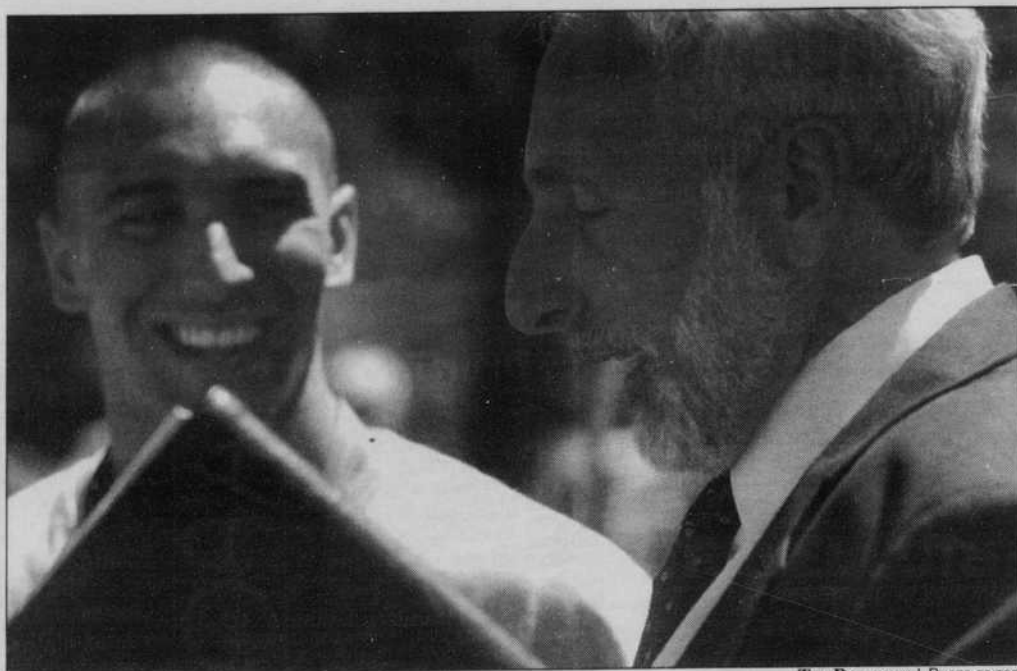


Vin Lananna meets track athletes before the ceremony where his new position as associate athletic director and director of Oregon track and field and cross country is announced in front of Hayward Field Wednesday afternoon.



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTO EDITOR

Lananna: Director signs five-year contract

Continued from page 5

program," Moss said. "His tremendous success in coaching, along with his experience in collegiate administration, makes him the perfect person to lead Oregon's track and field and cross country programs."

Lananna told his audience that he thought the thrill of coaching passed him by until he saw the potential in Oregon's track and field and cross country programs. Earlier in the year, Moos offered Lananna a job as a supervisor of these same programs, but Lananna told him he'd rather coach — the rest is history.

"After listening to the vision that Bill has about what the American track and field capital can be and should be, there's no other place better to do it than Eugene," Lananna said. "I'm excited about extending the program's tradition of excellence at the national level year-in and year-out so it spills over to the national level."

Lananna does not intend to make any drastic changes to Oregon's programs, but he does plan on focusing his attention on all aspects of track and field in the hopes that it flourishes. He sees the Pac-10 Championships as a big

opportunity for Oregon seeing as they will be held at Hayward Field this spring.

"Track and field needs to grow," Lananna said. "I'd like to continue to run a broad based program to help, and I'd like to see our stands full for the Pac-10 finals this year."

When asked whether bringing Olympic Trials to Eugene is on his agenda, Lananna answered optimistically.

"It would be exciting, no doubt, to have trials here," Lananna said. "It's something we'd like to do, but if we can't I'm still excited to be here."

IN BRIEF

Ernie Kent will continue to be a Duck through 2010

Oregon men's basketball coach Ernie Kent's contract has been rolled over through the 2010 season, Athletic Director Bill Moos announced Thursday.

"Ernie Kent is an outstanding leader for our men's basketball program and I have been tremendously impressed and proud of the direction we have taken during his tenure," Moos said. "I could not be more pleased with Ernie and I am excited about what the future holds for Oregon men's basketball."

Kent has a 149-94 record at Oregon in eight seasons and is the only coach to lead the Ducks to three NCAA Tournament appearances (2000, 2002, 2003), two NIT Final Fours (1999, 2004) and a Pac-10 Tournament championship (2003).

"I greatly appreciate the support this university and its leadership has given me and I look forward to a very exciting and rewarding career at the University of Oregon," Kent said.

"On a personal note, my family and I have gone through some difficult times that we continue to work through," Kent added. "I ask for respect from the community, all Oregon basketball fans and the news media to allow my family to work through these matters privately. While these challenges have been a personal strain, they have not had any impact on the progress of our men's basketball program."

Kapaku ineligible for 2005 women's soccer season

Kami Kapaku has been declared academically ineligible for the 2005 women's soccer season.

"Kami is a great person and a very talented player," Oregon coach Tara Erickson said. "She would have played an important role on this year's team."

"Kami's got a tough road ahead to get back academically, but we'll give her all of the support we can and hope to see her back on the field next year."

Kapaku led the Ducks with four goals last season.

Hairston withdraws from USA Basketball team trials

Malik Hairston, a sophomore next season for the Oregon men's basketball program, has removed himself from contention just days before the USA Basketball team trials because of a pulled groin.

Hairston is expected to make a full recovery as the injury is not severe, according to University team medical personnel.

Teammate Aaron Brooks is one of 20 student-athletes vying for 12 spots on the 21 and Under National Team. Trials begin Thursday and will continue through Saturday in Dallas, Texas.

Rupp destroys U.S. junior record while in Italy

Galen Rupp finished fourth in a 3,000-meter race in Lignano, Italy Sunday. Rupp's time of 7:49.16 broke the record of 7:58.0 set by Gerry Lindgren in 1965.

—Shawn Miller

Recruits: Coach has high hopes for veteran players

Continued from page 5

"She has a similar mentality and work rate that I look for in players and feel that I am as a coach," Erickson said. "I expect a lot out of the athletes, and hopefully she can bridge the gap a little bit."

Kate Nelson, a transfer from San Francisco, Calif., and Madison Cheek from Memphis, Tenn., will both be juniors for Oregon next season.

"They are incredibly important," Erickson said of transfers. "They can bring experience and a new life to the team — experience dealing with the preseason and the demands on life."

Taylor Callan, Jessie Chatfield, Nicole Dobrzynski, Darci Gardner, Allison Newton, Leigh Quinlan and Sara Yoro are the freshmen that complete

Erickson's first recruiting class.

"The team we took over is more athletic," Erickson said. "We tried to find more players that have a soccer mentality."

The Ducks are coming off a three-win season, a mark that Erickson wants to improve on, and she believes the 14 student-athletes returning from last season will play a valuable role this year.

"There are some talented athletes in that group... that know how to win," Erickson said. "As much as we are relying on these new players... we are definitely relying on 14 players that have been here and worn the Oregon jersey."

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