



john harris

# Rally squad: does anyone care?

Dianna Hovick, the adviser of the Oregon rally squad, poses some legitimate questions for Duck football fans. "Do people even want cheerleaders? Are we wasting our time? What does it take to get you involved?"

Although she won't admit it, Hovick has to be somewhat frustrated. Since she took charge Hovick and her rally squad have heard few cheers of encouragement as reward for their hard work. In fact, they have aroused

overt hostility at times. At all three of Oregon's home football games this season they have been showered with both verbal and physical abuse.

"At the USC game (the first home contest of the year) a fan brought a head of lettuce to throw, and he hadn't even seen us yet," Hovick tells.

Hovick and her rally squad are in a position not unlike that of Rich Brooks and his football team. Both squads have unremitting support

from the athletic department and both are struggling to establish themselves as successful programs.

The football team has implemented a new offense and defense, but is not yet winning games. The rally squad is performing new cheers, but is not yet arousing support.

Hovick was hired two years ago by Lew Cryer, then associate athletic director. The athletic department was interested in getting away from the school's dance

troupe, whose primary purpose was to entertain, and move more to traditional cheerleaders, whose job it is to arouse the vocal enthusiasm of the Duck followers.

The philosophy is simple enough, but the transition has been quite difficult. "There are so many versions of what people want out of cheerleaders, but we're just going to stick with the direction we're goin'," says Hovick.

"The main thing right now is to get crowd involvement, but there is no tradition here," she says. "It's going to take five years to get where I want to be, and people are going to have to be patient."

In the meantime, though, stopping lettuce and other refuse with their heads has proved to be a trying period for the members of the rally squad. "They've taken a lot of abuse which has intimidated them, and you can't blame them for that," Hovick says. "They're frustrated because of the lack of support at the games, but they just say 'lets work hard; let's show 'em.'"

The group, which includes Betty Christensen, Cindy Wheeler, Casi

Baranga, Tammy Fleming, Kristi Kvistad, Tori Craig, Todd Knight, Darius Mckonic, Barry Olsen, Cary Erickson, Jeff Hough, Mark Hogard and Chuck Koch as the Duck, do, indeed, work almost mercilessly.

They practice six days a week for two hours, and during the month prior to the opening of the football season they worked out eight hours a day seven days per week. The effort paid off when they were one of 10 teams to receive a superior rating at a camp in Santa Barbara which included squads from 76 schools.

As a further attempt to gain credibility the group is going to enter the national cheerleading competition, which last year was shown on television. To qualify for the finals the squad must prepare a five minute video tape of actual game performance and send it to the national association to be judged.

Hovick and her crew are not entering the competition as much to prove themselves to local fans as to be compared to other rally squads; an accomplishment that would go a long way to self-preservation if nothing else.

## Injuries hamper volleyballers

By JOHN HEALY  
Of the Emerald

Injuries spelled disaster for the women's volleyball team last Friday and Saturday at the Montana State Invitational, as Oregon dropped three of its last four matches to finish in a tie for fifth with a 3-4 tournament record.

Front-line starters Christie McFarlane and Sue Stadler were both sidelined with ankle injuries Saturday after the Ducks had posted a 2-1 mark in Friday's competition. McFarlane didn't play in the tournament at all, and Stadler went down Friday against Western Washington.

Those two injuries proved disastrous for Oregon, as they were pummeled in three straight matches after opening with a 15-4, 15-12 verdict over Montana. Washington State defeated the Ducks 15-10, 13-15, 15-6; Portland State whipped Oregon 15-3, 15-5; and Washington edged the Ducks 15-12, 14-16, 15-8.

Oregon coach Chris Voelz wasn't satisfied with the Ducks' play in the tournament, but in light of key injuries to two of her starters, she remained optimistic that Oregon would be able to do much better in the next Region Nine seeding tournament scheduled for Nov. 10-11 in Seattle.

"I think we can do better when we are at our full strength. We played a little backwards this weekend. We had problems with our transition from offense to defense, and with picking up the other team's offensive strategies."

Oregon opened the tournament on Friday with a 15-2, 11-15, 15-3 thumping of Montana State, dropped a 4-15, 14-16 loss to Oregon State, and then beat Western Washington 15-12, 8-15, 15-12.

Saturday was all downhill, though, as the Ducks' season record dropped to 8-13-2.

Portland State won the tournament with a 7-0 record, while Washington State finished in a tie for second with Washington, both having identical 5-2 marks. Oregon State posted a 4-3 record for fourth, and the Ducks tied for fifth with Montana State, followed by Western Washington (1-6) and Montana (0-7).

According to Voelz, the results of the Montana State Invitational and the next Region Nine tournament in Seattle will determine the seedings at the Region Nine tournament in Pullman, Wash., on Nov. 24-25. The higher a team is seeded, explained Voelz, the

easier schedule the team will play.

"Everyone's getting better," said Voelz, "and they really caught us off guard. We still lack cohesion, but I would rather be beaten at our weakest if we are going to lose at all.

"Shawna Baxter had a fine tournament — her blocking was very good," praised Voelz. "Mary (O'Brien) was very aggressive on the front line, and Anita (Ennsworth) came back to play consistently."

Oregon heads up Interstate 5 to Portland today to take on Portland State.

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