

Senior Matthew Davis, the Ducks' top finisher at the Pac-10 Championships in Eugene earlier this month, leads Oregon into the NCAA Championships today in Lawrence, Kan.

## Men to battle Arkansas for national title

By Scott Pesznecker  
*Oregon Daily Emerald*

When the Oregon men's cross country team competed at the NCAA Championships last year, it finished in eighth place.

Today, the No. 3 Ducks will compete again at the prestigious national competition — and this time they said they want to win it all.

"We have a good team," head coach Bill Dellinger said. "They have a definite shot at winning the title, but it will take top performances by all the guys going back there, not just Matthew Davis or Steve Fein."

Going into the meet, the favorite is No. 1 Arkansas. The Ducks have not met Arkansas in competition this season, but they have faced their other major opponent, Stanford, on several occasions.

The Cardinal dominated Oregon at the Pre-NCAA Invitational in

Lawrence, Kan., on Oct. 10, but narrowly escaped defeat at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships in Eugene three weeks ago. The two teams met last weekend at the West Regionals, and Stanford won that match-up as well.

"If each of our guys runs well and can pick off a couple of guys, then we should be good in the standings," Davis said. "As long as our guys run



hard in each of their races, including myself, then we'll be successful."

Davis and Fein are expected to lead the Ducks today in Lawrence, Kan. Rob Aubrey, Micah Davis, Andrew Bliss and Greg James will also run, as will All-American Oliver Wirz. Wirz has not run for

the Ducks since the Pre-NCAA.

"I feel pretty comfortable," Wirz said. "I've put my work in for the last couple of weeks and I have done some good workouts. I know that I've progressed since I ran the pre-nationals and I'm actually really excited about racing."

Today's meet will be the last of Dellinger's 32-year Oregon career. "I'm looking forward to it," Dellinger said. "This is a great group of individuals. It is the finest team I think we've had in a long time."

This meet will also be the final cross-country meet for Matthew and Micah Davis, Aubrey and James. Matthew said it is important for the team to remain focused on its immediate goals.

"In the midst of it, this is just another race," he said. "The realization that it is the end won't happen until later."

## Women hope for a strong season finish

By Scott Pesznecker  
*Oregon Daily Emerald*

A difficult schedule finally paid off for the Oregon women's cross-country team.

The No. 16 Ducks will compete today at the NCAA Championships in Lawrence, Kan., and head coach Tom Heinonen said the Ducks are "ready to go."

"As long as it doesn't rain to make the course muddy again, it should be pretty decent," Heinonen said. "Our team is healthy, and we plan on being rested by Monday."

The Ducks earned an at-large invite after their fourth-place finish at the West-Regionals in Fresno, Calif., two weeks ago, one of just 13 teams to earn the honor.

Heinonen said in order to finish well, the team must remain consistent with what it has done throughout the season.

"This race will be a matter of doing what we've been doing all year long," Heinonen said. "Teams that can do that do well."



Today will be senior Marie Davis' final cross-country meet for Oregon. Davis, a two-time All-American, has finished in the top five in all six of her races this season. This meet will also be the last for seniors Heather McMahon and Liz Howell.

Katie Crabb, Annie Ebner,

Robyn Sutherland and Kylee Wells will also make the trip to the NAAs. Wells entered into the Ducks' starting rotation shortly before last weekend.

Heinonen said he would like to see Oregon beat UCLA and Arizona State as it did at the West Regional meet. However, he said the unknown factor of the meet is the size of the field, which has been expanded from 22 teams to the national format of 31 teams.

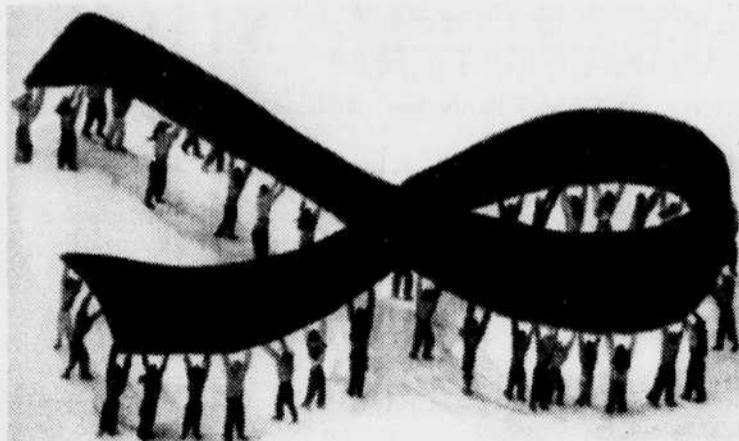
"I'd like to beat them again and I'd also like to beat Washington," Heinonen said. "There are a lot of other teams out there, and the conference teams are submerged in all those other teams that we haven't met."

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