

Oregon women finish up 18th

By Cam Sivesind
Emerald Sports Reporter

It wasn't the days of old, but the Oregon women's track team has to be happy with its performance at the NCAA championships in Durham, N.C. this last week.

The Ducks, who finished in a disappointing tie for 42nd place at last year's meet, improved to a tie for 18th this year.

Their team point total of 12 surpassed last year's effort of five.

Paula Berry was the Oregon athlete who shined the brightest. The junior from Dayville took second in the javelin to notch eight points. Berry's toss of 174-9 on her last attempt was enough to outdistance Nebraska's Nora Rockenbauer.

USC's Ashley Selman won the event with a mark of 186-3. Rockenbauer had a best of 174-11 set in 1987 as a high schooler, before making a late-season charge.

Kim Hyatt, a sophomore from Prineville, scored three more points in the event for the Ducks with her sixth-place showing. Her throw of 163-8 was far below her personal best of 177-9.

Part of the blame for her sub-par performance could be put on the fact that she slipped on her first attempt and took a



Paula Berry

hard fall. Hyatt did improve upon last year's eighth-place showing at the NCAA meet, however.

Berry has struggled all season, and in fact hadn't thrown past her personal record of 174-11 set in 1987 as a high schooler, before making a late-season charge.

She got the expectation monkey off her back at the Pacific-10 Conference championships by unleashing a throw of 178-1. The throw was good enough to crown her champion, and gave her the confidence needed going into the NCAA meet.

Junior Stephanie Wessell

grabbed the Ducks' first point of the meet Thursday with an eighth-place finish in the 10,000 meters. Her time of 34:15.05 was nearly 10 seconds faster than her first-place effort at the Pac-10 championships, and it was only the second race she has ever run at that distance.

Other Oregon athletes competing at the NCAA meet were discus thrower Stephanie Smith, sprinter Rosie Williams and distance runner Liz Wilson.

Smith's mark of 144-4 in the discus was nearly 30 feet below her PR of 171-9. As a result, the senior from Yreka, Calif. did not make the finals and had to settle for 12th place.

Williams, who was on a roll early in the season before a hamstring injury took its toll, failed to make the finals in the 200 with a 23.88 clocking.

Injuries also put a damper on Wilson's last collegiate meet. Wilson, who finished seventh in both the 3,000 and 5,000 at last year's NCAA meet, placed a disappointing 10th in the 5,000 this year. A sore hip slowed her time.

Wilson, Pac-10 runner-up for that distance, ran a time of 16:24.41 — nearly 14 seconds off the PR she set earlier this year at the Oregon Twilight meet.

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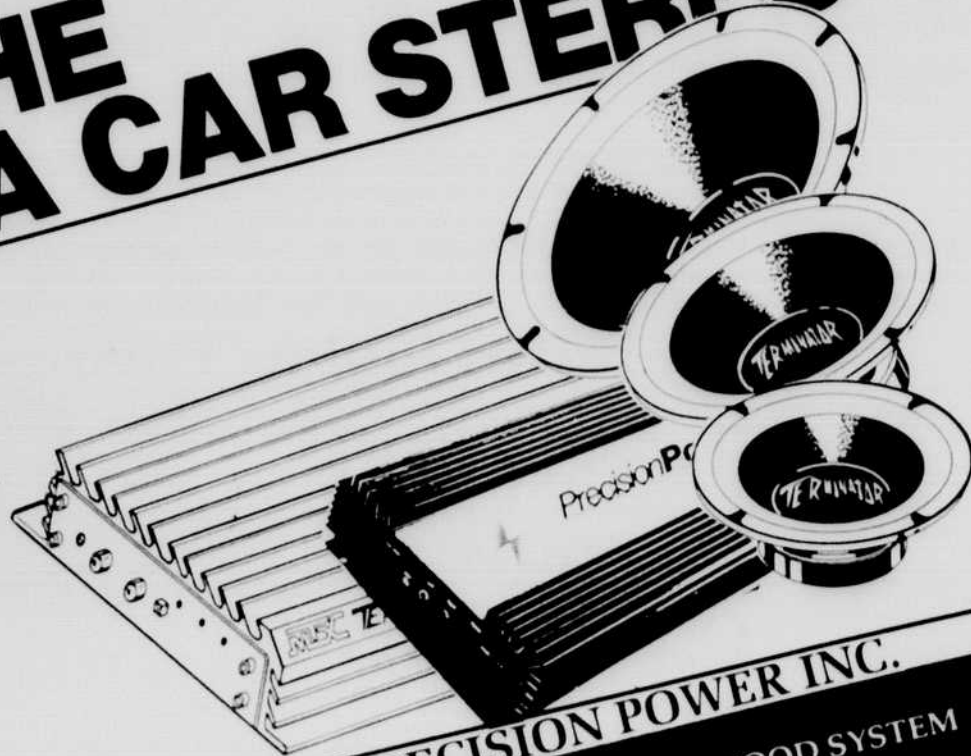
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