

Women harriers end season quietly at regionals

■ The end of the road has come for the women's cross country team with a 12th-place finish at the Western Regionals

By Chris Cabot
Oregon Daily Emerald

It's all over. After finishing 12th at the Western Regional Championships in Tucson, Ariz., the Oregon women's cross country team will not advance to the NCAA Championships later this season.

If the Ducks had finished in the top two they would have automatically received an invitation, but

the competition was fierce and included five top-25 teams in the 23-team race.

No. 1 Stanford won the regionals with 39 points and was followed by No. 8 Arizona (second, 81 points), No. 11 Arizona State (third, 85), No. 24 Washington (fourth, 118) and No. 17 UCLA (fifth, 164).

Redshirt junior Carrie Zografos, who was sick most of last week, could not find the energy to lead the team as she had done in every race in which she had entered before Saturday. Zografos finished fourth on the squad and 97th overall in a time of 24:25.8 over the

6,000-meter course.

Leading the way for the Ducks was sophomore Laura Harmon, who finished 45th overall with a time of 23:07.1. The race marked the first time Harmon had paced on the Oregon squad, and she made it clear that she was over the illnesses that had plagued her over the past month.

"It felt good to finally get over the health problems from the past few meets: a kidney infection at Furman (pre-nationals) and over-

hydration and lack of electrolytes at Pac-10s," Harmon said. "I felt so much better at the end, it actually surprised me how much I had left."

Junior Erinn Gulbrandsen produced her best finish of the season, placing second on the team and 75th overall with a time of 23:59.5. Gulbrandsen said the experience of three years on the squad is starting to help her, and that she was more comfortable during the race Saturday.

"I got into the flow and started to pick off runners all the way to the finish," she said. The other Oregon finishers were

Magdalena Sandoval, who was hampered by a quadriceps injury, (78th, 24:03.7), Annette Mosey (81st, 24:07.2) and Alicia Snyder-Carlson (125th, 25:07.5).

Head coach Tom Heinonen said that his team competed well, but that the race showed that teams must be healthy in order to win championships.

With an early end to the season, the women have time to recuperate and get back to 100 percent before the track season in spring.

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Ducks still winless in Pac-10 after 'senior night' Civil War loss

■ A three-game sweep at Mac Court gives Oregon State the season series over the Ducks

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

Oregon volleyball had it all Friday at McArthur Court.

Oregon State was in town for the second installment of this season's Civil War, it was "senior night" for Oregon's Julie Gerlach and Monique Tobbagi, and 1,325 fans showed up to cheer for the Ducks against the rival Beavers.

At the end of the night, the only thing Oregon lacked was a win.

With a three-game sweep of the

Ducks (31-29, 30-22, 30-27), the Beavers (16-7 overall, 9-5 Pacific-10 Conference) took the season series from their in-state rivals for the first time since 1997.

"This hurts even more because of it being the Civil War and Senior Night," Tobbagi said after posting a team-high 20 kills and earning her 26th career double-double. "We thought we were going to get it tonight. OSU played well and we just didn't step up."

The Ducks (9-17, 0-14) were in position to take the first game from Oregon State, but couldn't win the opener. With four-point and five-point runs, Oregon was dominant early, jumping out to a seven-point lead.

But the Beavers were able to claw their way back and eventually tied the game at 27. A block by OSU junior Michele Solomon and a kill by junior Megan McMillan helped put the Beavers in the driver's seat. Another block by Solomon and a service ace by senior Lori Daedelow gave the Beavers a two-point win.

What could have been an important win for Oregon quickly turned into a momentum-draining loss for the Ducks. Oregon State's seven-point run at the start of game two put the Ducks away for good en route to the Beavers' eight-point win.

"Emotionally, it was a letdown to lose game one and then see how game two starts," Oregon head

coach Carl Ferreira said.

Oregon began game three looking like a top-25 team, as it jumped out to another big lead over the Beavers. At 10-5, the Ducks were in control, but again saw the diligent Beavers come back.

With the game tied at 16, two Beaver attacks gave Oregon State a lead they would not relinquish. Ferreira's squad could get no closer than 28-26 before bowing out on an Oregon attack error and a kill by OSU senior Gina Schmidt.

"They executed better than we did," junior Stephanie Martin said. "They were more prepared for us. They wanted it more than we did."

A key to the Beavers' win was

their ability to maintain two highly successful runs on the Ducks. Early in the first game, a four-point run allowed them to gain momentum. Their seven-point run at the beginning of game two put the Ducks away before Oregon could even score a point.

"The repercussions of one play three plays later has such an emotionally steamrolling effect unless you have the mental ability to stop it," Ferreira said. "We talk all the time about not letting your opponent beat you twice."

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Smith

continued from page 9

then turns around and jogs toward the locker room, but not before dishing a little dirt on the remaining UCLA fans, who stand still in shock that their Bruins didn't win.

"You see our crowd?" Bauman said later. "Our crowd out there was louder than their crowd!"

Click. In the basement of the Rose Bowl, just outside the Oregon locker room, fullback Josh Line emerges with a beaming grin and a head shaking in disbelief. The reality of having caught the winning touchdown pass to beat the Bruins on the road and keep the Ducks in control of winning their wild league is beginning to sink in.

"It doesn't get any better than this," said Line, who broke loose from the line of scrimmage and rolled to the right side of the end zone on a critical fourth-and-goal

from the one and caught the go-ahead score. "I felt like the ball wasn't going to get to me."

Line then stops his racing thoughts on the victory and hopes his wife is doing OK back home. After all, his wife is pregnant with their child and, well, "Some people say that stress causes births and I'm pretty sure she was stressed," Line said. "My wife was probably watching at home and going crazy, and I hope she didn't have my baby."

"I hope I don't come home and I've got a baby in intensive care."

Click. A few feet away from Line, over in the corner and away from the media spotlight, sits Oregon defensive coordinator Nick Aliotti, whose defense held the Bruins on that last drive on a critical third-and-five to force the 50-yard field goal try.

You can forgive him if he never wants to leave this position where he's smiling, chatting with friends and just soaking up every bit of

the Ducks' victory over the Bruins in Pasadena.

After all, it wasn't that long ago, 1998 in fact, when Aliotti was in the other locker room at the Rose Bowl for the one season that he was UCLA's defensive coordinator before leaving under not-so-friendly circumstances with Bruins head coach Bob Toledo.

Bill Moos enters the room, takes off his coat, loosens his tie and heads right toward Aliotti and offers his hand. Aliotti shakes it and gets up and gives the Oregon athletic director a hug. He then sits back down, his face still one of elation, while Nike CEO Phil Knight is heard in the distance, exhaling, and saying, "Oh my!"

Click. And then there's Colleen Bellotti, wife of Mike, who watches from the stands with mixed emotions as the last-second field goal for the Bruins misses. She celebrates with those around her

and, later, walks off the field with her husband, whom she says was "more fired up than usual."

But still, she felt Griffith's pain when he walked off the field after booting the ball too short and too right. She knows all about kickers. Her son, Luke, is a junior place-kicker for Sheldon High, and just over a week ago, he had knocked through a field goal with 16 seconds left to give the Irish a 31-28 win and the Midwestern League championship.

"You feel bad for him," Colleen said of Griffith. "So my heart goes out to him because you're either the hero or the loneliest guy on the team."

She says these words at the same time that her husband tells a group of journalists just an earshot away, "If he makes it, then that's an awesome kick. I can accept that."

Click. The roll of film is almost up, and you have to make sure to save

some pictures for the remaining two "bowl games" of the season, as Bellotti calls them.

First, there's the Dec. 1 Civil War. Then, there could be the Jan. 1 Fiesta Bowl in Tempe, Ariz. Or, as doubtful as it seems, things could fall neatly into place and the Ducks could be returning to this rosy town on Jan. 3 to play for it all.

One last snapshot: It's of Harrington. He's gushing over his first victory in the stadium he's longed to play in. A reporter asks what it was like to play in the Rose Bowl for the final time. He gives him one of those Oregon Duck looks, one of those don't-underestimate-us looks.

"You keep saying that, and I'm not buying it," Harrington said. "There's a lot of playing left. "Stranger things have happened."

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