

Zografos earns individual berth in NCAAs

The Oregon women will send only one runner to the national meet Monday in Indiana

Mindi Rice
Freelance Sports Reporter

Senior Carrie Zografos will have to run with a different pack Monday at the NCAA Championships in Terre Haute, Ind.

The Oregon women's cross country squad did not receive one of 13 at-large bids for the NCAA meet, handed out Monday. However, as one of the top four finishers from a non-qualifying school, Zografos earned an individual spot in the race.

Zografos ran the NCAA course in October at the Pre-Nationals meet, where she finished 53rd.

"I'm looking forward to the course since it's a comfortable layout," Zografos said. "It's easy to focus and lock in on just running and not worry about loops or directions."

Zografos joins former Duck harriers Stephanie Wessell and Marie Davis as the only Oregon women in coach Tom Heinonen's tenure to qualify individually, without the team.

"It's a strange situation for the runner," Heinonen said. "No one likes to go by themselves, but I've had two other athletes make it as individuals, so I have a little experience with it. She's upbeat and I think she'll handle the challenge fine."

Heinonen, coaching his final season of women's cross country

after heading the program for 28 years, has coached 24 NCAA-meet teams. In the four years his teams did not earn a spot, three of them have had individual Ducks represent the women at the national race.

"Both I and the team were really excited about our regional performance Saturday," Heinonen said. "Our goal was to be really good at the end of the season when it counts the most. By far it was our best race of the season, and the runners were really complimented by a lot of people afterward."

UCLA and Washington earned the only at-large bids from the West Region. Washington, which finished just ahead of the Ducks at fourth in the regional meet, received the final spot of the 13 teams.

Polls raise and drop Ducks

In the final national cross country poll of the season, the men's cross country team dropped from its previous ranking. The men had been ranked fifth in the nation for the past seven weeks, but dropped to sixth after the regional races.

"I'm not worried about ranking. Our original goal coming into the year was to have a single-digit NCAA finish, and that's very doable," men's head coach Martin Smith said.

The women earned a national ranking for the first time this season in the Nov. 4 poll, earning 37th. In Monday's final poll, the women's



Carrie Zografos (35), seen here at the Oregon Invitational last April, earned an individual berth in Monday's NCAA Championships.

squad moved up to 35th.

Do I know you?

At the NCAA Championship meet, both Zografos and Smith will see familiar faces.

Zografos, who transferred to Oregon from Colorado after two years, will be running against two former teammates.

"It was funny, after my 1,500 (meter personal record) last year, I was talking to one of the Colorado girls and she said that runners never leave CU and get better," Zografos said. "She wasn't trying to be mean, but more that she was surprised, but I was still left with a feeling of 'How do I take that?'" Smith was the head coach for 15

years at Wisconsin before accepting his position at Oregon. Jerry Schumacher, Wisconsin's current head coach, was a three-time All-American for Smith between 1988 and 1993. Schumacher stuck around from 1994 until 1996 as an assistant to Smith.

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four weeks.

"We've got plenty of time. He'll be back for the bowl game," Campbell said. "I don't want to rush him along, but he'll be in rehab real quick."

Smith injured his knee Oct. 26 against in a 44-33 loss to USC. In the previous seven games, he was sixth in the country with 133.7 yards per game and 12 touchdowns.

No kidding

If you thought the war of words between the Ducks and Huskies was more of a whisper last week, you were right.

This week, however, the war has begun — and it has nothing to do with the Civil War or the Apple Cup.

Washington wide receiver Paul Arnold, who last week told reporters that the Ducks and Huskies have a "healthy hate," had a change of heart this week.

"I lied last week," Arnold told The Seattle Times. "It was actually more of a true hate."

Arnold had three catches for 21 yards in Washington's 42-14 win at Autzen Stadium. That's no lie.

Kicking butt

Oregon sophomore placekicker Jared



Adam Amato Emerald

Seth McEwan (43) and Igor Olshansky (53) are hoping to stuff the Ducks into a bowl game.

Siegel has been named one of three finalists for the Lou Groza Award, given to the nation's top kicker. Siegel has converted 18-of-21 field goal attempts this season, including a school-record 15 straight. He hit a school-record 59-yard kick against UCLA.

Nate Kaeding of Iowa and Mike Nugent of Ohio State are the other finalists. The winner will be announced Dec. 10 at a ceremony in West Palm Beach, Fla.

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Civil War

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action last week after sitting out four games with an injury. Meeuwesen was a Freshman All-American last season.

"He's still tweaked a little bit, but I believe he'll be close to 100 percent (Saturday)," Erickson said. "He'll play a lot, no question about that."

The Oregon State defense is stacked against the run and the pass this season. The Beavers give up an average of 88 rushing yards and 202.4 passing yards per game. Both numbers lead the conference.

Landing heads-up

The Beaver defense has had success in the one quarter that Oregon's offense has dominated — the first.

Oregon State has allowed a remarkable two touchdowns in the first quarter this season. The Beavers gave up their first first-quarter touchdown to Washington Nov. 9, then gave up another to Stanford on Saturday. Oregon State has outscored its opponents 102-43 in the first frame.

Oregon, meanwhile, has had success in the first quarter this year. The Ducks jumped out to a 14-0 lead against Washington, racked up 28-straight points on Stanford and led Arizona State 14-0, all in the first quarter. Overall, the Ducks have outscored their opponents 145-49 in the first quarter.

So the score reads 102-43 v. 145-49. Expect some fireworks right out of the gate Saturday.

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Volleyball

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"We have a good coach at every school. These are good jobs."

Dunning added that Carl Ferreira, Oregon's head coach, is the one who will lead the Ducks back to a promising record.

"There's a good person there," Dunning added.

Recruit, recruit!

Ferreira announced the signing of three high school players Monday.

Gresham's Heather Madison, Roseburg's Kristen Bitter and Sarah

Mason — from Ferreira's hometown of Hilo, Hawaii — all signed letters of intent to join the Ducks for the 2003-04 season.

"Since I got to Oregon, the number one goal has been to recruit the top players within the state of Oregon," Ferreira said. "These players are very athletic and will make an instant impact next season, much like the freshmen we have this year. I know the top players in Oregon can compete at a top-20 level, and getting these players has been based on relationships we've created."

Madison, a 5-foot-8-inch setter, was recently named Player of the

Year in the Mt. Hood Conference. She played for Jim Hartner at

"This is a Carl Ferreira-type of athlete ... When the game gets tougher, Heather gets tougher. She's a warrior."

Jim Hartner
Gresham coach

Gresham, who helped oversee current Duck Jodi Bell's play

while with the Nike Northwest Juniors Volleyball Club.

Madison also played for the group as a junior last year, but on a different team than Bell.

"This is a Carl Ferreira-type of athlete," Hartner said. "When the game gets tougher, Heather gets tougher. She's a warrior."

Bitter, a 6-foot-4-inch middle blocker, was instrumental in leading Roseburg High School to a second-place finish in the Southern Oregon Conference. She was credited with 157 kills and 324 blocks en route to being named the team's most valuable player.

Mason, who also attends the

same high school that Ferreira once did — St. Joseph's — was a 2001 All-Star All-State selection. The 6-foot-3-inch middle blocker has helped lead the school to two-straight league titles as St. Joseph's is currently the No. 1 ranked program in Hawaii.

"I see a lot in Oregon's future," Mason said. "I really liked the coaches and the campus was beautiful. I had never really seen anything like it. The team is rebuilding and I want to make an impact and improve the team."

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