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**Best bet**  
NBA Playoffs:  
Portland at Dallas, Game 2  
6:30 p.m., KEVU

Wednesday, April 23, 2003

## Coaches struggle with new NCAA meet

With the addition of a regional-meet system this year, college track athletes and coaches try to figure out the new system

### Track and field

Peter Hockaday  
Sports Editor

For the first time ever, track and field athletes across the country don't give a hoot about the NCAA Championships during their meets in April.

Well, they always care about the NCAA Championships. But this year, there's a road block on the road to the national meet — a very big road block in the form of the NCAA regional meets.

NCAA track now has a similar set-up to its spring-sports brethren softball and golf, where athletes must qualify for a regional meet before heading to the NCAA Championships. The qualifying standards are lower for the regional meets, and the NCAA will determine who goes to the national meet based on the athletes' performances at the regionals.

And many track coaches still don't know how to prepare their athletes for the coming change.

"We're trying to figure out exactly the best way to train for the regionals," Oregon head coach Martin Smith said earlier this season. "We don't know if we'll figure it out this year or not."

For Arizona head coach Fred Harvey, the change is positive. Harvey was a long-time assistant at Arizona before taking over as head coach this year, and he said the Wildcats love the new NCAA format. He said that instead of trying to hit big marks, which is what they're usually trying to do at this time of the year, most of the team's potential qualifiers are just waiting for the NCAA regionals.

"Our training volume is different

now at this time of the year," Harvey said. "We can go to the Drake Relays next week, for example, and just have fun — just run a bunch of odd relays. We don't need to say 'Oh, we need to run the 4x1 because we need that qualifying standard.'"

So with regional qualifying times similar to conference-meet qualifying times, does that de-emphasize confer-

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Martin Smith  
Oregon head coach

ence meets, which have previously been last-chance meets for athletes desperate to qualify for NCAAAs? Harvey doesn't think so.

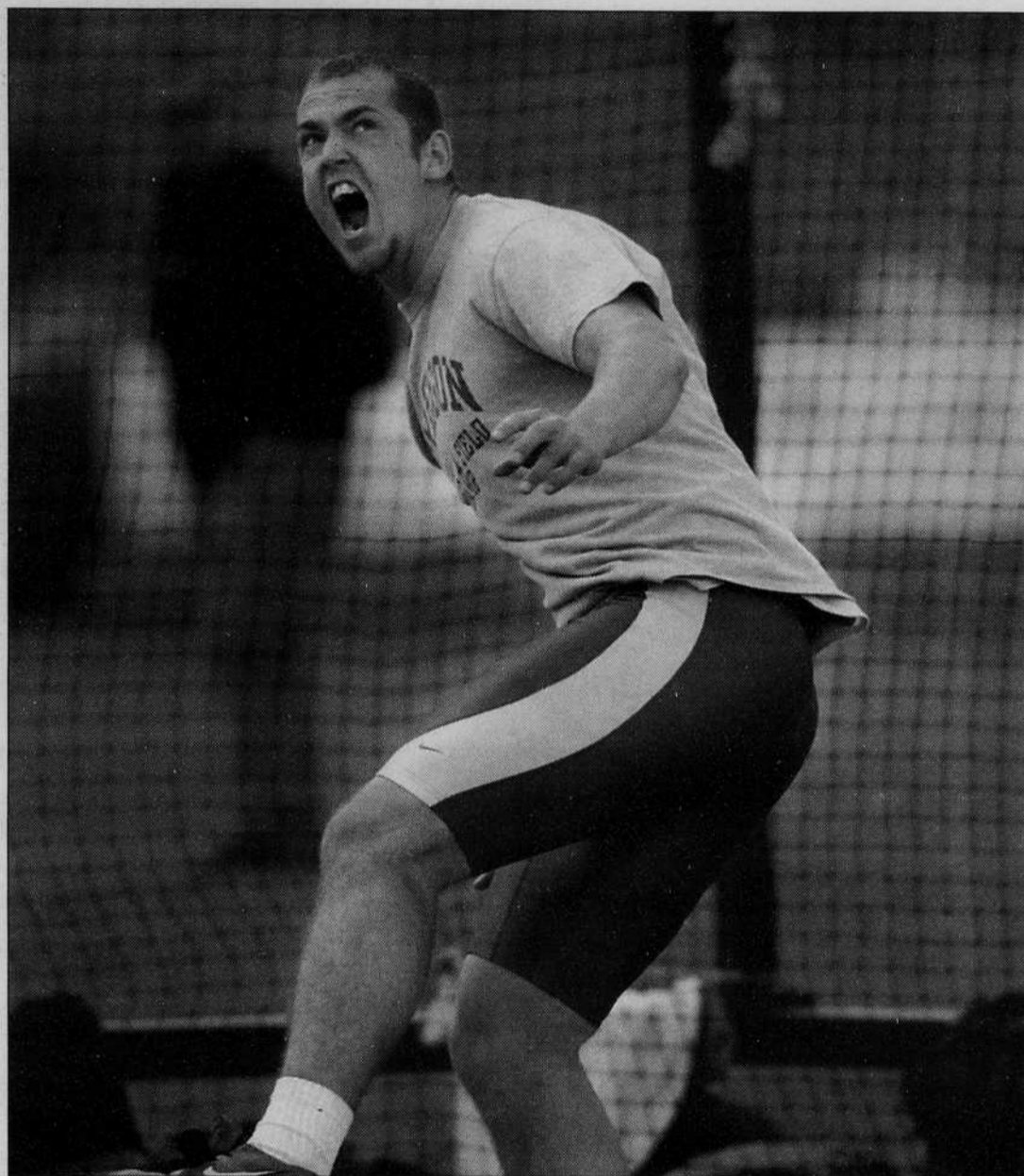
"We are definitely coming into the Pac-10 Championships trying to do the best we can, however, we're going to keep in mind regional championships are the next week," Harvey said. "But the importance of the meet, in my mind, is still there. I still want to be the Pac-10 champion."

### Dr. Santi?

Star decathlete Santiago Lorenzo will not compete in the Oregon Invitational decathlon Thursday and Friday. Understandable, considering he's already qualified for the NCAA Championships and doesn't want to push himself too hard.

But it's also understandable considering Lorenzo has a much bigger test Saturday than any small-college decathlete could ever give him.

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Mark McCambridge Emerald

James March is one Duck who has already qualified for the NCAA West Regionals in the shot put and discus.

## Kickers 'kick it' at spring drills

The Oregon kicking game has been quiet so far, but is picking up steam at the end of spring practices

### Spring football

Hank Hager  
Sports Reporter

For most of the spring, at least to this point, the focus on the Oregon football team has primarily been the battle of the quarterbacks.

Ryan Shaw, Chris Vincent and others have also garnered the spotlight in their competition to take over the running back spot from the departed Onterrio Smith. And then, of course, is the defense and how it grows up after a tough lesson most of last season.

With so much focus outside of the program centered elsewhere, the Oregon kicking game has gone unnoticed.

And why not? Jared Siegel had a solid season last year, connecting on 20 of 24 field goals, including a career-high 59-yarder against UCLA.

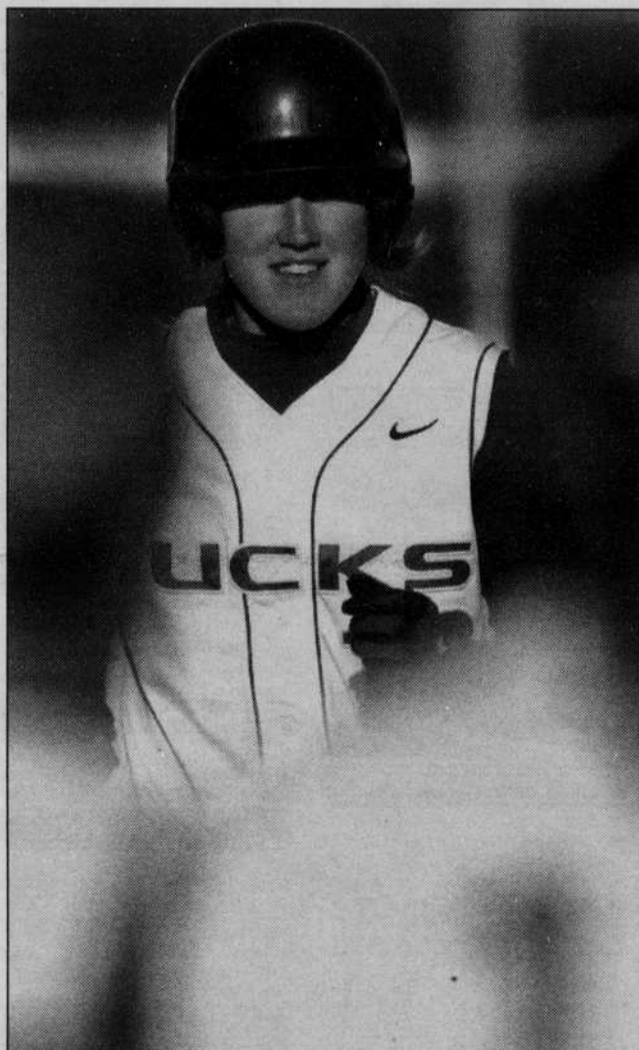
The Oregon punting situation is not as set as walk-ons Drew Larson and Chris Annis are holding down the fort now, but the Ducks expect a highly celebrated punter to join the team in the fall.

The spring is a time for the group to work on leg strength and build up stamina for the regular season.

"This year there hasn't been as much emphasis put on the kicking game because there's more uncertainty with our punting situation," Siegel said. "So it's a time for me to work on some of the small things I need to improve upon and an opportunity for the team to improve on different special teams."

For Annis and Larson, the opportunity to join the Ducks

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Mark McCambridge Emerald

Senior Lynsey Haij hit her first home run of the season on Wednesday.

## Ducks secure winning season with two wins

Amy Harris pitches 6 1/3 innings of a perfect game as the Ducks sweep Nevada in Wednesday's doubleheader

### Softball

Mindi Rice  
Sports Reporter

Outstanding pitching, perfect defense and five home runs combined to give No. 20 Oregon the edge in two games against Nevada on Wednesday.

Freshman pitcher Amy Harris took a perfect game into the top of the seventh inning in the first game, eventually giving up three hits and one run in the Ducks' 6-1 win.

In the second game, freshman shortstop Breanne Sabol hit her first home run of the season — a two-run shot to center field in the bottom of the second — to give Oregon (26-14 overall, 4-8 Pacific-10 Conference) the early 2-0 lead. The Ducks won the game, 4-0.

"We accomplished our first goal of the year in that first game by getting that 25th win," head coach Kathy Arendsen said. "It assures us of a winning record and now puts us in line for the postseason. Getting the second win now puts us at one game even better than that. I'm really pleased. I thought it was great effort and good team wins."

Senior third baseman Lynsey Haij scored the first run of the opening game. After hitting a double, Haij advanced to third base on junior catcher Jenn Poore's sacrifice fly. The ball went out of play as Nevada (20-29 overall) tried to throw out Haij, giving her

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