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Scott Deckelmann, Steve McCarthy and David Mustaine battle for the ball in practice Monday. The soccer team will take part in a tournament in Ashland this weekend and another tournament in Texas next week.

Soccer team in national tourney

■ **SOCCER:** Oregon's club team heads to Austin, Texas, this month for the tournament

By Pete Schneider
 Sports Reporter

The Oregon men's club soccer team is looking forward to playing in the National Soccer Championship Tournament this month, the first time an Oregon soccer team has qualified for the event.

The National Intramural and Recreation Association (NIRSA) will crown a national club soccer champion in Austin Texas on November 16, after a four-day competition. NIRSA extended bids to 16 club teams, representing six regions across the country.

"We're really excited to go and compete against these schools," said Greg Lababitch, co-captain of the Oregon team. "Some of these schools have more than 50,000 students, which I'm sure can field very good soccer teams."

The Oregon team, which has a 5-0-1 record, received an invitation from NIRSA this season on the basis of its record and strength of their schedule compared to other teams in the Western region. Oregon's region includes Washington, Califor-

nia, Utah, Montana and Nevada.

The biggest challenge for a club team at Oregon is money. As a non-varsity club team, the club is funded by a \$200-dollar allotment by Oregon Club Sports, which is sponsored by student activity fees. All uniforms, balls, and miscellaneous costs such as chalk and referees' fees comes out of the players' pockets. The 16 players on the team that plan to participate in the tournament had to come up with \$256 each for the trip.

To fund the trip, the members of the team are currently involved in several fund raisers, including selling Oregon Soccer Team t-shirts on campus. Lababitch sees fund raising as an indication of the seriousness of his team.

"The fact that we had to pay so much money shows the commitment that we have as a team this year," he said. "The financial commitment by our team show that we are not screwing around, but we are serious about making a good showing at the tournament."

Commitment has been the catch phrase for the Oregon team this season. As in all club

sports, there is no athletic department or scholarships to keep players motivated. But that didn't stop more than 40 players from trying out for the team. During weekly practices, the team has yet to have fewer than 15 players turn out for drills.

"This year, the team we have has shown an extraordinary commitment," Lababitch said. "Last year, I know we didn't have as much motivation. A lot of the time last season, maybe six people would show up for practice. That is not the case this year."

The season got off to a rocky start for the Oregon team. At about mid-season, the team decided coach Amir Tamiz was not working out. The team then decided to hire T. Talal as interim head coach for the remainder of the season.

"Under our first coach, our practices were not productive," Lababitch said. "He was unsociable and unworkable, so we decided to let him go. Talal has turned out to be very productive and he listens to our input."

Next up for the Oregon team is a tune-up tournament this weekend in Ashland. The team sees the six-team competition against state junior colleges as a time to hone skills and work on strategy for the national tournament.

Cougars: Davis suspended for rest of season due to 'behavior problem'

■ **Continued from Page 9**

Stanford on Saturday and Washington in the Apple Cup at Seattle Nov. 18.

Who will start the Stanford game won't be decided until later this week, Price said.

"I'm very positive about the future of this team and these next two games," Price said.

"Obviously, I'm not happy about the situation and the distraction ... it's an unpleasant thing to have happen to any player and I'm not happy about that, but I'm encouraged about how we're going

to do against Stanford."

Davis has started 21 consecutive games — winning 11 — since transferring from Oklahoma and sitting out the 1993 season.

Price said Davis should not be made the scapegoat for the team's 3-6 record that includes four consecutive Pacific-10 Conference losses.

"Everyone must share in the responsibility of our record. In no way does this have anything to do with our losses, or his performance," Price said of Davis's benching.

After a loss to Arizona a

week earlier, Davis publicly questioned the team's play selection, calling it "predictable." Davis was booed by Martin Stadium fans after throwing two late interceptions against Arizona.

Reached at his Pullman apartment Monday night, Davis said he was angry with Price's decision, but vowed to try to help the team.

Davis's benching was the result of "a behavioral problem" that did not involve drugs, alcohol or curfew violations, Price said.