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Ducks seventh at Roy Griak Invite

Senior transfers Hanna Smedstad and Michael Kasahun lead the Ducks at premier invitational meet

By Robbie McCallum
Oregon Daily Emerald

It was a day of firsts for the Oregon cross country teams at the Roy Griak Invitational in St. Paul, Minn.

The inaugural meet of the season was a successful one for the ninth-ranked men and the No. 12 women, as both teams placed seventh out of 31 teams. Host Minnesota won the team title with 98 points, placing four runners in the top-30.

Senior transfer Hanna Smedstad, a two-time All-American, led the Duck contingent, placing sixth in a time of 21 minutes, 12 seconds in her first race in an Oregon uniform.

"Hanna was solid all the way and was top-10 the entire race," women's head coach Tom Heinonen said. "She got up as far as fifth and as far back as eighth in the last mile."

"They'll have a better handle on it next time... I thought it was a good, solid first race, but I think we're a lot better, and we'll have our chance to show that in three weeks."

Tom Heinonen
Cross country coach

The meet also marked a change to the new NCAA standard distance for the women's team. The 6,000-meter course is a step up from the 5,000 meters the Ducks previously raced. The women showed their inexperience with the new distance.

"This was the first 6K for all our athletes," Heinonen said. "They'll have a better handle on it next time."

Senior Katie Crabb began her final season of eligibility Saturday. The All-American was the second Duck to the finish line, placing 34th in 21:59. Sophomore Eri MacDonald led a pack of Oregon's final three scorers, placing 57th (22:20) and leading senior Rhiannon Glenn (65th, 22:27) and freshman Laura Harmon (70th, 22:30).

"We beat a few teams that might help us for NCAA at-large consideration, but we have to be a lot better at Pre-Nationals," Heinonen said. "I thought it was a good, solid first race, but I think we're a lot better, and we'll have our chance to



show that in three weeks. The start was a little shocking — the field size was like an NCAA meet — so it was a good

warm-up for the Pre-NCAA meet down the road."

The meet was also the first race for senior Michael Kasahun and sophomore Jason Hartmann since stepping out of the shadow of graduated Steve Fein. Oregon's top two returning runners lived up to expectations as Kasahun placed 13th in 24:48 over the 8,000 meter course (5.024 miles) and Hartmann 18th in 24:52.

A pack of freshmen accounted for four of Oregon's ten entrants in Minnesota. It was the second meet of the season for Brett Holts, who led the Ducks at last week's Bearcat Open. Holts was the fourth Duck to the line, finishing 58th in 25:21. Noel Paulson (75th, 25:29), Chris Clancy (131st, 26:00) and Aaron Emery (144th, 26:06) also ran. Keith Kelly's first place finish led No. 14 Providence College to the team title with 104 points. The Ducks beat out four teams ranked in the top-25.

Veterans Adam Bergquist, Sam Hill and Lincoln Nehring also placed well for the Ducks.

Oregon will now have two weekends off before competing at the pre-NCAA Invitational in Ames, Iowa, on Oct. 14.

Duck golfers try to putt away the rain

Bad weather ruins the women's golf chances, while the men look ahead to sunnier days in Washington

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon women's golf team can't shake the storm clouds that hang over its head.

Literally.

For the third straight tournament, dating back to last year's NCAA Championship in Sunriver, the Ducks were dogged by poor weather. Oregon finished ninth of 15 teams at the rain-shortened Mary Fossum Invitational in East Lansing, Mich., this weekend. The tournament was shortened to 18 holes from 54 after Saturday's action was rained out.

Last week, the Ducks faced Hurricane Gordon at the NCAA Fall Preview in Howie-on-the-Hills, Fla., and finished a disappointing

19th out of 21 teams. That tournament was shortened to 36 holes. Last spring, Oregon dropped from third to 11th at the NCAA Championships after high winds lowered the team's scores.

The Ducks' next tournament will be at the Edean Ihanfeldt Invitational, October 9-12. That tournament is being held at the Sahalee Country Club in Redmond, Wash., site of the 1998 PGA Championship.

The Oregon men's golf team opened the season with a fifth-place finish at the Northwest Classic last week in Corvallis. Sophomore Chris Carnahan won the individual title at that tournament.

Oregon will attempt to repeat its performance today and Tuesday at the 54-hole Husky Invitational. Seven Pacific-10 conference teams will play in the tournament.

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