



Oregon's Milena Glusac (172) will be counted on heavily by the Ducks at the NCAA cross country meet Monday in Bethlehem, Pa.

Cross country looks for championship form

By Dave Charbonneau
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon men and women's cross country teams didn't exactly cruise into the NCAA Cross Country Championships, but that doesn't mean they don't have a chance to make some noise at the meet Monday in Bethlehem, Pa.

Both teams came off disappointing performances at the Pacific-10 Conference meet to earn at-large bids in the District VIII Championships.

The coaches of both teams are confident that if their teams run as they're capable of doing, a top-10 finish is well within their grasp.

"This team deserves to go to the NCAA championships, and they have a chance to finish in the top 10," Oregon men's coach Bill Dellinger said. "You'd like to go with a chance of winning, but they have proven they belong there."

Last year, the men finished eighth at the NCAA meet after capturing the Pac-10 championship. The Ducks are currently ranked 13th nationally.

The men will be relying on Karl Keska to step forward the

way he did in the district meet, when he finished seventh overall. Rick Cantwell has also had a fine season for the Ducks and took 12th at district. The Ducks will also need to get stellar outings from Tracy Hollister and John Dimoff.

"If Rick and Karl can run as well as they did last Saturday and the other three stay close, we can score well," Dellinger said.

The women had one of their worst Pac-10 performances in history but came back with a third place finish at district, leaving no doubt that they belong in the NCAA meet.

Head coach Tom Heinonen said the performance at the district meet was a welcome relief, and he believes his team is capable of an even stronger outing at the NCAAs.

"We made an important step up last week, but we're capable of even more," he said. "It's tough to have all seven people run well under championship conditions, but we'll be a top-10 team if we can."

Leading the Duck charge likely will be Milena Glusac. Glusac has been the top Duck in every

Ducks sign prep runner

Matthew Davis, one of the most victorious prep runners in Washington history, has signed a national letter of intent to attend Oregon, Duck coach Bill Dellinger said Thursday.

Davis won his third straight Washington AAA title in cross country two weeks ago and is favored to do the same in the 1,600- and 3,200-meter events on the track next spring for Mead High School in Spokane.

"There have been some great runners in the state of Washington that did not do

what Matt has done," Dellinger said. "I couldn't be more excited about getting him in our program next fall."

Davis is a product of one of the state's top distance programs under coach Pat Tyson, a former Oregon runner for Dellinger.

Davis was ranked nationally among runners in high school in both events last spring. His 4:10.77 in the 1,600 made him the No. 8 performer in the United States and was the best mark by a junior. He also had one of the top times (9:04.37) at 3,200 meters.

race this season, and another strong performance at the NCAAs will be crucial to Oregon's success.

Melody Fairchild finished ninth at district and has also been a solid Oregon runner in the past four meets. After that, the Ducks must count on strong finishes by the third, fourth and fifth scorers.

Jenna Carlson is the top candidate for the third position. Carlson finished 10th at the district meet and has also run well in the past three meets.

Niamh Zwagerman and Joni Wareham have also shone at times this season. Zwagerman finished in the top 10 in two meets this season and has yet to finish out of the top 20.

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