

Blazers-Lakers

PORTLAND — (AP) The remarkable road show known as the Western Conference finals makes its last Portland appearance Friday night, and one of the stars is hurting.

Kobe Bryant didn't practice with the Los Angeles Lakers for the second consecutive day Thursday because of a sprained right foot, an injury that occurred in the first half of his team's 96-88 loss Tuesday night.

Officially, the Lakers listed Bryant as probable for Friday's game.

Bryant's injury adds a little more uncertainty to a strange series in which the visitor has won four straight games and in which Portland is 2-1 in Los Angeles but 0-2 in the Rose Garden.

Los Angeles leads the series 3-2. If the homecourt disadvantage persists in Game 6, the Lakers will be headed to the NBA Finals. If the Trail Blazers finally win one at home, the deciding Game 7 will be Sunday in Los Angeles.

Damon's P.T.

PORTLAND —(AP) For the second straight year, Damon Stoudamire is feeling left out of the Western Conference finals. The difference is he's not complaining about it.

The Portland Trail Blazers' starting point guard angered his coach and the fans last season when he spouted off about reserve Greg Anthony being in the lineup late in games against the San Antonio Spurs, instead of him.

Part of Stoudamire's frustration came from missing a crucial free throw with 12 seconds left in Game 2 against the Spurs. The miss allowed Sean Elliott to make his game-winning 3-pointer, and San Antonio went on to sweep the Blazers and win the NBA title.

The stigma of selfishness stuck to Stoudamire through the summer and into this season, but the former Portland high school star hasn't piped up one time. For one, he was hurt by the public reaction to his comments.

Another reason is that in the current series against the Los Angeles Lakers, Anthony hasn't been getting minutes either. The Blazers have played Scottie Pippen as point guard to stop Kobe Bryant, leaving the other four defenders to help with double-teams on Shaquille O'Neal.



Best Bet

NBA: Playoffs Game 6
Blazers vs. Lakers
6:30 p.m., NBC

Sports

Oregon track teams land All-Americans

Mary Etter and Steve Fein become Oregon's first All-Americans this season, but Fein won't advance to the 1,500 finals; Katie Crabb advances to Saturday's 1,500 finals

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

Two Ducks received All-American honors and one advanced to the finals at the NCAA track and field championships in Durham, N.C. on Thursday.

But not all ended well. Freshman thrower Mary Etter placed herself among the nation's elite in the discus with a toss of 166 feet, 11 inches, good for eighth place.

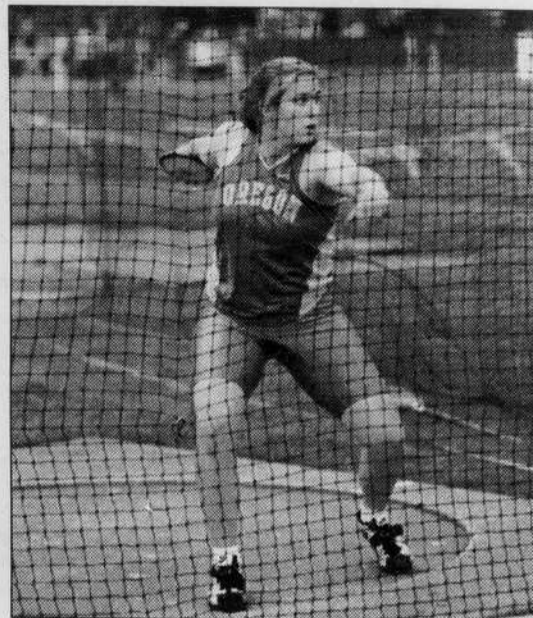
Steve Fein also earned All-American status with his time of 3 minutes, 45.63 seconds in the first of two 1,500 qualifying heats. However, the senior's

seventh-place finish did not advance him to the finals.

Senior Katie Crabb advanced to the 1,500 finals by finishing fifth in her heat in 4:21.91. The 1,500 finals take place at 7:55 p.m. EST, Saturday.

Etter entered Thursday's competition seeded No. 16. Coming out of it, she is ranked as the top freshman nationally in the discus. Her finish is the best for a Duck at the NCAA meet in 15 years.

Etter's throw was her third-best attempt this season. UCLA senior Seilala Sua won the NCAA discus title with a 200-9



Kevin Calame Emerald

Mary Etter is the nation's top-ranked freshman in the discus.

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Emerald

Oregon women's head coach Tom Heinonen has seen everything, including the fall of his track team to last place in the Pac-10 this season.

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

A lot can happen in 24 years.

That's how much time has passed since Tom Heinonen took the reins as head coach for the Oregon women's track team.

As the lead Duck, he's seen and accomplished a lot. His success has earned him international coaching jobs, such as coaching the U.S. junior women's team in the 1989 World Cross Country Championships in Norway.

However, like anyone else who coaches a sport, Heinonen has had his ups and downs.

But unfortunately, more of the latter as of late.

Oregon finished last place at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships last weekend. Of all places, it happened at Oregon's own Hayward Field.

It was the first time ever Heinonen's Ducks wound up in the conference cellar.

Weathering THE STORM

Women's track and field head coach Tom Heinonen knew this season would be tough for his inexperienced Ducks

"This is in fact a young team," Heinonen said. "Last year we graduated a huge number of seniors, and it was clear from day one that we'd be far below our previous standards."

"I knew this was coming. I knew we'd be at or near the bottom six weeks ago, but I didn't want to advertise it then. I could read the handwriting on the wall."

Four of his athletes this season — middle distance runner Katie Crabb, javelin thrower Karis Howell, discus thrower Mary Etter and pole vaulter Niki Reed — did make it to the NCAA Cham-

pionships being held this week in North Carolina.

Still, Heinonen is faced with a challenge of putting more of his athletes back in that position.

Heinonen has always managed to find success when it comes to running.

A student-athlete at Minnesota, Heinonen received All-American accolades on the track and won the 1969 AAU marathon one year after graduation.

Since becoming the Oregon women's track and field coach in 1976, he's captured nine Pac-10

titles and three NCAA titles. He's produced 13 NCAA individual champions and 71 track and cross country All-Americans.

But something began to change in 1986. The core group of seniors that led Oregon to an NCAA crown the previous season left, and Heinonen knew he couldn't make his new squad perform like a group of veteran athletes. The Ducks won the Pac-10 title but finished with zero points at the next NCAA meet.

"At that point, I never thought we'd get back up to the national level again," Heinonen said. "But we did. We went from top-to-bottom in a hurry."

Oregon hasn't been the NCAA champion since its 1985 title. But by 1988, his team was back on the national scoreboard — in third place.

Coaching can only go so far in

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Tom Heinonen
head coach

