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# Men's relay competes at qualifiers

The runners hope to clinch a spot at the NCAA Championships

By Allison Ross

In an attempt to improve its ninth place national standing, the Oregon men's track distance medley relay team will compete today at the NCAA Track and Field Qualifying meet in Ames, Iowa.

The Ducks have made one change since posting their season-best time of 9 minutes, 46.31 seconds at the Cyclone Classic at Ames on Feb. 5.

Junior Steve Fein will shift to the anchor position, while Greg James will run the opening 1,200meter leg, Nat Johnson will run the 400-meter portion and Richard Gervin will run the 800 before passing the baton to Fein for the remaining 1,600 meters. "We're just trying to put together a good enough team to qualify," Fein said. "I think we have an excellent shot at qualifying. Everyone is an NCAA-caliber athlete,

and we're one of the top teams in the country."

the country."
Some of the
Ducks' stiffest
competition in
the relay will be
a foursome from

Drake, which finished in second place (9:42.28) ahead of the Ducks at the Cyclone Classic.

Fein has already posted an automatic qualifying time of 7:55.56 for the indoor 3,000, which ranks him sixth nationally and third among American collegians.

Also making an appearance at the Lied Track and Recreation Center in Ames will be freshman Ross Krempley, juniors Howard Moore and Laird Prosser and senior Ross Dammann.

Prosser and Dammann will compete in the mile.

Moore leads the team in the 400 and will look to improve his time of 48:19. Ross, who won the 800 at Ames on Feb. 5 with a season-best time of 1:51.67, will try to improve that time.

"The primary focus of this meet will be on the distance relay," Oregon head coach Martin Smith said. "Clearly, for us to protect our spot or move up we need to do better than we've ever done before."

While the distance relay will be Oregon's main focus, the other runners will focus less on qualifying and more on improving their racing experience against some of the best colleges, Smith said.

The NCAA Indoor Championships are scheduled for March 5-6 at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis.

# Schilling, McRae slowed by injuries

Cubs pitcher Kerry Wood also suffers, experiencing a respiratory infection

The Associated Press

When it comes to bizarre baseball injuries, add Curt Schilling and Brian McRae to the list.

Schilling was slowed by back spasms Thursday. And the Philadelphia Phillies say the problem was caused by one of the favorite spring training pastimes — doing nothing.

"They stand around a lot," Phillies manager Terry Francona said at Clearwater, Fla. "I even told them they'd be standing around a lot. You get stiff when you do that."

Schilling does not expect to miss his regular turn to throw Friday.

"I thought it would kind of heat up and get loose, but it never did," he said. "Maybe we should check my mattress. Maybe that's the culprit."

McRae missed part of the New York Mets' first full workout because of an odd occurrence.

"He broke a tooth when he was running," manager Bobby Valentine said. 'It was cracked and sensitive, but it didn't go into the root."

Chicago Cubs pitcher Kerry Wood, meanwhile, went home early from the hospital after being slowed by an upper respiratory infection. He is scheduled to return to camp in Mesa, Ariz., Friday.

Team physician Dr. John Marquardt said the NL Rookie of the Year will continue to take medication and will work on his conditioning slowly. The 21-year-old right-hander hasn't participated in spring training since Sunday.

"It'll probably be a week to 10 days before he is operating on all cylinders," Marquardt said. "He's had an unlucky spring in that he's had three sort of distinct illnesses."

Neither Marquardt nor Cubs general manager Ed Lynch could predict if Wood would be ready for the season opener April 6.

"That's more than a month, so he may well come along nicely. It's hard to say," Marquardt said.

#### Sports Brief

## Another weekend trip for Oregon softball

Willie Nelson's signature hit "On the Road Again" would be a suitable theme song for the Oregon softball team so far this season — and it will continue to be so until the Ducks' home opener March 13.

Entering the third weekend of

its season, No. 25 Oregon (6-4 overall) plays a doubleheader at Loyola Marymount today before it plays four games Saturday and Sunday at Cal State Northridge in the Matador Invitational.

The Ducks begin game No. 1 against the Lions (9-8 overall) today at 1 p.m.

day at 1 p.m.

Loyola Marymount is 0-3
against Pacific-10 Conference

teams, dropping a pair to Oregon State — both by 4-0 scores — and losing to California, 10-2.

Saturday, Oregon meets Cal State Northridge at 10 a.m. and San Diego State at 2 p.m.

The Ducks battle the same two teams Sunday, but in reverse order. Oregon will play San Diego State at 10 a.m. and Cal State Northridge at noon.

