

Wrestling Ducks paste PSU 23-11

By CARL STEWARD
Of the Emerald

Key wins by Steve Hart and Joe Sade in the early going gave Oregon's wrestling team enough chopping block to score healthy revenge over visiting Portland State Wednesday night at Mac Court, 23-11.

The Viks, who had beaten Oregon 20-17 in Portland and had just come off a 24-13 victory over Oregon State, lost five decisions by one and two points to Duck matmen, accepted a draw in another and were soundly defeated in two square-offs.

"This is a big victory for us," said Coach Ron Finley after the meet. "We were impressive at weights we were counting on, especially the early ones."

Hart, who had lost a 4-1 match to Tom Scott of PSU in Portland, scored a decisive 4-2 triumph in a return bout, securing riding time in the second period, then gaining a reversal and escape after a takedown by Scott.

Sade scored a takedown with 19 seconds left in the third period to break a 2-2 deadlock with opponent Rudy Johnson. Johnson, however, had riding time from the second period and had not Sade picked up the two points he would have lost the match. He won, 4-3.

With that, Oregon took a 6-0 lead into a battle between Mike Oilar and Dan Mello of PSU. Oilar, who had a 24-0 dual meet record on the line in his last home appearance, lost a 6-4 encounter to Mello, who received winning dividend with four impressive points in the first period on a takedown and two-point near fall.

Oilar was almost pinned by Mello (he had 17 for the season going into the match), but quickly scored a reversal, however he could not make up the deficit.

Shuichi Shoji picked up a 5-3 decision over Steve Daniels and Dean Dixon drew with Sam Jones at 150. Jones had beaten Dixon in the first meeting and carried a 16-

1-1 record into the match. Neither wrestler could gain position on the other and as a result, the eight minutes ended in a scoreless deadlock.

Duane Stutzman received a tough fight from PSU's Bob Hulin at 167, finally winning 3-2 on riding time.

Freshman Randy Besaw filled in for Buck Davis at 177 and took a tough pin by undefeated Kelly Bledsoe. Bledsoe could not score on Besaw early, but scored an escape and takedown early in the second round. Besaw then hurt his ankle and could not fight off a tough offensive attack by the experienced Bledsoe.

Wes Hines broke a 4-4 tie with PSU's Robin Richards on a takedown with 1:10 left in the match and held on to score a 6-5 win. Richards, who drew with Duane Stutzman at 167 in the earlier meeting, lost his balance, fell to the mat and could not escape the grasp of Hines.

The win upped Oregon's dual

meet record to 15-5 with one meet engagement with Oregon State in to go on Saturday, a return Corvallis.



Photo by Geoff Parks

Steve Hart (on top) found himself in a jam here in his 118-pound wrestling bout with Portland State's Tom Scott. Hart rebounded, however, to take an important 4-2 decision helping Oregon to a 23-11 victory.

Willett faces another big job

By DAVE BRAFF
Of the Emerald

To beat the UCLA Bruins Bill Walton must be stopped. Saturday afternoon Gerald Willett, at six feet eight (on tiptoes) the smallest starting center in the Pac-8, put the clamps on the Bruin big man. Playing smart, aggressive defense Willett rendered Walton virtually ineffective. By positioning himself in front of the nation's outstanding amateur athlete, Willett shut off access to him.

The Duck guards Ron Lee and Mark Barwig constantly harried their counterparts, preventing

the famous looping pass to Walton that comes ever so close to offensive goaltending. Because of this pressure, Walton's contribution was minimal.

Gerald Willett, rebounding from what he considered a sub-par performance against USC was determined to beat UCLA. Willett outplayed the much publicized redhead from La Mesa, so decisively that it seemed that Walton had left his amazing talent in Pauley Pavillion.

But the Oregon standout could not accept any argument that Big Bill was lax or remiss last Saturday afternoon. "No one's gonna tell me Walton wasn't ready to play," said Willett. "When we were setting up underneath the basket I could feel him shaking. I thought, 'boy he's ready to play.' It stirred me up."

There were many factors that contributed to the impressive victory. Willett felt that the Ducks took smarter shots, moved the ball better, and were in better physical shape than the Bruins. He also praised Coach Dick Harter's control over the team in the frantic closing moments.

But the UCLA game merely represents fond memories now. Five games remain on the schedule. And if Oregon wants a berth in any of the post season tournaments they need to win all of them. California provides the competition Friday and the Cardinals from Stanford invade Mac Court Saturday.

The latter means weighty problems for Willett, in particular. The stalwart of the Stanford squad is seven foot Rich Kelly. Considered one of the best offensive pivot men in the conference, who this week jumped into the league lead in scoring with an average of 18.9 points per game, Kelly can shoot accurately from almost anywhere on the floor and is an extremely mobile big man. Willett is keenly aware of his adversary's ability. "I'll try to play him the same as I did Walton," he said. "That is by fronting him. The only way to stop Kelly is by preventing him from getting the ball."

One of Willett's most effective tactics is to establish dominance or to intimidate his opponent early in the contest. "I like to shake a player's confidence by playing aggressive basketball. If you keep the guy running up and down the court without touching the ball in the first few minutes, it can discourage him."

As the Ducks head down the stretch, still very much alive in the surprisingly hectic Pac-8 championship race, Willett hopes to improve his play. He is personally dissatisfied with his defensive work which he believes has regressed from last year. He also is striving to perfect the outside shot which forces a big center to leave the basket and guard him, thus opening up the inside.

The Duck's chances for a second or even first place finish in the Pac-8 are not unrealistic. Every one of these last five games is crucial. This weekend California and Stanford will be seeking retaliation against the Ducks who won both contests in the Bay area earlier in the season.

Every player and coach knows that no Pac-8 team is a pushover. And the never-say-die Ducks should have all the trouble they need against a vengeful Cal squad and a potent Stanford offensive machine. At this point there is no tomorrow after a defeat.



Photo by James Link

Gerald Willett

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