

SPORTS

Friday
March 12, 1999

Student tickets are available today for \$4 at the Casanova Center for Oregon's second-round NIT men's basketball game against Wyoming on Monday at 7 p.m. at McArthur Court.

SEASON PREVIEW

Oregon women showcase the young and old

*The Ducks will officially open the outdoor track season on Saturday at Hayward Field*By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

For the past couple of months, the Oregon women's track and field team could be found practicing in the Moshofsky Center as it attempted to escape from the wet, cold winter weather.

But from this point on, the team will spend most of its time outdoors.

The Ducks officially open their outdoor season Saturday at the Oregon Preview, held throughout the day at Hayward Field.

"The Moshofsky Center has been a lot of help to us, but it's time for the transition to the outdoor season," head coach Tom Heinonen said. "This coming meet will be a major step to get ready for the upcoming season."

Experience and youth are two things that Oregon has going for it. Returning from last season's Pacific-10 Conference Championships are 18 veterans who will help lead the squad's junior members.

"As in any team, we look toward the older athletes to lead the newcomers and show them how it's done," Heinonen said. "We have a solid group of older athletes who can be helpful to the youngsters."

Among the veteran talent is one of the nation's top distance trios. All-American Kaarin Knudson will compete in the 800 meters and 3,000 meters, and Katie Crabb has winning potential in the 800 meters and 1,500 meters after finishing strong last spring.

Rounding out the distance trio is All-American Marie Davis. Recently, Davis resumed full track workouts after sustaining a foot injury.

Heinonen called Davis' injury a possible "blessing in disguise."

"She is unlikely to start as fast as she did last year, but we don't need her to," he said. "We just want her to finish well. She still has the talent to get to the NCAA meet, and maybe a slower start will help her out down the stretch."

Two more critical pieces to Oregon's puzzle are veterans Aisha Wallace and Sue Morris. Wallace ranks second among the Ducks' returnees in the 100 meters and third in the 200 meters.

Morris has recovered from an Achilles tendon injury last year and wants to rejoin the Pac-10's elite in the 400 meters.

Oregon will also welcome two newcomers to anchor the Ducks in the sprints. Alexis Yeater will run the 100 and 200 meters, and Endia Abrante will race the 400 meters.

Fresh from an All-American finish in the NCAA Indoor Championships in Indianapolis,

Karina Elstrom will lead the Ducks in the jumps. Last season, Elstrom made appearances in both the indoor and outdoor NCAA meets.

Elstrom has cleared 12 feet in five of her last seven collegiate meets and wants to use the upcoming Oregon Preview to ease into the outdoor season.

"I really want to do well this season," Elstrom said. "This could be a great beginning to the outdoor season. I just want to get the crowd pumped up and jump as high as I can."

Freshmen Niki Reed and Georgette Moyle join sophomore Holly Speight in playing key roles for the Ducks' jumping squad. Reed is the third former Oregon state prep titleist to join the Ducks, while Moyle was also ranked among the top-20 high school preps last year.

The throws graduated three Pac-10 scorers last year, but the return of senior Heidi Fisk and junior Maureen Morrison



Nick Medley/Emerald

The Ducks' newly crowned All-American Karina Elstrom will vault in Saturday's Oregon Preview.

Turn to TRACK, Page 13A

UO men desire to continue winning ways in March

"The guys are focused and they're anxious to keep playing well."

Chris Russell
Oregon head coach

Scott Barnett/Emerald

Freshman Thomas Schneider will look to improve his 8-8 record this weekend when the Ducks take on Pacific and San Francisco.

By Mirjam Swanson
for the Emerald

With the way things are going for the Oregon men's tennis team, March could turn out to be the big month the Ducks were hoping for.

Heading into its final two home matches of the season, Oregon is fresh off its biggest wins in school history.

Last Sunday, Oregon upset No. 31 Santa Barbara, 5-3. The Ducks hope that win will set the tone for the rest of the month as well as the rest of the season.

"We've been looking for that kind of win for a while," head coach Chris Russell said. "Not only can we compete at that level, but we can win at that level. Our goal was to have a really great month, and we're talking about winning almost all of our matches."

The Ducks want to build as much momentum as they can before they begin play in the Gaucho Classic in Santa Barbara, Calif., on March 27, Russell said.

And a couple of wins this weekend would certainly help.

"The guys are focused and they're anxious to keep playing well," Russell said. "If we

Turn to TENNIS, Page 16A

The Ducks finish their home season with matches against Pacific on Saturday and San Francisco on Sunday

On tap

What: Men's tennis
Who: Oregon vs. Pacific
When: Saturday, 1 p.m.
Where: 13th Street Courts (with sun) or Willow Creek Tennis Courts (with rain)