

# Conference harriers ready for Pac-10s

The Pac-10 cross country teams will meet in California on Saturday for the conference title

## Cross Country Notes

**Mindi Rice**

Freelance Sports Reporter

Cross country is a sport that does not heavily depend on conference standings, unlike most other intercollegiate sports.

Instead, cross country relies on a team's finish in the regional championship meet and which teams have placed ahead of others in previous contests.

To add another race in which teams have an opportunity to place ahead of possible automatically qualifying teams, conferences

hold their own championships each season.

Saturday, nine women's squads and eight men's squads — Oregon State and USC do not field men's squads, while Oregon State also does not have a women's team — will travel to Pasadena, Calif., to race against their Pacific-10 Conference rivals and attempt to oust Stanford as the perennial Pac-10 leader. Here is a run-down of those teams.

### Arizona

The Arizona men finished second in the Arizona State Invitational, while the women finished fourth. Both teams placed ahead of ranked opponents in the Oct. 11 meet. Many of Arizona's runners this season are young and need experience to have a shot for the Pac-10 title.

### Arizona State

Host of last year's Pac-10 Championship meet, the Sun Devil squads are both nationally-ranked, with the men's squad 25th and the women's squad 17th. The men's squad finished 20th at the NCAA Championship meet last year, while the women finished 23rd in the same meet.

### California

The Golden Bears squads struggled last year, with both teams finishing last in the Pac-10 Championship meet. This year, both the men's and women's teams return several veteran runners, and also pick up a talented crop of freshmen.

### Stanford

The Stanford women's squad has won the Pac-10 Championship meet for the past six years, while the men

have taken home the title in five of the past six seasons. The men's squad is ranked first in the nation, and the women are ranked second.

### UCLA

The Bruins' men's squad finished sixth in the Pac-10 Championship meet last year, while the women finish fourth and went to the NCAA Championship meet. Last year the women had a young squad, and this year they return experience and talent. They are ranked 19th in the nation.

### USC

Following last year's seventh-place finish at the Pac-10 Championships, the USC women have placed fourth, fifth and sixth at their regular-season meets this year. The team is led by junior Brooke Thomas and senior Danielle Morrell.

### Washington

Both Husky squads placed fifth in the Pac-10 meet last year, and have shown strong improvement this season. The men finished 13th at the Pre-National meet, while the women finished 11th. Both teams are led by upperclassmen, with a strong contingent of young runners behind them.

### Washington State

The Cougars have a new coach this season, and have been running strong in their meets. The women finished sixth and the men seventh in last year's Pac-10 Championships, while each squad had one individual qualify for the NCAA Championship meet.

Mindi Rice is a freelance writer or the Emerald.

## Soccer

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The referee declared it as "all ball" with no foul, and Thayer ended up injuring the Wildcat player for the rest of the game. Thayer looked to the injury as uplifting for Oregon, and said it helped to lead the Ducks to their first Pac-10 win.

"I love hitting people; I just love the rush of it," Thayer said. "Just someone dribbling the ball and being able to smack them and then look at them on the ground."

For Mintz, the aggressiveness and contact in Pacific-10 Conference soccer is not the worst she has experienced. Mintz played the 2001 season at Connecticut before being transferred to Oregon this season.

"The East Coast is definitely a more physical game and the play is

much faster," Mintz said. "East Coast is geared a lot more around weights and strength and power, versus speed on the West Coast."

Oregon is an aggressive team and takes a strong physical approach to soccer, but the Ducks are small in size. The Ducks have three players listed at 5-feet-10, including Thayer, and 12 players under 5-feet-5.

"Both Robi and Christine are very smart, and understand the physicality of their game and their roles within the game," Steffen said. "Are they physical? Yes. And that's to be admired because they understand that there are physical challenges to the game and they accept those challenges and they have done pretty well with them."

Oregon faces UCLA and USC in back-to-back matchups this weekend, and physical prowess and aggressiveness will be key for the

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**Robi Thayer**  
Oregon defender

Ducks as the two California teams rank high with strong records.

### Fans, fans and more fans

To all the fans who have supported the Oregon women's soccer team through thick and thin, you have another reason to be proud.

Prior to the weekend, Papé Field had sported the second-highest home attendance average in the league. After six games and 4,667 total people, the Ducks were averaging 778 people per game.

With the undesirable weather conditions against Arizona and Arizona State, the average dropped to 671 per game. With a total of 5,366 people for eight games, that places Oregon fourth in the Pac-10.

The Washington Huskies lead the league with an average of 1,256 people per game followed by Stanford at 829 and UCLA is third with 740 to edge Oregon in attendance.

"It says something about women's soccer, especially with how this year we haven't had a great year but we still have tons of support from the community and that they are behind us every single game whether we win or lose," Thayer said. "To

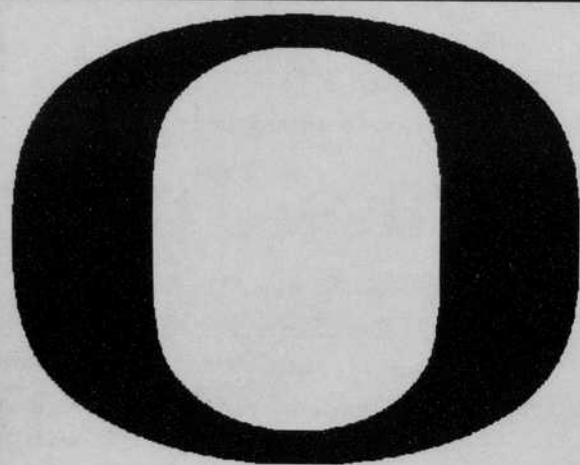
look up there and have all these fans, especially against North Carolina, is just amazing."

Oregon went head-to-head with top-ranked North Carolina on Sept. 29 at Papé Field, and although they took a 3-0 loss, 1,588 fans came out to support the Ducks and broke the previous attendance record.

"It definitely is a motivation for us, because while we may get down on ourselves it helps to know that fans still come out to see us play no matter what our record is," Mintz said.

Oregon fans will have one more opportunity in conference play to come out and support the Ducks. Oregon's final home game is Nov. 8 in the home rivalry at Papé Field with Oregon State.

Contact the sports reporter at [jessethomas@dailyemerald.com](mailto:jessethomas@dailyemerald.com).



## 2002-03 Oregon Men's Basketball Student Ticket Release Dates



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Students enrolled for Fall 2002 classes can pick up one ticket for each game at the ticket offices located in the EMU or at the Len Casanova Center. Student tickets are funded by the ADFC through student incidental fees. In most cases, tickets are distributed two games at a time. **For men's basketball, a total of 2,039 tickets per game are available for UO students. Students must have a current UO student photo ID card to pick up tickets.**

### Opponents (Game Dates)\*

Exh. - Basketball Travelers/EA Sports All Stars (Nov. 6/14)  
John Thompson Classic (Nov. 24-25)  
Pacific/Portland (Nov. 30/Dec. 4)  
**Oregon State (Jan. 18)**  
Florida A&M/Minnesota (Dec. 20/22)  
UC-Riverside, **Arizona/Arizona State (Dec. 28, Jan. 2/4)**  
**Washington/Washington State (Jan. 23/25)**  
**Stanford/California (Feb. 6/8)**  
**USC/UCLA (Feb. 27/Mar. 1)**

\*Pac-10 Conference games and dates in **BOLD**.

### Release Dates

Monday, November 4  
Tuesday, November 12  
Monday, November 18  
**Friday, December 6**  
Monday, December 9  
**Monday, December 16**  
**Monday, January 13**  
**Monday, January 27**  
**Monday, February 17**

For more information, contact the Duck Ticket Office at (541) 346-4461 or the ASUO at (541) 346-3724.