

UO women fight off illnesses

The women's cross country team prepares for Saturday's Pac-10s

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

When Marie Davis crossed the finish line at the Oregon Invitational two weeks ago, she was exhausted.

The Oregon women's cross country team's top runner still managed to place third overall, but throughout the race she had suffered from flu-like symptoms.

Now, Davis is healthy. And Saturday the Davis-led Ducks will have another shot at Alton Baker Park.

Oregon will run in the Pacific-10 Conference Championships on Saturday. The race will begin at 11 a.m.

"We've each realized that we need to get healthy," Davis said. "Each of us needed to prepare ourselves for the Pac-10, which meant getting rid of our colds and flus and preparing our bodies to run as hard as we can."

Davis has placed in the top five of each of her meets this season. Heather McMahon has also been a valuable asset to the Ducks, finishing behind Davis in four meets.

"We are so much healthier than we were before," head coach Tom Heinonen said. "Marie is healthy and Siri [Hafdah] is getting there, and that will help a lot. Katie Crabb and Robyn Sutherland had strong races at the Oregon Invitational. Liz Howell and Annie Ebner are also ready for big races."

Running for the women will be Crabb, Davis, Ebner, Howell, McMahon, Sutherland, and Kyle Wells.

The No. 16 Ducks will face an impressive field of competition,



Marie Davis leads the Oregon women's team into the Pac-10 Championships this weekend at Alton Baker Park.

including No. 2 Stanford, which is on pace to capture the national title. No. 6 Arizona, No. 12 Washington, No. 15 Arizona State and No. 23 UCLA will also be competing.

Heinonen is focused on improving the team's Pac-10 standing by the time Saturday's race ends.

"We're fifth in the Pac-10 right now," Heinonen said. "I'd like to see us jump ahead of Arizona State and stay ahead of UCLA, a

team that has been coming up fast in the end. Washington might be in reach of us, too."

Heinonen said that finishing strong on Saturday would give the Ducks momentum going into the regionals.

"Doing well on Saturday would be a great stepping stone to the West Regional Championships, which will be the key to getting the [NCAA] Championships," Heinonen said.

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