

Poised Duck spikers get their act together

By STEVE SPATZ
Of the Emerald

Consistency key to wins at SOSOC

The University's volleyball squad took giant strides last weekend toward the level of competition that they've been aiming for all season.

In what coach Chris Voelz termed their best sustained performance of the season, the Ducks claimed runnerup honors in the tough Southern

Oregon State College Invitational Tournament, losing to the University of Nevada at Reno in the championship finals, 3-1.

And though none of the games played in the tourney will apply to Region 9 standings, the victories that Oregon chalked up are more important mentally

to the Ducks then all of the league wins they've gained thus far.

"This was the best they've played this season in terms of consistency," said an obviously pleased Voelz. "They learned to play with poise, desire and toughness, which are all things that we haven't been doing well." Oregon compiled a 4-2 mark in tourney pool play on Friday and Saturday morning, ending up in third place in their bracket, and qualifying for action in the final rounds that took place on Saturday afternoon. Oregon beat Univ. of Idaho, Eastern Oregon State, Gonzaga and host Southern Oregon, while losing to Calif. State at Bakersfield and Portland State in the preliminary rounds.

"Southern Oregon, being the host team, was very tough and scrappy," said Voelz. "Against Portland State, I think we matched them in offense but they had all the breaks go their way."

In the championship quarterfinals, the Ducks blasted Oregon State, 15-3 and 15-10, in a match that signifies the turnaround the Ducks have made. Two weeks ago, the Beavers completely destroyed Oregon in match play at Mac Court, downing the Ducks in three straight games. But it was all Oregon this time, as the Ducks dominated from the opening.

"We really executed superbly (against OSU)," said Voelz.

"We completely shut down their middle attack."

Oregon expected to be matched with powerful PSU in the semifinals, a club that the Ducks have yet to beat in five attempts this season. But Washington State rose up and defeated the Vikings in the quarterfinals, erasing the Ducks' fears of another matchup. Voelz acknowledged that her club was relieved upon finding out of the Portland State loss.

"I know my club is very confident of their abilities," said Voelz, "but they were a little relieved that they were playing WSU instead of Portland."

The confident Ducks swept by Washington State in three games, 13-15, 15-13 and 15-12, to put themselves into the finals.

"Lisha Lass had a fine game for us against WSU," said Voelz, "and so did Carrie DeHart. Both played really well."

Against Reno, Oregon passed and served well, but the Ducks ran out of gas at the end, losing 12-15, 15-7, 13-15 and 8-15.

"We had played eight games in two days, and we were just physically and mentally exhausted," said Voelz. "It wasn't because of conditioning."

Voelz was pleased at the development her team showed, especially since the Ducks will be hosting the Oregon Invitational next Friday and Saturday, featuring a very competitive field.

"The difference between this weekend and our other games is that we really wanted to play," said Voelz. "We proved we had the desire and conditioning to be able to execute well."

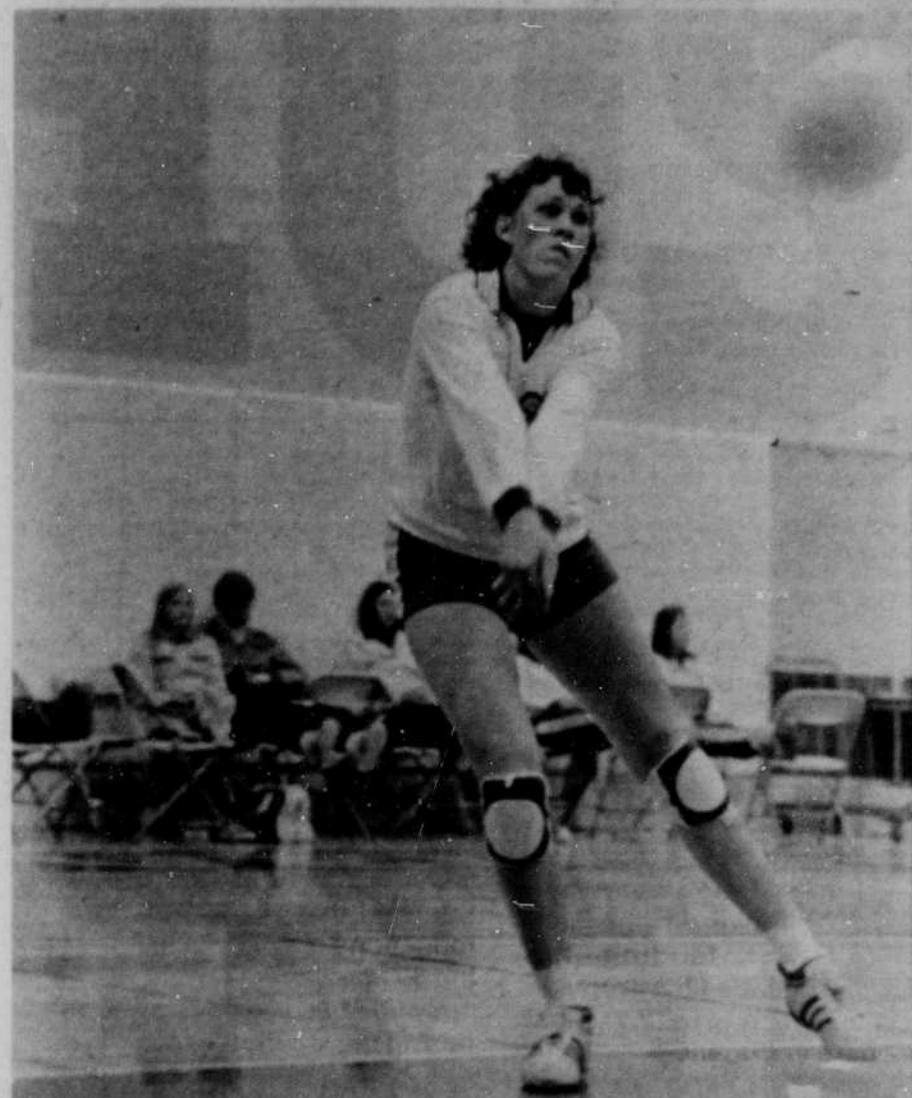


Photo by Joe Schnabel

Sophomore Annetta Ensworth, shown here in action in the recent Washington match play, was one of the sparkplugs in Oregon's second place finish in the SOSOC Invitational Tournament, the Ducks' best performance of the year. "Annetta had a superb tournament," said her coach, Chris Voelz. "She was our top server and attacker throughout the whole tournament, and she reached the level of consistency that we would like to see in her."

Sports Wrapup

Oregon cops badminton titles

Members of the University's badminton club fared extremely well at the Oregon Badminton Association's kick-off tournament at Lane Community College last Saturday.

Sandro Rossi picked up first place awards in the 'A' men's singles and the 'A' mixed doubles, combining with Juri Hughes to win the latter event.

Tom Berkey took the men's singles 'B' division and combined with Randy Oswald to win the 'B' men's doubles.

In the 'C' mixed doubles, David Wong and Diane Crawford lost in the finals to place second.

Cycling meeting announced

There will be a Cycling Club meeting on Thursday for all those interested in competitive cycling. The meeting will be at 5 p.m. in the EMU. Room to be announced. For more information, call Paul Schwyhart at 689-4304.

Ducks squash Willamette, 30-8

Matt Lazzarri tallied a school record four tries (each worth four points) to power the University men's rugby team to a 30-8 trouncing of Willamette at home last Sunday. Currently 2-0 on the season, the Ducks are in first place in the Oregon Rugby Union Senior "B" league.

The Ducks will host the First Annual University of Oregon Rugby Tournament on Saturday and Sunday on the University campus. Matches will be held at the IM field. Their will be men's and women's divisions.

Men split on road

Oregon's men's soccer club withstood a second half challenge by Western Washington, going on to chalk up a 3-2 win over the northern school in a league contest Sunday afternoon.

Eric Zook led the way for Oregon, blasting two goals in for the Ducks. Jeff Decker got credit for their only other score.

The Ducks took a quick 1-0 lead in the first half, only to have Western Washington fight back to tie the game at one apiece. Oregon scored just before halftime, then again after the

intermission to take a 3-1 lead.

Persistent Western came back one more time, tightening the margin to 3-2 with 10 minutes left in the contest. But Oregon was successful in holding onto the precarious margin for the win.

Coach Chris Hopper expressed satisfaction with his offense's play. "The offense was a lot more penetrating," reported Hopper. "We were a lot sharper in midfield."

The win was Oregon's first in four league games, and set their overall record to 4-5 on the year.

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