

Sports

Oregon women's cross-country team finishes third in Willamette Invitational

By Brendan Joyce
Emerald Contributor

The Oregon women's cross-country team took it easy on Saturday, running against 12 other teams in the Willamette Invitational in Salem. Despite the fact only six runners competed, Oregon finished third, with 173 points.

Pacific Lutheran won the meet with 51 points, followed by the Portland Running Club, with 68.

In a meet that coach Tom Heinonen considered optional for most of the runners, Heinonen said the women "did a pretty nice job in a low-key setting."

The meet was considered optional because the Ducks had run in last week's Emerald City Invitational in Seattle, Wash., and needed to prepare for next week's Wisconsin Classic to be held in Madison, Wis., which will pit the second-ranked Ducks against the top-ranked University of Wisconsin team, as well as the University of Florida.

Junior Francie Faure crossed the finish line first for the Ducks in 18:14, ninth overall, and redshirt sophomore Stephanie Wessel was close behind in 18:18; 10th overall. Unattached freshman Lisa Karnopp, 19th; sophomore Angela Bonomini, 33rd; sophomore Wendy Knox, 59th; and freshman Leslie Chapman, 62nd rounded out the small Oregon running contingent in a substantial field of 102.

Although the men's team fielded a larger number of runners, coach Bill Dellinger still

viewed the Tokatee Invitational, held at Tokatee Country Club, located outside Blue River, as a workout. Because the team had competed last week in the Emerald City Invitational, Dellinger had his runners work more on pace than on winning.

Despite the fact the meet was just a workout, Oregon's A team finished first in the meet with 29 points, and the B team finished third with a score of 70.

Brad Hudson, first among the Ducks (fifth overall), and Chad Bennion, second among the Ducks (seventh overall), performed as expected finishing in 31:10 and 31:37, respectively.

Dellinger also found Steve Richards' performance "really good," as he finished third among the Ducks after a fifth-place finish in last week's Emerald City Invitational.

Four of the top five finishers in the meet were former Oregon runners. Don Clary finished first (30:06), followed by Art Boileau, Mike Blackmore, Mark Beemon and Hudson. Shemi Sabag, an Oregon runner last year, finished sixth overall behind Hudson.

Carleton Jones, Seth Simonds, and John Truax finished very close together in the ninth, 10th, and 11th spots, with Truax and Simonds performing better than Dellinger had expected.

The next race for the men's team is Oct. 17, in the University of Portland Invitational at Clackamas. That will be the team's final meet before the Pacific-10 Conference championships at Stanford, Calif., on Nov. 2.

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