

SPORTS

Wednesday

Best Bet
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Duck men pumped up for NCAAs at Hayward

■ Oregon is sitting pretty with a small but proven contingent and the home field advantage

By Robbie McCallum
Oregon Daily Emerald

The NCAA Championship meet has not been kind to the Oregon men's track and field team lately. The once mighty Ducks have been seen at the bottom of the NCAA scoreboard: 65th place... Oregon... 2 points.



The slump may be over, though. Oregon head coach Martin Smith has revamped the Ducks program with big-name talent from a mix of in-state and international athletes.

letes.

If everything goes according to plan this week, Oregon will place 15th with 17 points, a far cry from the five-point performance last year and the two-point performance in 1999.

The Ducks feel they have an ace up their sleeve. With the NCAA Championships taking place right here in Eugene, the athletes will have a large

crowd on their side while competing on familiar facilities.

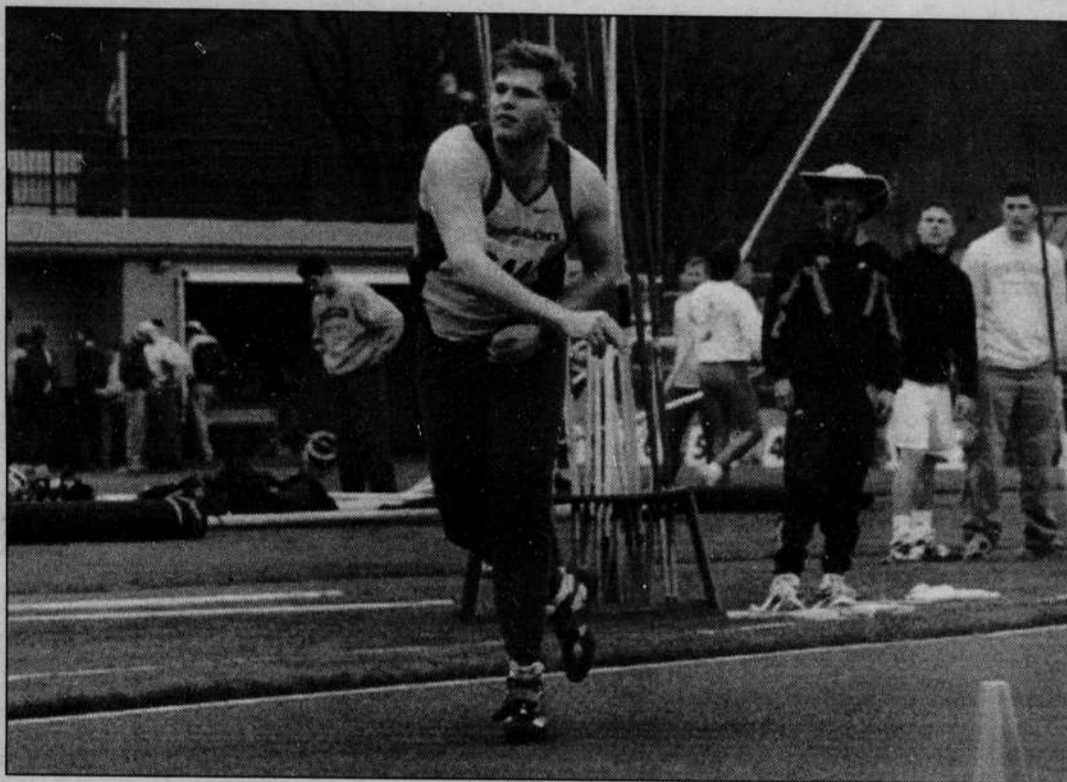
"I can imagine the whole stadium filled with green Duck fans cheering me on," said Oregon's Santiago Lorenzo, the fourth-ranked decathlete. "It's really going to help me a lot."

One of Oregon's biggest threats is sophomore John Stiegeler, who is the favorite to win the javelin.

"Throwing at home definitely has its advantages," said Stiegeler, who was dubbed "Javelin John" by faithful Hayward fans earlier this season. "It's always fun competing at home. I'm an internal person but when you get the crowd going, you get an extra spark."

The bulk of Oregon's points are expected to come from Stiegeler and Lorenzo, but the Ducks have other threats elsewhere. In only his second meet of the season, redshirt freshman Jason Hartmann posted an NCAA provision mark in the 10,000 meters in a time of 28 minutes, 56 seconds, which has remained the seventh-best mark in the nation for two months. Now, Hartmann is rested and ready for a strong performance.

A big surprise could come from jun-



Oregon's "Javelin John" Stiegeler is a big reason why the Ducks could make some noise at the NCAA Championships.

Emerald

Turn to Men's, page 12A

Quartet of women hold Oregon's NCAA title hopes



Jon House Emerald

Sophomore Mary Etter, ranked 10th nationally in the discus, is one of four Ducks qualified for the NCAA Championships.

■ Four Ducks will shoot for All-American status at this week's four-day NCAA Championships

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Theoretically, the Oregon women's track and field team could score up to 38 points at this week's NCAA Championships. That point total would put them somewhere near fifth- or sixth-place nationally.

If that happened, there would be much celebration in Tracktown, U.S.A.

Instead, if everything goes according to the national plan, the Ducks are more likely to score around 15 points and end up near 15th or 20th in the country at the meet that they will host.

So the Ducks will instead focus on in-

dividual goals. Oregon has four athletes entered into the four-day championships: freshman Sarah Malone in the javelin, junior Niki Reed in the pole vault, sophomore Mary Etter in the discus and sophomore Charyl Weingarten in the javelin.

"We're very strong in the field events this year and we'd like to have a good showing in front of our hometown fans," Oregon head coach Tom Heinonen said. "We've made some strides, and we'll certainly be motivated this week. It's an opportunity for us to showcase what we've got."

Of those four Oregon athletes, Malone, Reed and Etter have the best chances to win national titles. Malone is ranked second nationally in the javelin, while Reed and Etter both rank 10th in their events. However, Reed has the same season-best jump as the fifth-ranked jumper and only lies in 10th because of a complicated series of tie-breakers.

Turn to Women's, page 12A

Despite victory in court, Martin's ride will be rough



OUT IN LEFT FIELD

ADAM JUDE

I have a hard enough time finishing a round of golf using my healthy legs. I can't imagine having to do it with a disability.

Which makes my admiration for Eugene's Casey Martin even greater.

Martin suffers from a rare circulatory disorder in his right leg, making it painful to walk, especially for four hours on an 18-hole golf course. But after a three-and-a-half-year struggle, he can now rest easy knowing he

can ride with the rest of the pack.

Citing the 1990 Disabilities Act, the Supreme Court ruled Tuesday that Martin can use a golf cart in between shots. The decision came after the PGA appealed two lower court rulings, which also sided with Martin's original lawsuit, filed in 1997.

The PGA argued that the fatigue of walking from shot to shot was part of golf and Martin would have an unfair advantage with a cart.

There were no hard feelings on either side, however. PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem woke Martin in his Eugene home early Tuesday morning to inform him of the ruling and congratulate him.

"My instant reaction was relief," Martin told ESPN.com. "Relief that it was over and I can put all this behind me. There is no guarantee that golf will be in my future forever, but I will always be able to look back and realize that I prevailed in this. That means a lot."

Martin, a former teammate of Tiger Woods and member of the 1994 NCAA championship team at Stanford, said he hopes the court's decision will create more opportunities for other disabled athletes.

"I think in the future this opens some doors for people," Martin told the Associated Press.

The controversy has sparked much debate, including how other forms of disability will be interpreted.

"In Casey's particular case, there's no doubt about his disability," said PGA Tour player Hal Sutton. "This is not about Casey Martin. It's about the possibilities it opens up. The next person's disabilities — it might not be as clear."

If not physically, the victory will surely help Martin's psyche, now that he can put the stress of the court's decision behind him.

But the story is far from over for Martin

and he is the first to admit it. He failed to retain his PGA Tour card at the end of last year and is now trying to regain his admittance to the big show in the Buy.com Tour.

"Even though this is one big hurdle that I've cleared, there are still others," Martin said. "The lifestyle is trying at times, to say the least. So yes, this is a big win for me, but it's not the end of the line. The end of the story is certainly not written."

Martin will no doubt feel the pressure from his co-workers on the tour, some probably wishing they could ride around the course, too. But you can bet that Martin would give them the cart for one of their healthy right legs.

Regardless, Martin has to be given credit for his fight and support for this next endeavor. Congrats, Casey. Go get 'em.

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