

Oregon harriers head north to NCAA Western Regional

The men's and women's teams head to Portland in hopes of advancing to the NCAA Championships

By Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

The men and women of Oregon are prepared for the 2003 NCAA Western Regionals.

For the past week, the teams have discontinued competition and have instead focused on preparation for the race.

The Oregon men feel they have securely placed themselves in the at-large category to gain admittance into the NCAA championships.

DUCK CROSS COUNTRY

However, a second-place finish on Saturday would erase any doubts. The top two teams from each region are guaranteed a spot in the NCAA Championships.

The women, though, may not have enough at-large points to be accepted as a team and will likely need a top-two finish at the Western Regionals.

At this point, only Magdalena Sandoval and possibly Eri Macdonald would be invited to the NCAA Championships.

The Oregon men and women may be facing the toughest regional this weekend as six top-30 men's teams and four top-25 women's teams will be competing.

The Oregon men beat out all of their Pacific-10 Conference foes in the Conference Championships — with the exception of Stanford — to finish second two weekends ago.

It gave the Ducks at-large points after beating teams it will be competing against for an at-large spot in the NCAA Championships.

If neither Oregon team finishes second and secures an automatic bid, then the top four individuals from non-qualifying teams will automatically be selected to race in the NCAA Championships.

The NCAA will select 13 at-large teams on Nov. 17.

"We think we have enough at-large points from (earlier races)," Brett Holts said. "We should get in with that if we have a terrible day at regionals. Worse comes to worse, we should be OK. But we have left it to chance before, and we have been left out. We want full control."

The Ducks are confident their battles against other nationally ranked teams will help propel them to the NCAA Championships.

"We have beaten out enough teams to qualify for nationals," Ryan Andrus said. "We don't want to leave it to chance, and we are determined to be the team we can be. We have increased determination and desire."

Most recently, it has been the team's attitude at practice that has the men's squad feeling they are peaking at the right time.

The team has "stepped up the intensity in practice," Eric Logsdon said. "We went back to what has worked in the past."

"Practice has been intense, and we have had a change in attitude," Andrus said.

Scott Archer is a freelance sports reporter for the Emerald.



Gary W. Green Orlando Sentinel

Tampa Bay defensive lineman Warren Sapp created a stir last season when he knocked Green Bay's Chad Clifton out of a game.

Sapp, Green Bay's Beightol take center stage Sunday

The rivalry between Warren Sapp and Green Bay is renewed Sunday when the teams meet in Florida

By Lori Nickel
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (KRT)

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Endless TV cameras, countless countdown programs, numerous Web sites and those insipid halftime interviews have helped the National Football League create as many actors as it has athletes and coaches.

The pat answers can be as tedious as they are fake, but players and coaches are almost under a gag order with the constant threat of an NFL fine or a reprimand from the head coach if they dare say the wrong thing.

It's rare that the truth escapes.

When Green Bay offensive line coach Larry Beightol let down his guard the day after the Tampa Bay game last year, his thoughts were a precious glimpse of the real emotions some of the Green Bay Packers felt in private after what will go down as one of the most memorable Packers games of our generation.

The day after Tampa Bay defeated Green Bay and coach Mike Sherman confronted Warren Sapp on live television, the Packers were back home without easygoing, likeable Chad Clifton, who was still lying in a Florida hospital bed after his collision with Sapp. The Tampa Bay defensive lineman's hit, ruled legal, knocked Clifton out for the year.

Beightol was furious with Sapp and vowed revenge.

"There will be other games. There will be other times," Beightol said at the time. "Like the saying goes, every dog has his day. We'll see about him. Everyone is fair game. When we see him again, we'll see how that dog fares. We'll cut him every single time. I want him to know that."

"There's no need for that. If we play them again, he's fair game. Somewhere we'll see him."

Three hundred and fifty-seven days later (who's counting?), after the hobbled Packers bowed out of the playoffs in Round 1 and the Buccaneers went on to win the Super Bowl without the desired playoff rematch with Green Bay, that day is almost here.

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