

Women usher in new coach, men search for depth

Oregon men return three All-Americans for 2003 season

By Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

A new era has begun for the women's cross country team at Oregon. Gone is 28-year coaching veteran Tom Heinonen. In is first-time collegiate coach Marnie Mason.

Mason, a graduate of Klamath Union High School in Klamath Falls, and former state 4A harrier and 3,000-meter state champion, assumes control of a team returning three of last year's top 30 regional finishers. Included in that list is senior Eri Macdonald who won the women's season opener at the Pier Park Review in 18 minutes 24 seconds for 5,000 meters.

Mason, however, is no stranger to the Pacific-10 Conference, as five of Mason's former high school harriers are currently running for Pac-10 schools, including current Duck red-shirt sophomore Sara Schaaf.

"I'm very motivated to have Oregon return to the national prominence it had when I was recruited to come here in the mid-1980s," Mason said.

The Ducks open the season at Pier Park in Portland on Sept. 12 in a quadrangular with Washington, Portland and Portland State.

All healthy Oregon harriers will compete as the team tries to fill the void left after the graduation of All-American Carrie Zografos.

Redshirt junior Annette Mosey bolsters the roster as she returns from a year in Spain, while utilizing her redshirt year, and is ready for competition to begin.

"It will be a good year," Mosey said. "(The team) is adjusting well. It's going smoothly."

In all, Oregon returns 10 harriers to a team that finished fifth in both regional and conference matches a year ago, although several have yet to make their mark in varsity competition.

While the Oregon women's team ushers in a new coach and direction, the men return three All-Americans in redshirt juniors Ryan Andrus and Eric Logsdon, along with senior Brett Holts.

In addition, the Ducks also return

with six of last year's top seven runners from a team that finished fifth in the NCAAs. But even with the top three runners set — all of whom helped lead Oregon to second place in both conference competition and in the Western Regional championships — questions still remain.

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Marnie Mason
Cross country head coach

"Our team's chances really depend on our four-five-six-seven positions," fifth-year head coach Martin Smith said.

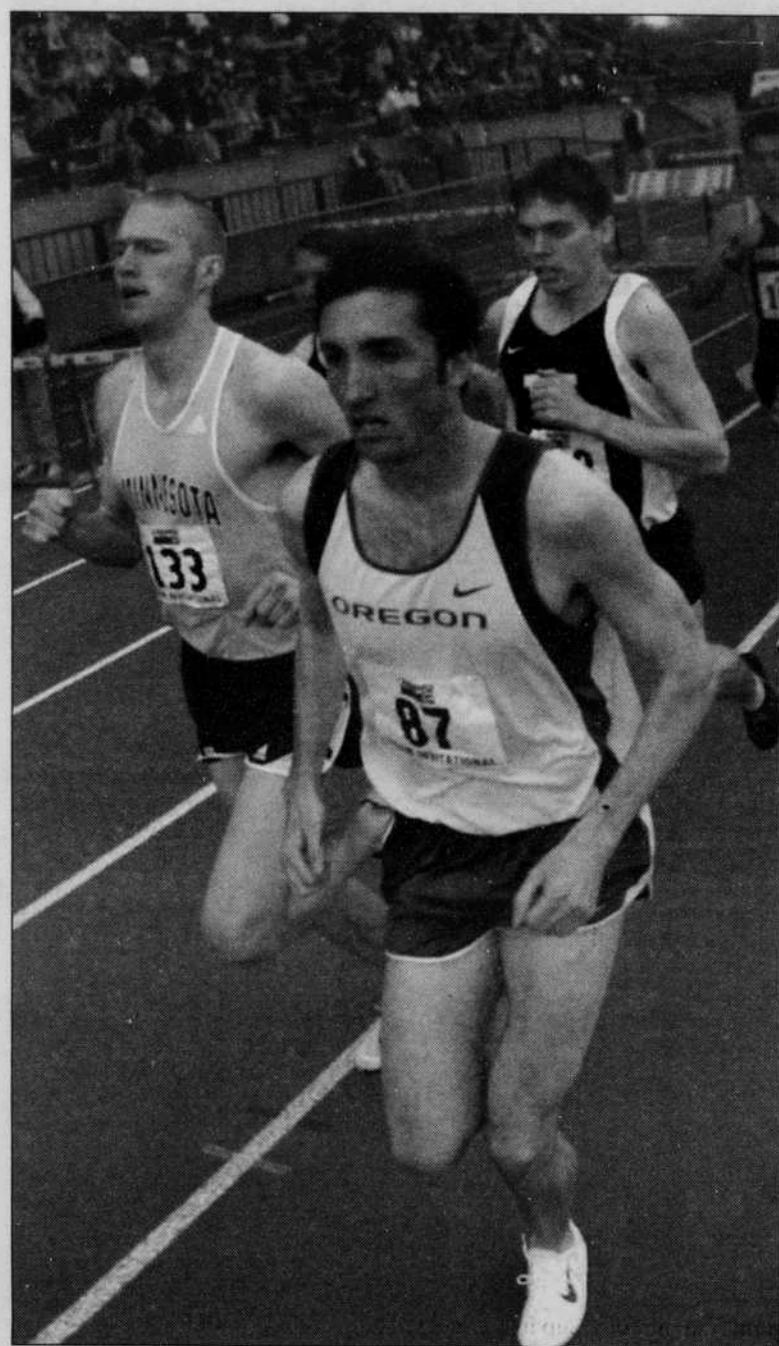
Oregon will miss the services of three-time All-American Jason Hartmann, who graduated as a four-time NCAA top-50 finisher.

However, up-and-coming Andrus headlines a group of solid runners who should contend with the conference and nation's best. Andrus finished fifth in last year's Pac-10 matchup featuring 11 All-Americans.

"The big thing about the team is our nucleus," Andrus said. "Our top five have been running together for three years; we have complete confidence in each other."

Admittedly, Oregon will be competing for second-place as Stanford returns all of its main five harriers from a squad that won the Pac-10 and national championship a year ago.

"We have no illusions of grandeur to take down Stanford," Andrus said. "But we want to breathe down their necks, it gives us something to run after."



Redshirt junior Eric Logsdon (87) returns to the team as one of three All-Americans.

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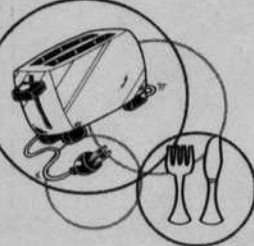
Scott Archer is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

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