

Cross country teams go for NCAA titles in Indiana

By Steve Mims
Emerald Sports Reporter

The Oregon men's and women's cross country teams are seeking the NCAA Championship today in Bloomington, Ind., one week after finishing second at the District VIII Championships.

The Duck women dropped from seventh to 13th place in the national polls after tying Arizona at regionals for second place, but are looking to improve with the help of a healthy Nicole Woodward.

Woodward, who has won three races this year, was forced to drop out of the regional meet after suffering from flu-like symptoms during the race. Despite losing their top runner, the Ducks managed to finish second and received an automatic bid to the meet.

"We hope Nicole's illness was just for one-day," Oregon head coach Tom Heinonen said. "It was monumental to our team placing and she could make a difference of 80 points in the NCAA meet if she isn't able to run. She has re-

bounded nicely this week and ran a workout on Wednesday."

Freshman Heidi Van Borkulo-Goldstein ran a great race for the Ducks at regionals, finishing fifth with a time of 17:37. Goldstein's finish was her fourth top-10 performance in five races this year, although her time was up from the week before at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships.

"Heidi is feeling good about herself," Heinonen said. "She ran a terrific race last weekend and she is flying high now."

Senior Erika Klein had a strong finish at regionals, coming in 15th place with a time of 18:11 over the 5,000 meter course. Klein, whose best NCAA meet finish is 140th in 1990, will be counted on heavily, Heinonen said.

"Erika was sick from Sunday to Tuesday," Heinonen said. "But she has rebounded well and we need her and Nicole if we are to be at full strength."

Sophomore Jenna Carlson has also been hurting, but she appears to be ready for nationals. Carlson began the year

with two top-10 performances but suffered an illness before the Drenth Memorial where she finished in 29th place. Two weeks later Carlson was unable to race at the conference championships and last weekend she finished 23rd at regionals.

Jill Callero, Niamh Zwagerman and Joani Wareham will also be running for the Ducks. Callero finished 132nd at last year's NCAA meet, while Wareham and Zwagerman are competing in their first national championship.

"We are ranked 13th, but I would like to see us in the top 10 or have a great day and be in the top five," Heinonen said. "That's asking a lot, but it's not impossible."

The Oregon men's cross country team beat Washington by 20 points at the regional meet to come in second place and clinch the automatic entry into the NCAA meet, but the Ducks finished 37 points behind Arizona, a team they beat two weeks earlier at the Pac-10 Championships.

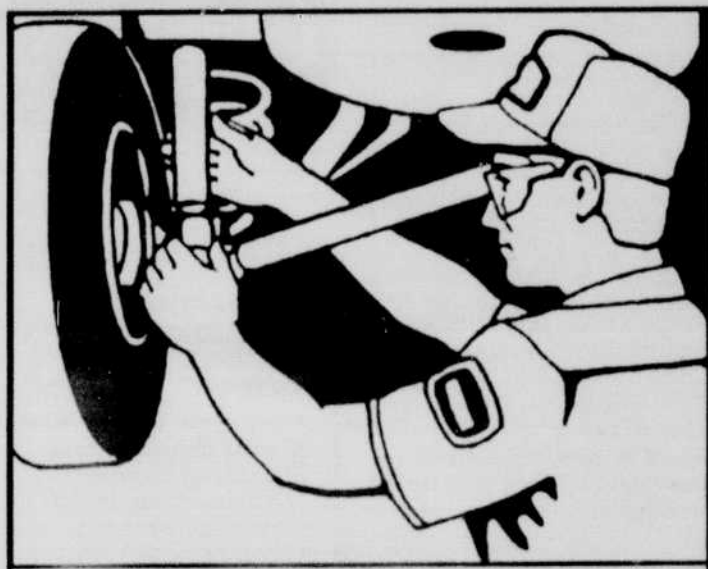
Freshman Karl Keska has led the

Ducks in all three of the four races he has run this year, but he had his worst finish of the year at regionals, coming in 13th place.

Redshirt freshman Tracy Hollister had two straight top-10 finishes before last weekend when he finished 49th. Hollister, an 800 meter runner in the spring, struggled over the 10,000-meter race compared to the 8,000-meter races the Ducks had run all year. The national meet will also be run on a 10,000-meter course.

"We had some guys who couldn't handle the heat in Arizona," Oregon head coach Bill Dellinger said. "When you're running in adverse conditions, maturity and experience are a factor. We have a young team but we held together to be second."

Seniors Colden Baxter and Rick Mestler have improved their performances during the post season. Mestler finished 11th at the conference meet but led the Ducks with a seventh-place finish at regionals.



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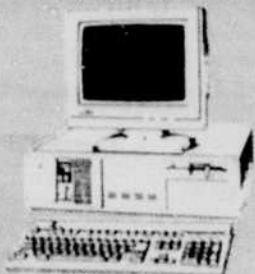
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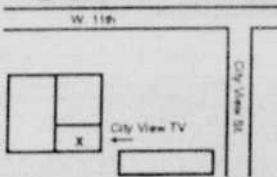
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