



Billiards
Ultimate 9-ball challenge,
ESPN (34), 6:30 p.m.

SPORTS

Oregon Daily
Emerald

Top UO stories of 1997-98

1. BILL DELLINGER'S RETIREMENT:

The man who continued the Oregon track tradition begun by the other Bill's, Hayward and Bowerman, hung up his spikes after 26 years as the men's head coach. The former Duck and Olympian announced his departure, effective after next fall's cross country season, just two weeks after the announcement of ...

1A. RON FINLEY'S RETIREMENT:

Finley single-handedly supported Oregon's wrestling program through 28 seasons, recording more than 300 career victories and guiding 20 Oregon men to All-American honors. The former USA Wrestling coach of the year was a member of four world championship teams.

3. OREGON 31, NO. 6 WASHINGTON 28:

The football team's Nov. 8 win in Seattle broke the Huskies' two-season conference home winning streak. Akili Smith completed 15 of 25 passes for 193 yards and three touchdowns, including the game winner with 2:33 left in the fourth quarter to a diving Pat Johnson.

4. OREGON 97, NO. 6 UCLA 81:

For the third time in four seasons, the men's basketball team welcomed a nationally ranked Bruins team to McArthur Court and sent them away empty-handed. Oregon hit six straight three-pointers, the first three by junior Terik Brown, beginning at the 6:37 mark of the second half, then nailed 15 of 16 free throws down the stretch to ice the victory and the Bruins. The win was the biggest of Ernie Kent's first season as head coach of his alma mater.

5. OREGON 68, NO. 7 ARIZONA 66:

Oregon point guard Natalie Hughes sank a 15-footer with 2.6 seconds left to give the women's basketball team its second win over a nationally ranked opponent in as many weeks. The tide turned two nights later when freshman forward Brianne Meharry, until then one of the team's MVPs, tore her ACL just 40 seconds into the Arizona State game. That injury, combined with center Jenny Mowe's medical redshirt, severely hampered Oregon's post-season chances, as they eventually lost to Rutgers in the first round of the NCAA Tournament, 79-76.

6. OREGON 41, AIR FORCE 13:

The football team kicked off the Pacific-10 Conference's 5-1 showing in the postseason bowls by thrashing the Falcons' "white" defense in every way imaginable. Johnson scored on a 69-yard pass from Smith on Oregon's first play from scrimmage, tailback Saladin McCullough scampered to a 76-yard touchdown run on the second and Air Force's vaunted triple-option offense was allowed just 152 yards rushing by the young, but stingy, Oregon defense.

7. OREGON 10, NO. 19 IOWA 9:

Lindsay Welch's grand slam in the bottom of the seventh inning lifted the Oregon softball team to the championship game of the College World Series' Midwestern Region and the Ducks' highest postseason finish since 1989. No. 5 Nebraska ended Oregon's season the next day with a hotly contested 9-7 victory that featured five lead changes.

8. AKILI SMITH'S SUSPENSION:

Smith was back in the news two months after the football season ended when the quarterback was accused first of beating up a bouncer at the Mill Camp Saloon in Springfield on Feb. 1, then arrested for drunken driving by Eugene police two weeks later. The suspension, imposed for an indefinite time period by head football coach Mike Bellotti for "violation of team policy," was conveniently lifted just one day after the Ducks' spring practice season began April 6.

9. NCAA GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS:

Both the men's and women's golf teams advanced to nationals in the same season for the first time ever. The men tied for 27th in their first appearance at the championships since 1990. The women placed 14th in their fifth visit to nationals in the last six seasons.

10. SALADIN MCCULLOUGH 93 YARDS,

ARIZONA WILDCATS SPECIAL TEAMS 0:

McCullough got the Oregon football season started on the right foot, then the left, then the right ... eventually taking the Ducks' first touch of the season, after Arizona kicked off, 93 yards in the other direction for a touchdown.

Davis UO's strongest finisher at NCAAs

After falling to eighth, Micah Davis passed four runners in the final 300 meters of Friday's steeplechase to finish fourth

By Alex Pond
Sports Editor

Led by Micah Davis' fourth-place finish in Friday's steeplechase, the Oregon men concluded their season—and with it the 26-year head coaching career of Bill Dellinger—over the weekend at the NCAA Track and Field Championships in Buffalo, N.Y.

With seven team points, the Ducks finished in 35th place overall. Arkansas won the title with 58.5 points, while Stanford finished second with 51 points.

Davis, one of three Oregon men compet-

ing in the meet, concluded the steeplechase in his fastest time ever, eight minutes, 41.95 seconds, and earned All-American honors for the second straight season.

NCAA Track & Field Championship

"I'm happy with my race," Davis said, "but I'm also a bit disappointed. I wanted to do better, but you can only rehash a race a million times in your mind. What's done is done."

Davis, Oregon's 12th All-American in the steeplechase in the past 10 years, led the first half of the race before falling back to eighth with less than a lap to go. However, he passed up four runners in the final 300 meters, then held off Portland's Bryan Bothwell

for the fourth-place finish.

The Spokane, Wash., native said his strategy was to just keep the leaders within reach heading into the final lap, which he wasn't quite able to do.

"I let them get too far away from me," he said. "I should have responded sooner when they went around me and then I probably could have been within striking distance with a lap to go."

"It was kind of a weird race and I was in it and out of it mentally. There were parts of the race where I was right there and parts where I wasn't there. I guess the best part of my race was the finish. I had a really strong



DAVIS

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NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

Marie Davis, who received All-American honors for finishing sixth on the 3,000 meters at the NCAA Championships, runs against WSU earlier this season.

Three women come home All-Americans

Marie Davis was the third UO woman to earn All-American honors with a fifth-place finish in the 3,000 meters

By Rob Moseley
Sports Reporter

With two All-American honors by Oregon women already secured, the Ducks' Marie Davis entered the 3,000 meters at this weekend's NCAA Track and Field Championships in Buffalo, N.Y., with Oregon's best chance for a top-three finish and possibly even a win.

Davis started strategically, staying near the back of a 12-deep group of leaders so as to avoid expending energy by providing the others with someone to draft behind.

"I wanted to be in position for the win, and I was," Davis said. "It was the kind of race where it was tough to judge where you should be because it was so tactical."

Tracy Robertson and Jessica Koch, both members of the eventual national champion Arkansas Razorbacks, took the lead in the second half of the race, and Davis took advantage of the ability to draft to move into third.

But when the bell rang for the final lap,

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Pac-10 proves to be king of NCAA conferences

OPINION



Tim Pyle

There is a popular notion on the East Coast that goes something like this:

"This is the center of the world. Everything that is important happens here. That's why we're all in such a [insert expletive here] hurry all the time. If you think otherwise, I will mercilessly tailgate you — actually, I'll do that regardless of your opinion."

I learned this from living in New Jersey for a summer, during which I was repeatedly asked interesting questions about Oregon. Among the greatest hits were inquiries about marijuana laws (all the Jersey natives think there are none here), how big the farm I lived on was (I've never lived on one) and whether Chinese restaurants had made their way to our neck of the woods.

The East's chest-thumping does not relinquish in sports, either.

In the collegiate sports world, the commonly held belief on the other side of the country is that only conferences east of the Rocky Mountains are among the nation's elite.

True, the Big East, Atlantic Coast, Southeastern and Big Ten conferences boast an abundance of quality competition and top athletes. However, one conference outshines them all when collegiate sports in their entirety are considered.

Oregon's very own Pacific-10 Conference has proved

itself worthy of its self-proclaimed "Conference of Champions" slogan in recent years.

After setting an all-time record with 14 NCAA team titles in 1996-97, the Pac-10 has captured 11 more national championships this academic year, culminating with Southern California's 21-14 drubbing of Arizona State in Saturday's Fiesta Bowl ... er ... College World Series title game (note: I'm not claiming the Pac-10 has the nation's best pitchers).

In addition to the Trojans' baseball triumph, Stanford has earned five championships (men's cross country, women's volleyball, men's and women's swimming and men's tennis). UCLA has gained two titles (men's soccer and men's volleyball), and California (men's gymnastics), Arizona State (women's golf) and Washington (women's rowing) have all captured one national championship this school year.

Furthermore, the Pac-10 has won NCAA titles in 17 of the 31 possible different sports since the beginning of the 1996-97 school year.

That does not even take into account multiple winners in a particular sport. In women's golf (Arizona in 1995-96 and Arizona State the last two seasons) and

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