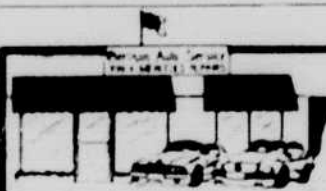


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SPORTS

Skipper rocks to championships

By Dave Charbonneau
Emerald Sports Reporter

As Art Skipper gets ready, Metallica pumps through his skull.

Skipper approaches the runway with his javelin in one hand and his Walkman in the other. The band wails the lyrics to "Enter Sandman" in his ears as he drifts into his own world.

Then, when his intensity hits its peak, Skipper rips off his headphones and rips down the runway firing his javelin — as the song goes, "off to never-never land."

"I'm not a head banger or anything," Skipper said. "But it's a good rockin' song to get me going."

The Ducks' top javelin thrower of all time is rockin' his way through his senior season at Oregon. He has already qualified for the NCAA championships in June with a school-record throw of 251-8 two weeks ago, and he has his sights set on the Olympic trials.

Skipper will throw for the Ducks this weekend against Washington State at Hayward Field, but he has changed his focus to getting ready for the Pacific-10 Conference meet and the NCAAs, along with the trials.

"I'm going to sit back and try to be smart," Skipper said. "I'm not really worried about the next few meets."

This Saturday, Skipper may not even have the headphones on.

"I'll take the headphones off," Skipper said, "and take a minute to concentrate on the throw."

Skipper said he started wearing headphones when he was at Sandy High School. It was at Sandy that he broke the national high school record in 1988 with a throw of 259-10, a mark he still has yet to eclipse.

But Skipper is not worried about personal bests. Those will come. He instead tries to focus his energies elsewhere.

"I don't really think about it," Skipper said. "Of course I would like to beat my marks, but I don't really concentrate on them."

The Ducks will be concentrating on regaining at least a little pride back after they were demolished by the Cougars last year, 111-52, in the annual



Top javelin thrower Art Skipper and the rest of the track team will take on Washington State this Saturday at Hayward Field — without headphones.

meeting of the two teams.

Oregon and Washington State match up well, but Oregon is the underdog in coach Bill Dellinger's mind.

"It's going to be a great meet," Dellinger said. "We could make it a competitive meet. We have some areas where we're pretty good, but I don't know if that will be enough."

If Oregon is going to make a stance, it will need top performances from Bob Gray in the hurdles, Pat Haller in the 5,000, Ronnie Harris in the 200 and Tye Van Schoiack and Rick Mestler in the steeplechase.

The Ducks could lose valuable points if Muhammad Oliver is unable to compete. Oliver was picked in the NFL col-

lege draft by the Denver Broncos on Monday and is at a three-day camp that ends Saturday. It does not look as if Oliver will be able to return in time.

Oliver was scheduled to compete in the long jump, high jump and 110 hurdles.

On a positive note, Devon Hosey — who has been injured for the past month — is scheduled to return for Saturday's meet. Hosey is the Duck's fastest 100-meter runner and will also compete in the triple jump, 4X400- and 4X100-relay races.

There's no doubt Oregon will need some great performances Saturday if the Ducks expect to beat the Cougars.

Maybe Skipper will share his Walkman.

One to go before NCAAs

The Oregon women's track and field team has one more test this weekend before the Pacific-10 Conference Championships.

For the league meet, which will be at Hayward Field May 22 and 23, the Ducks have qualified 15 different individuals in 23 events. The only events that Oregon does not have a qualifier for are the 100 hurdles and the 800-meter run.

But the Ducks will get their next chance to do that Saturday when they compete in the Don Kirby Memorial Invitational in Albuquerque, N.M., in a four-way meet with New Mexico, San Diego State and Texas-El Paso.

Oregon coach Tom Heinonen said the Ducks' overall depth should prove to be too much for their opponents in the end.

"I'm not that concerned about the team score," Heinonen said. "Because we should overwhelm them in the end. We do everything well enough that I don't think it's going to be a problem."

Heinonen also hopes to use the trip as a prelude to the NCAA meet, when the Ducks will have to travel to Austin, Texas.

"The reason we're doing this is because our kids need to travel and find themselves in a different environment," he said. "They have to get the job done."

Sprinter Camara Jones, the Ducks' only automatic NCAA qualifier, is on the entry list for the meet, but a calf injury she suffered from a palette falling on her leg may keep her from competing.

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