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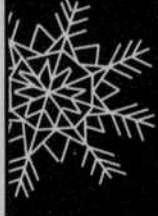
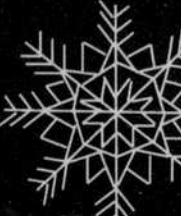
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National championship hopes begin today for UO harriers

The Oregon men, along with Magdalena Sandoval, will compete in the NCAA Championships today

Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

It has all come down to this for the Oregon men's cross country team. Three months of hard running and accumulating at-large points secured the Oregon men an at-large berth in the 2003 NCAA Championships. Their season-long work has been about getting to this point, and while it

DUCK CROSS COUNTRY

wasn't the way the team would have liked to have been invited, it was still sweet to get the invite.

Magdalena Sandoval will represent the women. She took a route similar to the men, selected by the NCAA hierarchy.

Sandoval finished among the top four individuals at the NCAA Western Regional. The other three, much like Sandoval, earned the invites despite their teams not being chosen.

Sandoval is the third Duck individual qualifier in the past seven years. Last year's qualifier, Carrie Zografos, also garnered All-American honors. This is Sandoval's first NCAA Championship race.

"(I want) to be competitive and have a race that I feel I completed to the best of my ability," Sandoval said. "I don't want to say I'm going for a certain place, because I don't have one."

The post-season team appearance for the men marks Oregon's 29th showing in the NCAA Championships. The team first competed at the prestigious event in 1963.

Oregon is among 13 at-large teams to be running today in Waterloo, Iowa, and is one of 31 teams running in hopes of earning the championship win. All in all, 255 runners will be competing today.

Oregon is hoping for its second consecutive top 10 finish. It finished fifth in the nation a year ago.

"We are excited," Ryan Andrus said. "Most of us core five guys are experienced; we know what to expect. This race is a challenge, it's a different animal (from other races)."

Andrus is just one-third of a piece to Oregon's three-headed All-Ameri-



Geoff Thurner Oregon Media Services

Magdalena Sandoval is the only Oregon woman heading to the NCAA Championship race.

can trio. Oregon, as it has been all year, is relying heavily on its top three runners in All-Americans Andrus, Eric Logsdon and Brett Holts.

"I would like to repeat with All-American award," Eric Logsdon said. "We need to finish somewhere in the top 20 teams this year."

The Ducks will also send two-time NCAA veteran Noel Paulson, along with freshman Patrick Werhane. Oregon has one opening spot but it was unclear who would fill the void among Shane Ahlers, Kyle Alocrn or Alec Wall.

The men's race is a 10,000-kilometer event that will begin at 11 a.m. CST.

Key to Oregon's championship hopes is keeping down emotions.

"I don't think about it," Logsdon said. "It's a waste of energy. It will probably sink in more (when the team arrives), I will be a little nervous; it's definitely not just another race. It is the most important meet of the year."

While Oregon runners may not have had the most consistent of years, Andrus believes the team is trained to peak at the end of the year while other teams may be running out of gas.

"This is characteristic of our team," Andrus said. "We perform better at the end of the season, while others are on their last leg. We are primed and we are in a position to (catch people)."

Scott Archer is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

Season finale proves no different as California takes sweep of UO

Oregon closes its season with a loss to California and fails to win a Pac-10 match

By Jon Roetman
Sports Reporter

The Oregon volleyball team ended Pacific-10 Conference play Friday the same way it began on Sept. 18: With a loss to California.

The Ducks gave the No. 9 Golden Bears all they could handle in game one, but dropped the match, 3-0 (30-27, 30-11, 30-13) in front of 1,234 fans at Haas Pavilion.

Oregon started the match on a positive note. The Ducks led from the beginning of game one until a service ace by California freshman setter Samantha Carter tied the score at 23. The Golden Bears built a 28-

27 lead and put the game away on back-to-back service aces by junior middle blocker Camille Leffall.

California (21-6 overall, 12-6 Pac-10) dominated the final two games. Oregon managed only 24 points and an .091 hitting percentage while dropping games two and three, 30-11 and 30-13. The Golden Bears hit .491 during the two-game stretch.

The Ducks (3-24, 0-18) closed their season on a 19-match losing streak and finished winless in the conference for the second time in three years.

Despite Oregon's struggles, head coach Carl Ferreira said the Ducks have stayed positive throughout the season and have a promising future.

"I think we had the right frame of mind about how we wanted to finish the season," Ferreira said. "I'm not disappointed in anything my players have done. I know they have a bright future and they know they have a bright future as well."

Sophomore middle blocker Kelly

Russell led the Oregon attack with 11 kills and a .391 hitting clip. Junior outside hitter Lauren Westendorf added eight kills and freshman setter Heather Madison dished out 29 assists. Defensively, Westendorf, Russell, junior libero Katie O'Neil and freshman defensive specialist Kandice Feola hammered out six digs apiece.

California was led by junior All-American Mia Jerkov, who finished the match with 15 kills and a .500 hitting clip. Jerkov, who has been named Pac-10 Player of the Week four times this season, added five service aces and hammered out nine digs.

Sophomore outside hitter Jenna Brown ended the match with 12 kills and a .500 hitting clip, while senior outside hitter Jessica Zatica added seven kills. Carter finished with a match-high 41 assists.

The loss puts Oregon's overall

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