

Harriers will arrive at Montana race in full force

By Dave Charbonneau
Emerald Sports Reporter

It's time for the men's cross country team to get serious.

This weekend the fourth-ranked Ducks travel to Missoula, Mont., for the Mountain West Classic, and they will be sporting the best possible team they can.

Last weekend Coach Bill Dellinger opted to leave four of his top runners at home and the result was a third-place finish at the Emerald City Invitational. Dellinger, however, was not at all disappointed.

"It was a chance to look at the rest of the guys on the team," Dellinger said, "and in the long run it's better that our top runners have an extra weekend to workout."

'We have the potential to be very good as long as we stay healthy.'

— Bill Dellinger,
Men's cross country coach

Seniors Colin Dalton, Pat Haller and Shannon Lemora, and sophomore Coley Candaele, were left home last weekend as seven other runners vied for the final three spots for this weekend's meet. Joining those four in Missoula will be Andy Maris (who was the third collegian to finish last weekend), Tye Van Schoiack, and Tim Julian. Lemora just recently rejoined the squad after completing summer school to regain his eligibility.

This weekend's meet will feature a host of talented teams, including third-ranked Texas. Dellinger seemed excited for the challenge his runners will be facing.

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Cross country team to face talented foes at Classic

"This is a real good competition," he said. "All of the teams in this meet are talented."

Dellinger also pointed out that some of the teams, such as Kentucky and Tennessee, have been in school for a month and have already participated in three or four meets this year.

Dellinger said he is cautious not to put too much emphasis

on the meet.

"This meet is basically just for the guys to get one under their belt," he said. "We're pointing toward regionals and the Pac-10 Championships."

"I don't expect us to be in top form. The guys just got here last week."

The Ducks are returning everyone from a team that last

year won the Pacific-10 Conference Championships and finished fifth at the NCAA Championships.

"We have the potential to be very good as long as we stay healthy," Dellinger said. "In the next three or four weeks we'll find out how good we really are."

The only Oregon runner to encounter injury problems so far this year is Rick Mestler, who has been out of action with hip problems.

Other notable teams competing in the meet will be 17th-ranked Washington State, 15th-ranked Weber State, Montana, and Montana State.

The women's team is off this week to prepare for next weekend's Stanford Invitational.

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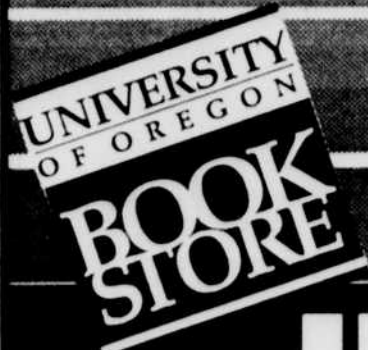
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