

Oregon takes on large field

■ The cross country teams make their last appearance in the state of Oregon on Saturday at the Willamette Open

By Robbie McCallum
Oregon Daily Emerald

The tightest race this week isn't in the Associated Press football polls — it's which University athletic event is the most exciting in football's absence.

According to the GoDucks.com fan poll, the cross country team's trip to the Willamette Open this Saturday rules all. At press time, the Duck Harriers were receiving 26.4 percent of the vote, just over volleyball's game against Arizona State, which was garnering 20.8 percent.

Oregon fans should be excited about the west coast's largest cross country race of the season.

The Ducks are just one of the 40 teams entered into the meet at Salem's Bush Pasture Park, which expects over 700 runners. The men's 8,000-meter race will begin at 9 a.m., and the women's 5,000-meter race is set to start at 10:15 a.m.

The No. 2 Colorado women's team comes to Salem with the high-

est ranking. Eastern Oregon University holds the No. 11 spot in the NCAA Division III women's polls, while Willamette is No. 22.

On the men's side, Colorado also comes in as the favorite, being the fourth-ranked team in the nation. Lewis and Clark of Portland are ranked 14th among NAIA teams.

The No. 19 Oregon women will be at full strength, while the men will field their "B" squad.

Duck freshmen Chris Clancy, Aaron Emery and Mike Pluth, as well as junior transfer Symon Kimata will make their second trip to the Bush Park course. On Saturday, Sept. 23, the Duck newbies competed in the much smaller Bearcat Open on the same course. Kimata placed second at that meet, helping the "B" squad to a 1-2-3 sweep and first-place finish.

The men will also get an unexpected boost from the track team. Competing in their first cross coun-

try races since high school will be juniors Ross Krempley, Merritt McDole and Sean Gross, and sophomore Jake Horner. All four runners are 800-meter specialists in track but have not competed outside Hayward Field for the Ducks.

Senior transfer Hanna Smedstad leads the Oregon women's contingent. The native of Sundsvall, Sweden, placed sixth at last week's Roy Griak Invitational in St. Paul, Minn.

Veteran seniors Katie Crabb and Rhiannon Glenn will make their fourth trip to the 5,000-meter Bush Park course.

Sophomores Erinn Gulbrandsen, Annie Davis and Carrie Zografos are also expected to compete.

Past evidence has shown Bush Park to be friendly to Oregon runners, as two Duck alumni hold course records. Former NCAA champion Kathy Hayes holds the 5,000-meter record at 16 minutes, 19.7 seconds while Shannon Lemora owns the 8,000-meter record at 23:41.0.

The Willamette meet will serve as a warm up to the Pre-NCAA meet next weekend in Ames, Iowa.

Big Mac's homer clinches win

By R.B. Fallstrom
The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Mark McGwire gets only one at-bat a game these days, but he made this one count.

McGwire, limited to pinch-hitting duty by tendinitis in his right knee, hit an eighth-inning home run for the St. Louis Cardinals' final run in their 10-4 win over Atlanta on Thursday.

"Mark is the heart and soul of this organization," said Will Clark, who hit a three-run homer in the first.

"All that does is just give him more confidence, and I think it gives the team more confidence to know that hey, he's on the bench and he can go up there with one swing of the bat and put a run on the board."

McGwire's right knee, which caused him to go on the disabled list for two months starting in early July, has been slow to respond to treatment. But there's nothing wrong with his bat.

Two of McGwire's 32 regular-sea-

son homers came after he returned from the disabled list Sept. 8.

On Thursday, bringing back memories of Kirk Gibson's homer for Los Angeles in the 1998 World Series, he lined a 1-2 pitch from Mike Remlinger over the center-field wall, a drive estimated at 412 feet, for his fifth career postseason homer.

McGwire is unable to play first base because of pain in the knee, and he comes out for a pinch runner whenever he reaches base.

Soccer

vs. # 15 Arizona State
Friday - 3:00pm - Pape Field

vs. Arizona
Sunday - 1:00pm - Pape Field



Volleyball

vs. Arizona State
Friday - 7:00pm - Mac Court

vs. #8 Arizona
Saturday - 7:00pm - Mac Court

Visit us at www.goDucks.com

\$10 buffet - All you can eat and drink! Friday 9-12pm

SCANDALS

The best dance party in Eugene is always at Scandals.
2222 Centennial Blvd. (Next to Autzen Stadium) 343-4735