

Men go the distance at Pac-10s

By Scott Simonson
Oregon Daily Emerald

Head coach Bill Dellinger said his Oregon men's track team has not tried to fool itself this season. The team knows it won't be cast in a favorite's role when the Pacific-10 Conference championships take place Friday and Saturday.

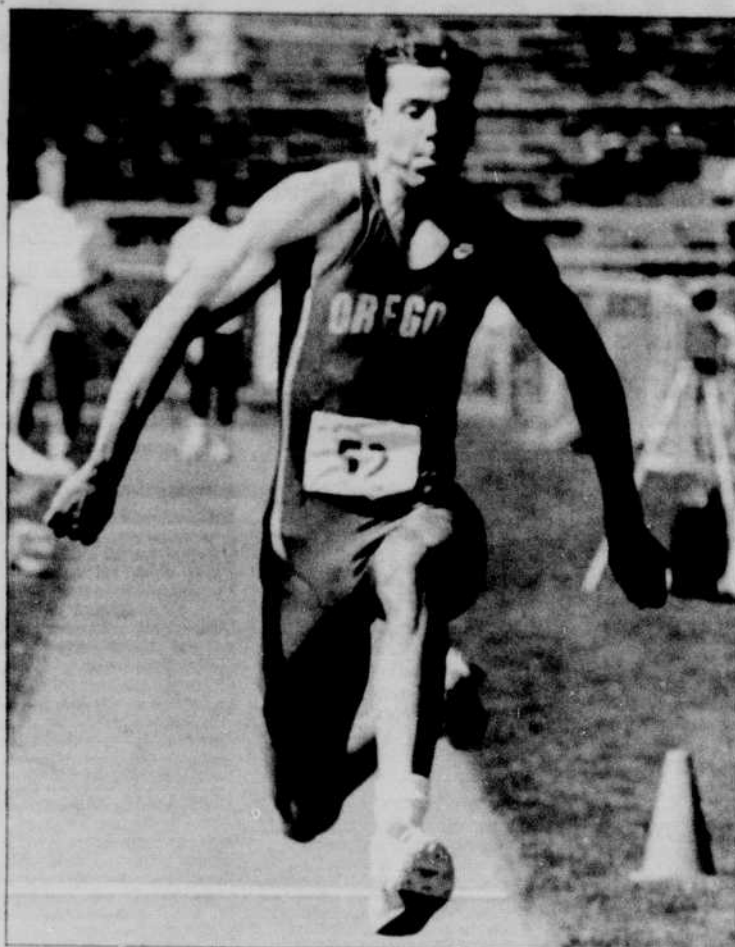
"UCLA will be the odds-on favorite," Dellinger said. "Arizona will be tough. So will Cal and USC. We'll have a tough time cracking the top three."

But don't expect the Ducks to go quietly. Most of the team that finished fifth at the 1993 Pac-10 meet returned this season. They are a year better and a year more experienced.

History says the Ducks will finish in the top four. Since 1960, Oregon has finished lower than fourth only twice. The Ducks have never finished worse than fifth at the Pac-10s.

Oregon's best opportunities for points probably will come in the distance events. Oregon owns five of the top seven times in the conference at 1,500 meters. The Ducks also have two athletes who are among the top five at 5,000 meters.

Gordon Johnson, who has the conference's top mark in the 1,500, is scheduled to run the



Oregon triple jumper Todd Bleakney holds the fourth best mark in the Pacific-10 Conference heading into this week's conference championship.

MICHAEL SHINDLER/Emerald

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Women in unfamiliar Pac-10 role

By Dave Charbonneau
Oregon Daily Emerald

The way Tom Heinonen sees it, the race for the women's Pacific-10 Conference track and field championship, which starts today in Pullman, Wash., can be broken into three groups.

Unfortunately, Heinonen's Ducks aren't in the top group, and that's kind of unfamiliar territory for the 18-year coach of the Oregon women's track team.

"A division of three groups has clearly developed as far as the team championship is concerned, with UCLA, Arizona and Arizona State battling for the team title," Heinonen said. "We should be in the next group fighting with Washington and USC for fourth place. It's certainly not as much fun when you're not going there to try and win the thing."

UCLA is the favorite to take the team title, but that's nothing new for the Bruins, who have won six team titles in the eight-year history of the meet. The two Arizona schools could push UCLA, but they will need a lot of big breaks.

The Ducks, on the other hand, come into the meet with fewer than the 24 maximum qualifiers for the first time ever. They instead will bring 13 automatic qualifiers and 24 entries to Pullman.

Much of that shortcoming can be attributed to the shortage of distance runners. Only freshman Milena Glusac has a chance to make any noise at the conference meet, but that may be more than just a little noise.

Glusac has the second-best qualifying time in the conference in the 3,000 and the third top time in the 5,000.

"We have no distance strength whatever other than Milena, and she may run the 3,000 and the 5,000 or just the 3,000," Heinonen said. "She's just an 18-year-old and it's her first conference meet so we'll see how it goes."

Then, of course, there's Kelly Blair. Blair made quick work of an overmatched field at the Pac-10 heptathlon championship last weekend, taking the title easily despite terrible weather.

Blair earned 10 points for the Ducks in winning

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