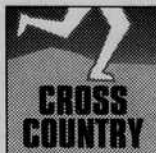




Weather dominates NCAA cross country meet



■ Oregon cross country teams are hit hard by freezing temperatures and strong headwinds at the national championships

By Robbie McCallum
Oregon Daily Emerald

Seventeen degrees, 21-mile-per-hour winds and a negative five degree wind chill — not the most ideal running conditions.

Yet, that was the weather Monday in Ames, Iowa, the site of the NCAA cross country meet. Despite the harsh conditions, 505 runners, nine of whom were Ducks, lined up for two chilly races.

"The conditions were brutal," Oregon women's coach Tom Heinonen said. "I've never seen anything like this in 26 years. Even when we've run in snow, it hasn't been this bad."

Oregon runners did not respond well to the conditions, as few Ducks put in top performances. The Ducks were represented by the women's team, which placed 28th out of 31 teams, and two individual men.

Sophomore Jason Hartmann put in arguably the best performance of the day for Oregon, earning his second All-American honor by placing 35th in a time of 31 minutes, three seconds over the 10,000 meter course.

"I did all right but not as well as I would have liked," Hartmann said. "It comes down to doing it on the day. I

was in position, but couldn't close it and that's the key."

Senior Michael Kasahun was the only other Oregon runner in the men's race. The Ethiopia native capped his Oregon cross country career with a 65th-place finish in a time of 31:26.

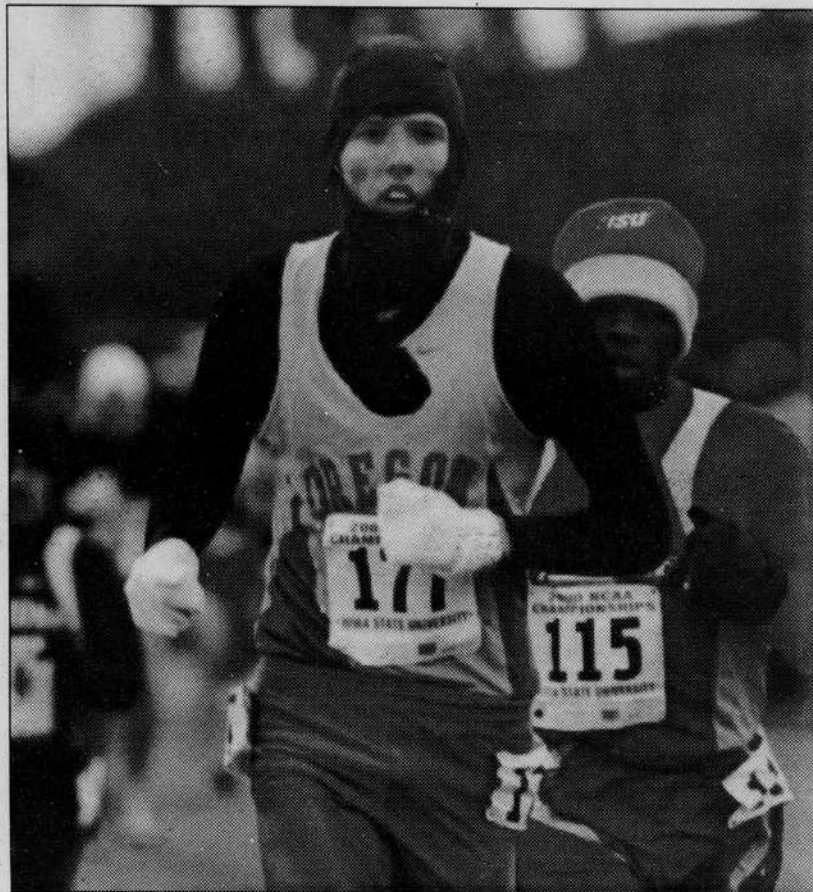
"During the race, I was in control, but couldn't close it up," Kasahun said. "My legs basically froze up on me at the end. I was trying everything I could, but just couldn't get it out."

The Oregon men's team failed to qualify for the NCAA meet after a fourth-place finish at the Western Regional meet Nov. 11. Hartmann and Kasahun qualified, though, by placing second and fourth, individually.

"Obviously, [Hartmann and Kasahun] were disappointed that the team couldn't be here but still approached the race as mentally tough as they could," men's head coach Martin Smith said. "This is tough cross country weather and if you weren't mentally prepared and mentally strong enough, it could have a major impact."

Underdogs took home most of the trophies in the men's race. Providence College's Keith Kelly outkicked defending national champion David Kimani of Alabama and Stephen Ondieki of Fairleigh Dickinson to win in a time of 30:14.

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Sophomore Jason Hartmann bundled up for the men's NCAA championship race, where he earned All-American honors.

“The conditions were brutal. I’ve never seen anything like this in 26 years. Even when we’ve run in snow, it hasn’t been this bad.”

Tom Heinonen
Oregon women's coach

Men's hoops hits the road to face waiting Denver



Oregon senior forward Bryan Bracey exploded Friday for his first career double-double in points and rebounds and will be looking to do more of the same tonight.

■ The Ducks know they will be playing a Denver team that will be looking to avenge last season's blowout at Mac Court

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

For the Denver men's basketball team, revenge is spelled O-r-e-g-o-n.

The Pioneers suffered their worst loss of the season last year in Eugene, a 101-53 defeat at the hands of the Ducks.

Tonight, Denver will have the home-court advantage.

"We had a good win against Denver last year and they're looking for revenge," Oregon senior center Julius Hicks said. "They felt we ran up the score last year, which wasn't the case."

Oregon head coach Ernie Kent thinks the revenge factor will be good for his team.

"If it's a hostile environment and they're a little bitter, then that's a good test for us," Kent said. "Certainly we're going to find those environments down the road when we get into conference

play."

The game will be the Ducks' second of the season and their first road test. Oregon handily defeated Mississippi Valley State, 85-70, in its season opener Friday.

Denver may be emotionally excited in its first game of the season tonight, but it may not be able to overcome the talent difference between the two teams. The Pioneers finished with a 6-22 record last year, despite playing in the lowly Sun Belt Conference. In two exhibition games this year, Denver defeated World Basketball Opportunities 109-102 and the Nantucket Nectar Naturals 80-70.

Despite the Pioneers' track record, the Ducks are taking the team seriously.

"Anybody can beat you on any given night," junior forward Freddie Jones said. "We've got to go out there and play with intensity or they'll sneak up on us."

"They're going to get up for this game, an opportunity to play a Pac-10 school," senior forward Bryan Bracey said. "We know they're going to be holding a grudge after last year. We just have to come and be ready to play."

Kent will be looking to put all his team's puzzle pieces together.

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“We had a good win against Denver last year and they’re looking for revenge.”

Julius Hicks
Oregon center

Cheer up, there are still plenty of reasons to be a proud Duck



PEZ SEZ

SCOTT PESZNECKER

So, did anyone watch the Civil War Saturday? I did, and let me tell you, it wasn't Oregon's best performance ever. In fact, it ranked right up there with the worst I'd seen in its last two seasons.

sons.

So many things went wrong in that oh-so-important game. Where was the passing defense in the first quarter? Was the O-line actually trying to protect quarterback Joey Harrington? And why did Harrington, who thrives on pressure, throw five interceptions?

It's funny how the hands of fate can be so cruel; how one moment, a team controls its Rose Bowl destiny, and the next, the BCS bowl representatives are snuggling up with the other team. And not just

any other team, but a heated in-state rival.

How can it be?

Oregon fans were stunned and shocked after the loss. One can only imagine how electric Eugene would have been that night had the Ducks won — but they didn't.

Today, I'd bet that many Oregon football fans are still trying to shake away the cobwebs, still trying to get a grip on the grim reality at hand.

No Rose Bowl, no BCS bowl, no 10-win season — at least not yet.

My response? No problem.

You see, Oregon fans, there are still plenty of reasons have Duck pride.

For starters, there's the Oregon women's basketball team. True, the women lost point guard Shaquala Williams, their best player, before the start of the season. However, backup Kourtney Shreve has shifted into the starting role well, recently scoring the game-winning four points to beat North Carolina State on the road.

Guard/forward Lindsey Dion is healthy for the time being — another plus for Oregon — and the

tall, athletic Alyssa Fredrick has calmed down on the floor to become a steady inside force so far this season.

And, even though Williams is on the bench for the season, spectators at the Ducks' two exhibition games saw a rare thing from her: a smile, for real.

Oregon was picked to finish second in the Pacific-10 Conference, but with the way it played on the road last weekend, this team could do more. Can you say "threepeat?"

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