

# Invitational gives team a break

By Ashley Conklin  
Emerald Sports Reporter

For the Oregon men's track team, the Oregon Invitational is coming at the right time.

After three tough dual meets with California, Washington and Washington State, as well as the Pepsi Team Invitational, the Ducks finally get a break from team competition with Saturday's invitational at Hayward Field.

To say the least, Oregon coach Bill Dellinger is welcoming the meet.

"It will be nice to get a break and give our guys with injuries and some nagging things to heal up," he said. "It's good because some of our guys won't have to compete."

The meet actually began on Thursday with the men's decathlon and women's heptathlon getting under way. The multi-event competitions will conclude today.

Oregon's Pedro daSilva will be looking to break the NCAA standard of 7,480 points in the decathlon, and should be able to do so easily. Last season daSilva scored 7,661 points in the Oregon Invitational and finished second at both the Pacific-10 and NCAA meets.

Other than daSilva, Dellinger plans to give most of his athletes the week off or move them around into different events.

Brian Wright, who has lost only once in the 400-meter hurdles this season, will drop down from his speciality to run the open 400. Steeplechaser Rick Mestler will run the 5,000 meters in an attempt to qualify for the Pac-10 meet.

However, Eric Peterson will run in his speciality, the 1,500 meters.

Peterson, one of the nation's best, will go after the NCAA standard of 3:42:20 in the 1,500

after running the 800 meters against Cal last week.

Not competing for the second week in a row is sprinter Klaus Weigeldt, who is still out with a sore hamstring, but could return to action next week. Distance runner Jimmy Howarth is still out after suffering from the chicken pox.

Moreover, horizontal jumpers Latin Berry and Spencer Williams won't compete. Berry will be in Los Angeles working on contract negotiations with the Los Angeles Rams, and Williams will take the time to allow a sore groin to heal.

But that's not to say Saturday's meet will be a dud.

Annually one of the top early-season meets, this year's Oregon Invitational should be another outstanding one before the twilight crowd. The invitational part of the meet will begin at 4:15 p.m.

Among those tentatively entered include Hayward Field record holder Lance Deal in the hammer, former Duck distance great Alberto Salazar in the 10,000 meters and Hayward Field javelin record holder Brian Crouser.

As Dellinger put it, "There will be good track and field this weekend in the Oregon Invitational."

Crouser set the Hayward Field record of 261-0 in last year's meet and, along with Mike Barnett, who has also thrown over 260 feet, will provide plenty of competition for Oregon's Art Skipper.

Skipper is unbeaten in the javelin and has a best of 246-5, will compete despite recovering from a sore groin muscle.

Another Duck, hammer thrower Scott McGee, is also unbeaten this season and will finally get some competition from Deal (a personal record of

257-0) and John McArdle.

And then there is Salazar, one of the best-ever U.S. distance runners.

Salazar, coached by Dellinger, will run the 10,000 meters as he continues his comeback from injuries.

Four other former Oregon athletes — Tim Canfield, Jose deSouza, Dan Nelson and Andy Young — are also entered in the meet.

Canfield, ranked third on the Ducks all-time pole vault list, will hook-up with Oregon's Brian Cullen, Ben Benson and Shawn Meyle. Cullen has cleared 17-7 this year and after two down weeks, returned to form last week by going 16-10 1/4. Benson also cleared 16-10 1/4 last week, a PR by six inches.

DeSouza, who had his appeal for a fourth year of eligibility turned down by the NCAA in the winter, will compete in the discus, and Young, who set the high jump school record of 7-4 1/4, will also be on hand.

Also returning is Nelson, who won the NCAA steeplechase title for the Ducks in 1987.



Photo by Steve Card

Brian Wright, who specializes in the 400-meter hurdles, will run the open 400 in Saturday's invitational meet.

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