*"I was terrible. I didn't do anything right."*

Indiana forward Jermaine O'Neal after his 4 of 15 shooting performance during the Pacers' 89-76 loss to Detroit on Sunday

■ Men's track

# Men's track wins conference title

*Top performances abounded as Oregon took home the Pac-10 crown for the fifth time since 1979*

BY BRIAN SMITH
SPORTS REPORTER

The Oregon men's track and field team has had to endure the departure of head coach Martin Smith, sift through the controversy which surrounded the distance program and carry the expectation of still performing at a high level this season.

On Sunday, all distractions were forgotten as Oregon received a total team performance and took home the 2005 Pacific-10 Conference Championship title on Sunday at Drake Stadium in Los Angeles.

Sunday's 152-134 1/2 defeat of UCLA marked the fifth time the Ducks have won the title since the conference expanded to 10 teams in 1979.

In addition, it was the 10th time that the Ducks and Bruins have finished first and second in the final standings. Since 1979, UCLA has taken home the conference crown 12 times and both teams have combined for 17 titles in 27 years.

This year was no different as both teams battled until the final event for the crown. Multiple times throughout Sunday, Oregon and UCLA found themselves trading the top spot.

The Ducks received top performances among the 24 entrants in all events. Oregon got championship performances from sprinters Eric Mitchum and Kedar Inico, who won the 110-meter hurdles and the 400-meter dash, respectively.

Mitchum successfully defended his 110-meter title from last season by beating UCLA's Jonathan Williams with a time of 13.59 seconds (wind: 0.5). Mitchum shaved a 10th of a second from his preliminary heat time, which was a 10th of a second better than William's final time of 13.81.

Inico was the only competitor in the 400 final to break 46 seconds, recording a time of 45.61, which pushed Inico to third all-time in school history in the 400.

"Kedar's win in the 400 was a big turning point," Mitchum said. "In the 110 hurdles, my start was good, and from there I got faster and faster. The special part was that we came together as a team."

In addition to the two individual championships, the Ducks also received a number of top finishes from all of the events, including second place in the hammer throw, javelin, triple jump, 4x100 relay, 4x400 relay and the 10,000-meters.

Those top finishes were much needed after Oregon pole vaulter Tommy Skipper received a no height in the pole vault competition.

The defending Pac-10 champion failed on each of his attempts at his opening height of 17 feet, 4 1/2 inches.

"Tommy's more disappointed than anyone about the misfortune in the pole vault, but he tried to come back from knee surgery in March and put us in position to challenge in the team race," Oregon assistant coach Bill Lawson said. "Unfortunately it didn't work out as expected, but this a meet that depends on the entire 24-person roster in 21 events, and the other two vaulters scored in that event so they deserve some credit against the nation's deepest pole vault field."

GEOFF THURNER | OREGON MEDIA SERVICES

From left: Lars Mueller Laursen, Eric Mitchum, Paul Etter, Galen Rupp (332), Tommy Skipper and Jeff Lindsey take their victory lap in celebration of Oregon's fifth conference title since 1979.

In the other field events, Oregon javelin thrower Lars Mueller Laursen finished second behind California's Paul Teinert, who won the event with a throw of 235-11.

The junior made his 2005 outdoor season debut on Saturday and with his mark of 222-2, Laursen moved into 10th all-time in school history.

Oregon also got a second place finish from senior hammer thrower Paul Etter after his personal best throw of 201-11.

Also in the field, Oregon senior jumper Leonidas Watson turned in solid second and third place performances in the triple and long jump.

"It takes me a little time to warm up sometimes," Watson said. "But once I got going, I was having a lot of fun."

On the track, Oregon benefited from its depth around the track, headlined by the performance by freshman distance runner Galen Rupp. The Portland native, along with teammate Eric Logsdon finished in the top six in both the 5,000 and 10,000-meters — Arizona's Robert Cheseret won both events.

On Saturday, Rupp dueled with Cheseret in the final mile of the 10,000 meters. Rupp separated himself from the pack with a 62-second lap heading into the last 1,600 meters. Cheseret was the only other runner to keep up with Rupp and in the final three laps stalked the Oregon freshman until he passed him with 500 meters left.

"I knew it would be tactical coming in, so I tried to be patient and stay back, although it was a little

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■ Women's track

# Oregon takes seventh place in Pac-10s

*Sarah Malone won first place in the javelin, but overall team performance was inconsistent*

BY STEPHEN MILLER
SPORTS REPORTER

Oregon's Sarah Malone competed with consistency at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships last weekend. As a team, however, the Ducks hoped for placement and cumulative scoring improvements from last year's outcome, instead of just a consistent finish.

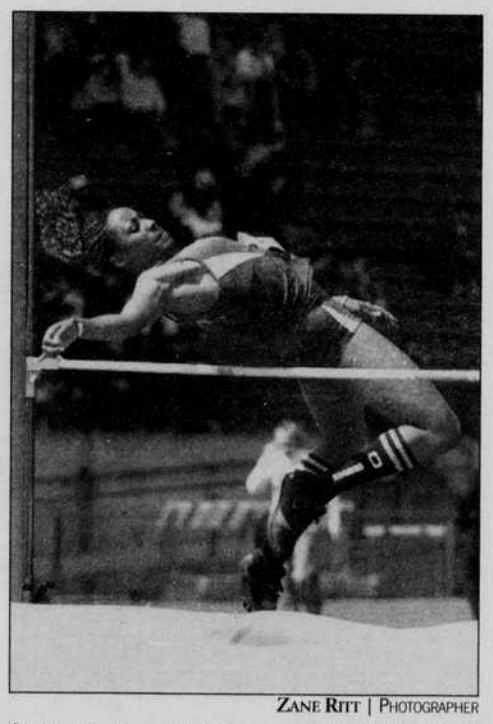
By Sunday's conclusion, Oregon ended the Pac-10 outdoor season in seventh place for the third-straight season. The Ducks scored 68 points, which was a 10-point improvement on their final team score from 2004, but not enough to escalate their previous conference ranking.

Stanford sustained its lead through the first day and collected 173 points to claim its first women's conference championship. At the same time, the Cardinal broke UCLA's streak of eight consecutive Pac-10 titles. The Bruins finished with 125 points on their own turf, Drake Stadium.

Oregon's javelin unit earned 18 of the 36 points the team scored on Saturday.

Malone, who had finished second for Oregon in three previous championship appearances and was the Pac-10's top javelin thrower this season, broke out of her runner-up shell.

The fifth-year senior gained two feet of separation on her fourth toss, which measured 170 feet, 9 inches — the same measurement she recorded in the preliminary round — to win the event after she fouled on her first two throws. Until that, Washington State's Jenna Dean held the top mark of 168-11 from her second throw.



ZANE RITT | PHOTOGRAPHER

Oregon junior Lauryn Jordan, seen here at the Pepsi Invitational, set a personal record of 5-10 in the high jump at the Pac-10 Championships.

"I'm a little rusty since I haven't done as much in practice as I would have liked the past two weeks, but that's not an excuse," said Malone, who recorded a mark exceeding 170-feet for the third consecutive meet. "It's nice to finally have a chance to win, although it's not as big a deal for me. It's more an honor for all the people who have gotten me here — my parents who were here again cheering me on today, coaches, and all my friends."

Redshirt junior Roslyn Lundeen threw her spear a season-best distance of 162-8 to finish third and collect six points for the Ducks. Senior Rachael Kriz Wallace racked up two points with a career-best 149-10.

Oregon's Lauryn Jordan scored 13 points over the two days. A week earlier, Jordan contributed five points to the team score with a fourth-place finish in the heptathlon championships. The junior-transfer finished fifth in the triple jump (40-9 1/2) on Sunday.

"I came in fairly fatigued and had some cramping beforehand," Jordan said after competing in her final event, "so I'm glad to get a good mark and more points for the team."

On Saturday, she soared to a two-inch personal record and second-place finish in the high jump with a 5-10 clearance. Washington State's Robin Mikesh won the event as she cleared the same height as Jordan in one less attempt.

"The whole high jump field was cheering for me and that helped get me going," said Jordan, who is now tied for fifth on Oregon's all-time list. "They were saying I was getting great height, but I just needed to arch my back. I was a little surprised I went that high because I hadn't even practiced it this week.

"My approach was off, but I still got my

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■ Duck softball

# Ducks end season and qualify for postseason

*Oregon split a weekend set with the Huskies and is now preparing for the NCAAs*

BY JON ROETMAN
SENIOR SPORTS REPORTER

It turns out 34 wins and the stellar reputation of Pacific-10 Conference softball were enough for Oregon to qualify for the postseason.

The Ducks (34-23 overall, 7-14 Pac-10) received a berth in the NCAA regional softball playoffs and a first-round matchup with Louisiana Lafayette (50-8, 19-1 Sun Belt Conference) on Friday at 3 p.m. in Norman, Okla.

If the Ducks beat the Ragin' Cajuns, they will face the winner of the matchup between Wichita State (46-16) and 14th seeded Oklahoma (47-15) on Saturday at 1 p.m. If Oregon is defeated, the Ducks will face the loser of the Shockers, Sooners game on Saturday at 3:30 p.m.

Oregon concluded its regular season by splitting a pair of road games with No. 22 Washington (31-20, 10-11) during the weekend. The Huskies defeated the Ducks 7-1 on Saturday, marking Oregon's first loss in Seattle in five games during head coach Kathy Arendsen's tenure.

Washington jumped out to an early lead on an RBI single from center fielder Aimee Minor and a solo home run by right fielder Lauren Greer, which gave the Huskies a 2-0 advantage in the second inning.

Oregon loaded the bases with one out in the third inning but managed only one run on an RBI single by senior catcher Ashley Richards, which cut the Washington lead in half. The Huskies quickly got the run back, however, on a solo home run by Minor in the bottom of the inning.

Washington added another run in the fourth and three more in the fifth to put the game out of reach.

Oregon starting pitcher Amy Harris (17-14) took the loss, allowing two earned runs and four hits in 1 1/3 innings. Alicia Cook and Lindsey Kontra experienced control problems in relief, walking a combined six batters in 4 2/3 innings.

"We had opportunities to score and put runners on, but we didn't get it done," Arendsen said. "But I thought we had a good weekend overall and I'm pleased with the way we finished the regular season."

One day earlier, Oregon used the right arm of Harris and the bat of shortstop Breanne Sabol to edge Washington 3-0.

Harris struck out eight and allowed five hits during her complete-game shutout. The win came one day after Harris shut out No. 12 UCLA.

Washington starter Caitlin Noble (14-8) was equally brilliant, however, taking a no-hitter into the seventh inning. After walks to Oregon third baseman Beth Boskovich and Richards, Noble gave up a three-run home run to Sabol — her first of the season — as the Ducks pulled out the late-inning win.

"We battled all day," Arendsen said after the game. "We didn't strike out all that much and we kept making contact so I knew we'd come around. The important thing is to play and battle for seven innings and we did that today."

jonroetman@dailyemerald.com