

oregon track club

O N T R A C K **winter 2003-04**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Just like 2003, it looks like 2004 will be a year of challenge and high expectations for the Oregon Track Club. As always, the club will help in numerous ways to support the University of Oregon collegiate meets that will take center stage beginning with the Oregon Preview on March 20. This meet should offer the first glimpse of some of the highly regarded new Duck athletes in competition at Hayward Field. Then, Oregon will once again host Colorado, Minnesota and the Washington Huskies at the popular Pepsi Team Invitational on April 10. This should be a highly competitive opportunity against some fine visiting athletes. A mini-meet is on the slate for the morning hours leading up to the start of the main meet. Next on the schedule on April 23-24 is the two day Oregon Invitational, loaded with many invited athletes from various levels of schools. The final home meet will be the Oregon Twilight on May 1. An exciting new feature will be the [Team XO](#) High School Invitational to be held during the day leading up to the Oregon Twilight meet.

The end of the home season for the Ducks will usher in another busy spring and summer of track and field activity. One week after the collegians hold the NCAA Nationals in Austin, Texas, the Oregon Track Club on June 19 will be hosting the finest track meet in the United States—the [Prefontaine Classic](#). The five week series of KEZI 9 Hayward Field All Comers' meets (Wednesdays and Thursdays) starts June 23-24, only a few days after the Prefontaine Classic. Within days of the final All Comers' meets, Hayward Field will be the site for competition by 5,000 Junior Olympic athletes from July 27-August 1. This major championship event is being co-hosted by OTC and Track City Track Club.

From the schedule of events, it is obvious that this will be another extremely busy summer for all the officials and volunteers. If you have not volunteered before, or if not for a few years, please consider doing so this year. If you have any thoughts of becoming an official, this would be a perfect year to get certified. Rod Wood (767-2499) is the USATF certification chairman, and Mike Olsen (344-9664) is the coordinator of University of Oregon officials. Contact either if you can help as an official or a volunteer.

With the start of a new year, the Oregon Track Club is excited about the roles that we will be playing in support of track and field in this community. In addition to offering monetary support to try to improve the talent level of the Oregon Invitational meet, we will be plowing new ground in the support of developmental track and field. First, OTC is a proud sponsor of the experimental Team XO High School Invitational meet May 1. Secondly, OTC intends to unveil a new OTC Grant Program that is directed toward the track and field needs of developmental organizations. This program will give youth and developmental clubs and high schools the opportunity to apply for a limited amount of funds for specific projects. Our hope is that this program will help maintain track and field as a viable sport for young athletes.

More often than not, 2003 was a thrilling year for the Oregon Track Club, as we watched a scrappy U of O men's track and field team belatedly being awarded the Pac 10 championship. The Prefontaine Classic reached new heights and Hayward Field hosted another successful

masters championship during August. The potential risks of 2003, in the aftermath of the terrorist bombings, kept us a bit edgy and they will be with us again in 2004. Nevertheless, the club is doing well and is not standing still. In addition to our expanded involvement in support of developmental track and field, the club has just reached a multi-year sponsorship and promotional agreement with KEZI relative to the Prefontaine Classic, Junior Olympics and All Comers' meets. At the same time, the club will continue our long-term partnership with KVAL in support of the [Butte to Butte Race](#). Finally, our Membership Committee, coordinated by Jenny Rexius and with the support of CVALCO, is working hard to promote the benefits of OTC club membership to the business community. If you own a business, please consider the benefits of a business membership now.

Don't forget the OTC Annual Meeting (free pizza and salad dinner) in the Pitmann Room at the Casanova Center on Thursday evening, February 12. Our guest speaker, Dan Williams from the University of Oregon, is closely involved with the new basketball arena project and its potential effect on Hayward Field. I hope to see all of you there and at the OTC tent during meets this year. —*Frank Lulich*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 8 Truffle Shuffle

Feb. 14 Couples Classic

See your local running store for race entries!

PRE SET FOR JUNE 19

It's an Olympic Year, and the 2004 Prefontaine Classic on June 19th will be the last major invitational in the U.S. before the start of the Olympic Trials in July. The meet will be televised on the same day for 90 minutes on ESPN2 to a national audience. All of the top American athletes are expected to participate, as well as world mile record-holder Hicham El Guerrouj of Morocco and world 400-meter champion Ana Guevara of Mexico. Meet Director Tom Jordan anticipates another sell-out of Hayward Field, which would be the seventh in the past eight years. Tickets will go on sale to the general public April 7 from the UO Ticket Office in the Casanova Center (1-800-WEBFOOT). However, those fans who purchase season tickets to the University of Oregon track & field meets will be able to obtain their same seats for the Pre Classic using the UO season ticket order form. Group discounts (for 20 tickets or more) are also available after April 7th.

For more information about the Prefontaine Classic, access the [website](#) for periodic updates.

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UO WOMEN RECRUITS FOR 2004-05 SEASON

by Geoff Thurner

The University of Oregon women's track and field team announced the addition of five of the Northwest's top distance signees for the upcoming 2004-05 season for distance coach Marnie Mason's crew.

The Ducks added four in-state prospects - state cross country champion Katie Leary of Klamath Falls and fellow top-five state placers Heather Fitz-Gustafson and Sarah Pearson, and middle distance specialist Maegan Kuntz of Aumsville - and multiple Montana state champion Kasey Harwood. "This group gives us an exciting and great foundation for the future," Oregon women's distance coach Marnie Mason said. "Getting Katie is the start of something exciting because the Klamath Union program has been one of the state's best historically. Sarah is one of the area's top prospects, and Heather is another championship-tested performer in cross country and track. Kasey is a terrific athlete in several very different events and should only blossom as she adds experience."

Leary hails from Mason's alma mater, Klamath Union in Klamath Falls, Ore., and won the recent state 2003 state 4A cross country title by a seven-second margin (18:03), while her squad took seventh. Last year on the track, she placed in the top three as a junior in the state 4A 1,500 (third, 4:36.76) and 3,000 (third, 10:00.38), and at season's end ranked top-five in the combined state rankings in the 1,500 (fourth, 4:36.76) and 3,000 (third, 10:00.38). In previous state harrier finales, she took 24th as a freshman (20:01) and 14th as a junior (19:22), and also made the trip on the track as a sophomore (1,500, ninth, 4:52.09).

Closer to home, the Ducks welcome Eugene product Pearson who took 16th in the 2003 state 4A cross country championships (19:04) and helped South High School to fourth as a team, and only two points shy of second place. On the track, she took second as a junior in the state 4A 1,500 (third, 4:36.17), and ranked third on the Oregon prep season best list (4:36.17). In previous state cross country trips, she took seventh as a sophomore (19:15) for the state champs, fourth as a junior (18:39), and also made a state track appearance as a sophomore (1,500, sixth, 4:49.14).

Senior Heather Fitz-Gustafson led The Dalles High School to sixth as a team in the 2003 state 3A cross county finale after she took sixth individually (19:39). Last year on the oval, she claimed state crowns in the 3,000 (10:27.33) and 4x400 (first, 4:00.56) and took fourth in the,500 (4:41.61). In other cross country action, she took third as a junior (19:10), fourth as a

sophomore (19:24) and 10th as a freshman (19:07), and also made a state meet visit as a sophomore in 2002 (800, fifth, 2:24.12, 2:20.05-prelim; 1,500, fourth, 4:50.54).

Harwood, a native of Polson, Mont., (just north of Missoula) almost single-handedly led Polson High School to the state 1A team title as a junior in 2003 with wins in the 400 (first, 58.19, 60.43-p), 800 (first, 2:13.00), 300 hurdles (first, 44.25), and 4x400 (4:01.05, 4:09.36-prelim) and also placed top-four in the triple jump (second, 36-3) and 100 hurdles (second, 14.77, 15.19-prelim). In cross country this fall (10/18), she won the 1A state harrier crown (19:11.69) by a four-second margin.

Maegan Kuntz, a Cascade High School senior and Aumsville, Ore., resident has racked up nine, top-eight finishes already in the state track championships as a freshman, sophomore and junior, and also scored top-30 placings as a junior and senior in cross country. She owns track bests of 4:55 in the 1,500, 10:42.6 in the 3,000, and 2:28 in the 800 - all from her sophomore campaign.

“Maegan is another great addition to an already deep class,” Oregon women’s distance coach Marnie Mason said. “So far she has been a relatively low-mileage runner in high school, and her soccer commitments have prevented from training a lot with the cross country team, so she has great potential. I’d imagine she would be more of a 1,500-3,000 type of runner in college and is athletic enough with her other sports background to consider the steeplechase too”

On the oval, she took top eight in three events the past three 3A state championships as a junior in 2003 (1,500, eighth, 4:56.74; 3,000, fourth, 10:49.98; 4x400, fourth, 4:03.32), sophomore in 2002 (1,500, seventh 4:56.75; 3,000, second 10:42.06; 4x400, first 3:59.91 (4:03.88-q)) and freshman in 2001 (1,500, sixth; 3,000, third; 4x400, first). In cross country, she made a pair of state appearances individually and placed fourth as a junior in 2002 (19:46) and 27th as a senior in 2003 (20:29).

“I’m really excited to compete at the Division 1 level, and it’s something I’ve worked towards for a long time,” Kuntz said. “During the recruiting process, Marnie (Mason, distance coach) was really nice, and I really liked the team - I think I’ll fit in and they were really down to earth. I also liked the closeness of the campus - an hour is just far enough away yet my parents can still come see me run. I’m also interested in journalism, and it has a great program, so everything was right about the decision. Every time I go to Hayward Field I’ll get excited because I have so many great memories from the state meet.”

The 2004 Duck women’s cross country squad will be newcomer-heavy with the graduation of a pair of seniors Magdalena Sandoval and Eri Macdonald who were top-20 Pac-10 finishers in 2003 (fifth/16th). Next season the squad will return sophomore Hariprukh Khalsa - the team’s top returning Pac-10 placer from 2003 (31st) - and redshirting junior Laura Harmon (19th in 2002), and fellow letterwinners Taylor Bryant, Eleanor Gordon, Annette Mosey, Sara Schaaf and Krissy Sonniksen. The squad will also add junior Mandi Fitz-Gustafson, a transfer from Arizona State, who was 39th as a redshirt freshman in 2002 and owns track bests of 2:16.9 (800), 4:37.86 (1,500), 10:17 (3,000), and 10:59.85 (steeple).

Marnie Mason commented “I’m also excited that most of this group is from Oregon, so hopefully we can continue to keep the best talent in-state.”

SOUTH EUGENE TRACK IN NEED OF REPAIR

by Jeff Hess

The well-worn track at South Eugene will soon be undergoing a major renovation. The vision of the South Eugene Track Renovation Committee is to create a facility that will accommodate track and field training and competition at all levels.

Beyond resurfacing the track with a softer synthetic surface, plans for the renovation include adding a second runway, new throwing circles and landing areas, adding a hammer ring and cage, a water jump, safety lighting, new seating, drinking fountains, a ticket booth, and an entry way. Jeff Hess, chairman of the renovation committee said, "This is not just a high school track. We want to create an exceptional facility and open its doors to all of Eugene's runners as well as the thousands who will arrive to compete at the new venue."

The track is centrally located near the UO campus and is heavily used by area clubs and local runners, joggers and walkers. It is bordered by the school's all-weather turf field, the city's soccer fields, softball fields, tennis courts, sand volleyball courts, bike paths, and the heavily used Amazon running trail, all of which join to create Eugene's largest sports complex.

Funding for the \$500,000 project will be multi-faceted and community centered. School District 4J has contributed \$30,000. SportHill's \$5,000 pledge was the first corporate contribution. Brad Cohen of Brad's Cottage Grove Chevrolet has donated a car that will be raffled, and as of January 5th, the school had received about \$27,000 in individual donations. "We have several ideas for fundraisers over the next six months," said Hess, "but we know that the bulk of the funding must come from individuals who have an interest in creating an exceptional track and field venue that will be available when Hayward Field is not."

If you'd like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the South Eugene track reconstruction, you can contact Jeff Hess at 687-3201 or a check payable to South Eugene High School:

South Eugene Track Renovation Fund
South Eugene High School
400 E. 19th Ave.
Eugene, OR 97401

NEW WOMEN'S JUMPS AND SPRINTS COACH — ROCK LIGHT

The University of Oregon track and field program completed its coaching staff for the 2003-04 season with the addition of assistant coach Rock Light.

The 46-year-old Lamar, Colo., native will oversee the women's sprinters, jumpers, heptathletes and hurdlers after women's coach Dan Steele shifted to the men's sprint, hurdle and middle distance crew to replace Steve Silvey who resigned in September.

A highly regarded coach at the collegiate, U.S. and international levels, Light is best-known for his tenure as an assistant coach at Louisiana State University from August 1989 through August 1995. He oversaw the Bayou Bengals' M&W multi-event and high jump athletes and men's hurdlers, and also served as the team's recruiting coordinator.

“I’ve been to Eugene for many meets, and the atmosphere is legendary, so it’s part of a dream come true” Light said. “I’m looking forward to being a part of a staff that is incredibly talented, excited and hard-working. I’ve been fortunate to be around highly successful teams and national champions at LSU, Southwest Texas State and Adams State. I know what it takes to be competitive at the highest level, and am looking forward to coaching at that level once again.”

In his six seasons in Baton Rouge, his athletes claimed four NCAA titles (men’s and women’s high jump, heptathlon and decathlon), 15 All-America performances, 13 Southeastern Conference titles and 12 school records. Indoors and outdoors during that run, the LSU men and women combined for 11 NCAA team titles, eight SEC titles and 19 top-10 NCAA team finishes. In that stretch, he also coached post-collegian Charles Austin, the 1996 Olympic gold medalist, 1991 World Championships gold medalist and Olympic record holder (7-10).

In a previous coaching stint, he served as men’s and women’s head track and field and cross country coach at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos (1/83-7/89). He guided SWTSU to a pair of Southland Conference titles (and six runner-up finishes) to go along with five Gulf Star Conference crowns. Individually, his athletes won seven combined league titles and 21 All-America honors. He was named 1989 NCAA District VI Coach of the Year, and overall was a seven-time Southland and Gulf Star Conference Coach of the Year honoree. In his other coaching stop, he served two seasons as women’s track and field and cross country head coach at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colo., (8/80-8/82). He was honored as NAIA National Coach of the Year following his team’s NAIA cross country win in 1981 (and then-meet record low 25 points), and outdoor national runner-up finish in 1982. Individually, his athletes claimed four individual TF/XC crowns, two NAIA national records and 15 All-America plaques.

He has worked as a financial advisor in Baton Rouge, La., since 1995, and also served as a USA Track and Field lead instructor for coaches education since 1991. He has instructed coaches’ in Level II jumps and combined events, and assisted in developing the course curriculum for both Level II programs.

As a student-athlete, he was a two-time All-America sprinter at Adams State, and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in health, physical education and recreation in 1979, and added a master’s degree in exercise physiology in 1980.

Light (8-4-57) and his wife Sharon have two sons, Tyler (22) and Brett (19).

Article from University of Oregon Athletic Dept. – Sports Information Dept. --[Goducks website](#)

CLUB NOTES

2004: The Year of the All-Comers' Volunteer

Does your New Year's resolutions list include volunteering in our community? Volunteer officials for the summer all-comers' meets are always needed and appreciated. Mark your calendars now for the evenings of June 23, 24, 30 and July 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21 and 22. We have many positions to fill and dates are flexible. Track and field fans like you make the all-comers' meets a proud tradition of Oregon Track Club and a trademark of community fun in Track Town, USA.

For more information and/or to receive volunteer notices and reminders, please email jmestler@juno.com or call Jill Mestler at 302-9416. Thank you!

Membership Renewal Time

OTC's **Membership Committee** encourages you to fill out the [renewal application](#) NOW and mail it in. Business memberships are only \$100, which includes a family membership plus listing of your business in various meet programs (including the Pre Classic!) A bargain for advertising. Choose this option for yourself or encourage a friend in business. Questions, call Barbara @ NW Event Management (687-1989). Either way, send in your renewal now and begin to get your discount at local retailers.

OREGON TRACK CLUB MASTERS

OTCM has just concluded another successful year. In April, we had 37 running and walking teams and 8 individuals compete in the OTCM Marathon Relay. Perfect weather greeted 315 competitors in June for the annual Hayward Classic meet. World records were broken in the 60-69 sprint medley relay, men's 40-49 4x1500m relay and the women's 40-49 4x1500 relay. OTCM sponsored a successful National Masters Championships in August. Eight world and 30 US records were set in this year's competition. In September, we organized the Eugene Celebration Run/Walk, an annual event of OTCM. Mike Tymn, a columnist for the National Masters News, was our guest speaker at our January annual dinner held at Shadow Hills Country Club. We look forward to another great year in 2004! —*Larry Norris, OTCM President*

ASSESSING TRACK & FIELD RESULTS BY AGE

Several years ago, as I witnessed my times in races eroding, I was introduced to the concepts of age grading and All-American standards of excellence. As we age, it is important to adjust our goals in running, walking, and field events.

If you are still competing and looking for a way to gauge your results, consider matching them to the standards of excellence tables located in the *National Masters News*. Check the tables and see how your times and distances compare for your age group. Each year at the OTCM annual dinner, we award members an OTCM All-American certificate when they match or exceed these standards of excellence. —*Larry Norris*

2004 UO TRACK SCHEDULE

Sat, Jan 17 Husky Indoor Preview at Seattle, Wash.

Sat, Jan 31 www.Bodybuilding.com Invitational at Boise, Idaho

Sat, Feb 14 UW Invitational at Seattle, Wash.

Fri, Feb 27 - 28 Mountain Pacific Championships at Seattle, Wash.

Sat, Mar 06 UW Last Chance Qualifier at Seattle, Wash.

Fri, Mar 12 - 13 NCAA Indoor Championships. at Fayetteville, Ark.

Sat, Mar 20 Oregon Preview Hayward Field

Wed, Mar 24 - 25 Jim Click Multis at Tucson, Ariz.

Fri, Mar 26 - 27 Stanford Invitational at Stanford, Calif.

Sat, Mar 27 Jim Click Shootout at Tucson, Ariz.

Wed, Mar 31 - Apr 04 Texas Relays at Austin, Texas
Sat, Apr 10 Colorado-Minnesota-Washington Hayward Field
Thu, Apr 15 - 17 Mt. SAC Relays at Walnut, Calif.
Fri, Apr 23 - 24 Oregon Invitational Hayward Field
Sat, May 01 Oregon Twilight Hayward Field
Fri, May 07 - 08 Pac-10 Championships Heptathlon at Tucson, Ariz.
Fri, May 14 - 15 Pac-10 Championships at Tucson, Ariz.
Fri, May 28 - 29 NCAA West Regional Qualifier at Northridge, Calif.
Wed, Jun 09 - 12 NCAA Championships at Austin, Texas
Sat, Jun 19 Prefontaine Classic Hayward Field
Sat, Jul 10 - 18 U.S. Olympic Trials at Sacramento, Calif.