

JAMES CAAN

HALLE BERRY

OMAR EPPS

CRAIG SHEFFER

KRISTY SWANSON

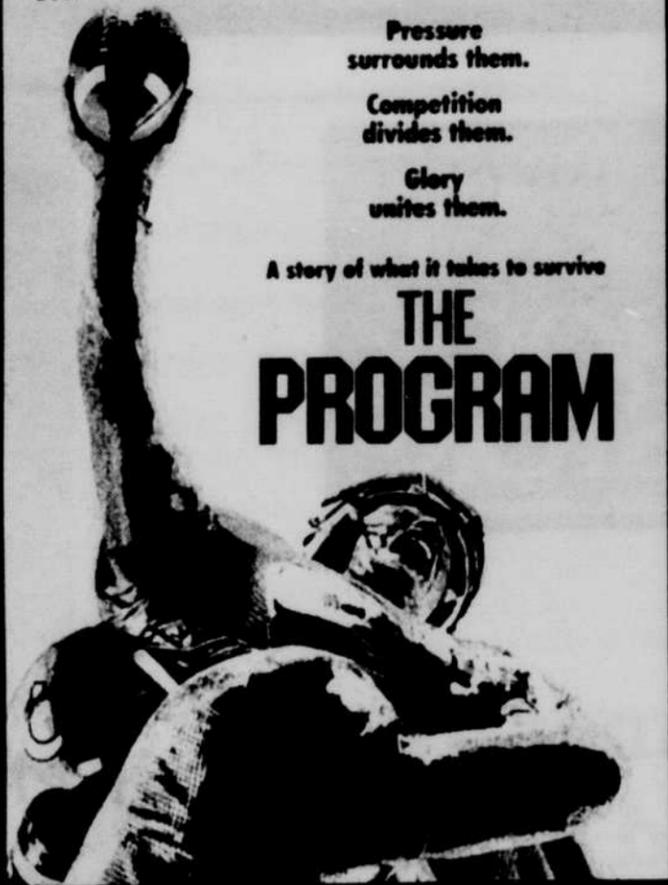
Pressure surrounds them.

Competition divides them.

Glory unites them.

A story of what it takes to survive

# THE PROGRAM



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## HEINONEN

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The biggest question confronting Heinonen lies with Fairchild. After coming to Oregon in 1991 as one of the top high school runners in the world, injuries held her back, and she elected to drop out of school for a year. Heinonen wasn't even sure if Fairchild would ever return to the Ducks at this time last season.

But Fairchild has returned, and Heinonen is anticipating the possibilities. She's two inches taller, about 20 pounds heavier and has matured greatly since her last stint with Oregon. She has only competed once since May 1991, so all Heinonen can do is hope.

"Melody has astounding credentials, but those are two years old," he said. "She's not as tiny as she was, she's matured as runner, and she's

healthy, which she wasn't the last time she was here. If she returns even close to the form she was in three years ago, that will help us a great deal."

Oregon's main competition in the conference will be, as usual, Arizona and Washington. But this year, Stanford has jumped into the picture with a cast of newcomers.

Heinonen is not ruling out anything this season. The conference championship, district championship, and even a top-five national ranking are all within reach of the Ducks in his eyes.

"We will be competitive on all levels," he said. "A top-five finish would require all of our strongest runners running in top form and injury free at the end of the season. We can dream the dream, but there are a lot of ifs."

Oregon will compete this weekend at the Mountain West Classic in Missoula, Mont.

## MEN

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than last year."

No doubt the year of experience will help the youngest, and most successful, of last year's bunch: sophomores Karl Keska and Tracy Hollister.

Last season, Keska and Hollister led the Duck charge at the Pac-10 meet, finishing fourth and eighth, respectively. Keska followed up his Pac-10 performance by placing 13th at district and 43rd at the NCAA meet.

Hollister fell off after the conference meet, placing 49th at district and failing to do much at nationals.

Dellinger is hoping Keska will pick up where he left off last season and Hollister returns to his Pac-10 form.

The other top returnees are seniors Jason Humble and John

Dimoff. Humble ran solidly for the Ducks last fall, placing 13th at Pac-10s and 14th at district, but ideally, Dellinger would like to see Humble jump in as a top-10 finisher eventually.

Dimoff also finished last season strongly, taking 12th at Pac-10s and 16th at district. Dimoff also had his best track season in the spring, finishing 12th at the Pac-10 meet.

After that, the Ducks will be relying on a largely untested crew to round out the team.

Sophomore Scott Nicholas had an impressive spring on the track, finishing fourth at the Pac-10s in the 1,500 meters. If Nicholas is able to translate his performance on the track to cross country, it could go a long way toward helping the Ducks defend their Pac-10 title.

Redshirt freshman Rick Cantwell is also a strong candi-

date to fill the void left by Rick Mestler, Tim Julian and Colden Baxter, who all graduated in the spring. Cantwell has a strong distance background and could bring in valuable points as the Ducks' fourth or fifth finisher.

The rest of the team consists of a number of track athletes who will be making the transition to cross country.

Senior Chad Schacht, junior Mike Mahoney, senior Gordon Johnson, transfer Goss Lindsey and redshirt freshman Michael Katri are all better known for their track exploits, but if one or two of them could make a smooth transition to the trails, it could help the Ducks immensely.

The Ducks opened the season last weekend with a warm-up meet at the Pier Park Invitational in Portland and will run in the Mountain West Classic in Missoula, Mont., Saturday.



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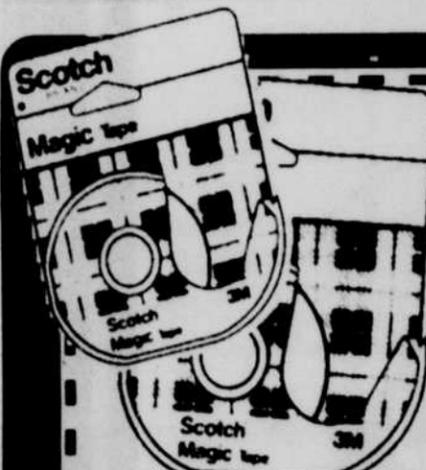
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