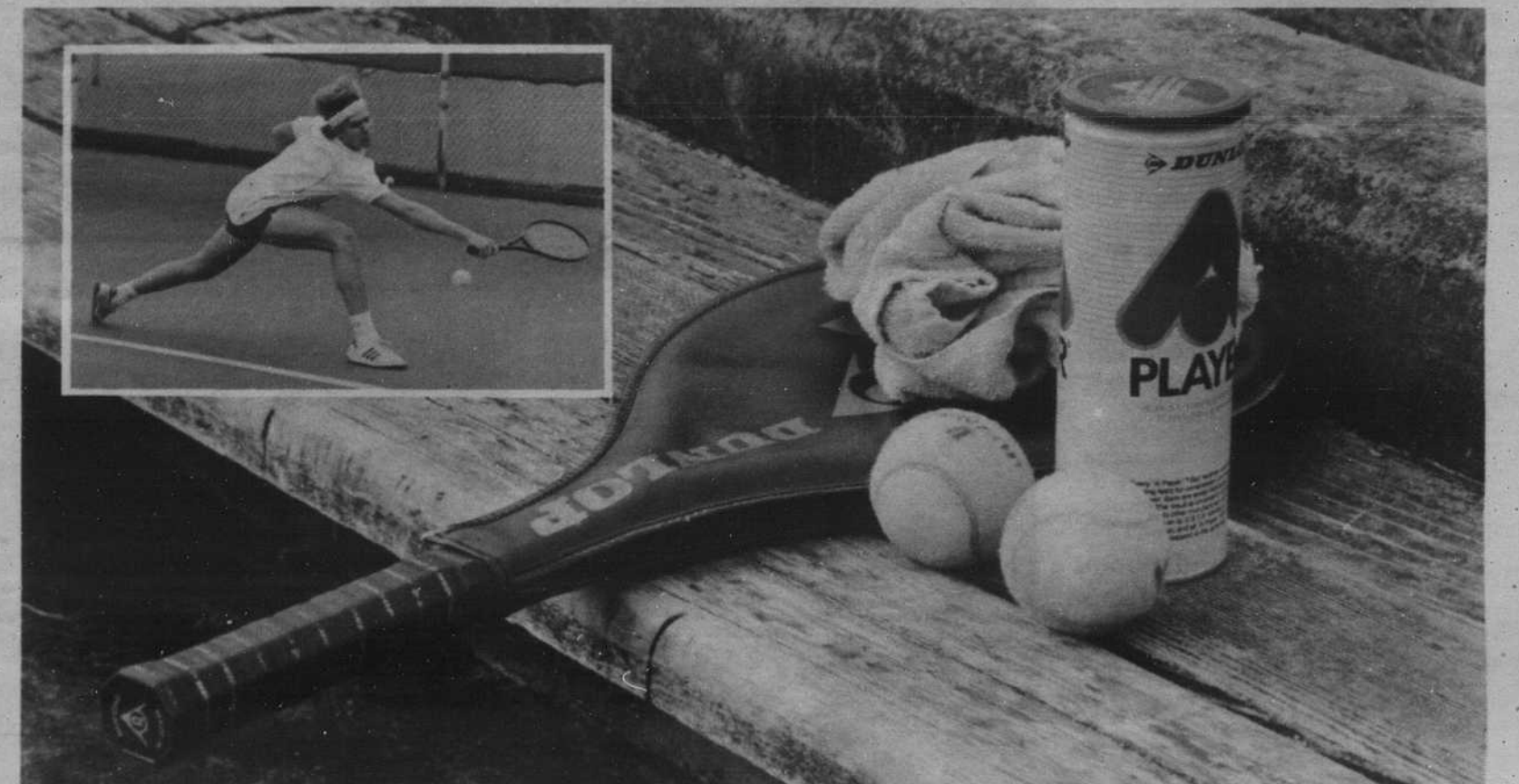
David Smith, a freshman, is considered one of the smartest court players on the team.

Summers enters his 18th season as the Ducks head coach with 214 victories. Summers has been nationally ranked nine times. In 1981, Summers was undefeated and top-ranked in the Pacific Northwest 45-and-over singles division.

The Ducks will compete today at 3 p.m. against Whitman College at the University's East 15th Street courts, weather permitting.

Story by Mary Lichtenwalner

MEN'S TENNIS



Photos by Steven Wall

The Duck men's tennis squad returns for spring season with three veterans from the '84 team, and high hopes for its newcomers. The Ducks will be playing at home today at 3 p.m.

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