

Oregon aims for improvement against PSU

By STEVE SPATZ
Of the Emerald

The advertising slogan "You've come along way, baby" is perhaps appropriate to describe the University's volleyball team's season thus far.

After suffering through a dismal early season full of disappointing losses, the lady Ducks have rebounded strongly, finishing high in two consecutive tournaments, and putting themselves back in the race for Region 9 honors and their sixth trip to the Nationals in the past seven years.

Coach Chris Voelz maintains that she wasn't the one who lit the fire under the Ducks' tail feathers, but believes rather that her team's improvement is the result of each player's increased dedication.

"I think they're taking it more seriously now," says Voelz. "When they walk out there, they

really have desire. They're not just going through the motions."

Also, maintains Voelz, now that the season is winding down to the more important matches, perhaps her club is aware that each match is very important to their chances for post-season play.

"It's not just wanting to win, it's being afraid to be set back," says Voelz. "It's a question of how badly they don't want to be set back."

Oregon fans will get a chance to see the improvement firsthand on Wednesday night when the Portland State Vikings come to town, a perennial volleyball power in the Northwest and the holder of a perfect five win-no losses record over the Ducks this season.

Despite the winless efforts against PSU, Voelz is relatively optimistic about the final home match that will count to deter-

mine Region 9 seeding.

"Everytime we play them, we get closer to them," says Voelz. "The last time we played them, at the SOSC tournament, we almost pulled it off."

At last weekend's Oregon Invitational, the Ducks walked off with the runnerup trophy after dropping the title match to Fresno State in a thrilling three game match. Voelz believes that part of the credit for the good showing should go to the large crowd that watched the championship game. "I'm sure that it was the biggest crowd ever to see an Oregon volleyball game," says Voelz. "Even though we knew it was due to the (basketball) scrimmage (that followed the match), it was nice to see. I hope some of them will be back Wednesday night."

Ducks lose 7-3 decision

Entering Sunday's game with Western Washington University, the University's women's soccer team had yielded only seven goals in 11 matches.

But undefeated Western Washington showed the Ducks seven goals in just 90 minutes en route to a 7-3 drubbing of the Oregon women.

The loss was the first of the season for the Ducks, who now hold a 10-1-1 record with just three road games remaining.

Western Washington jumped on top early in the game and had built up a 4-1 lead by the break. The visitors booted three more goals past the Ducks in the second half to ice the win.

Oregon's Sharon Refvem, Victoria Taylor and Michele Postestio scored in the loss.

Coach Dewey Wilson found at least one good thing about being behind on the scoreboard for a change — it was the first chance to see how the team plays when trailing.

"I found out that they aren't quitters," said the Duck mentor. "With five minutes left to play they were still going for it."

The Ducks travel to Western Washington for a rematch on Saturday, then move on to play the University of Washington on Sunday.

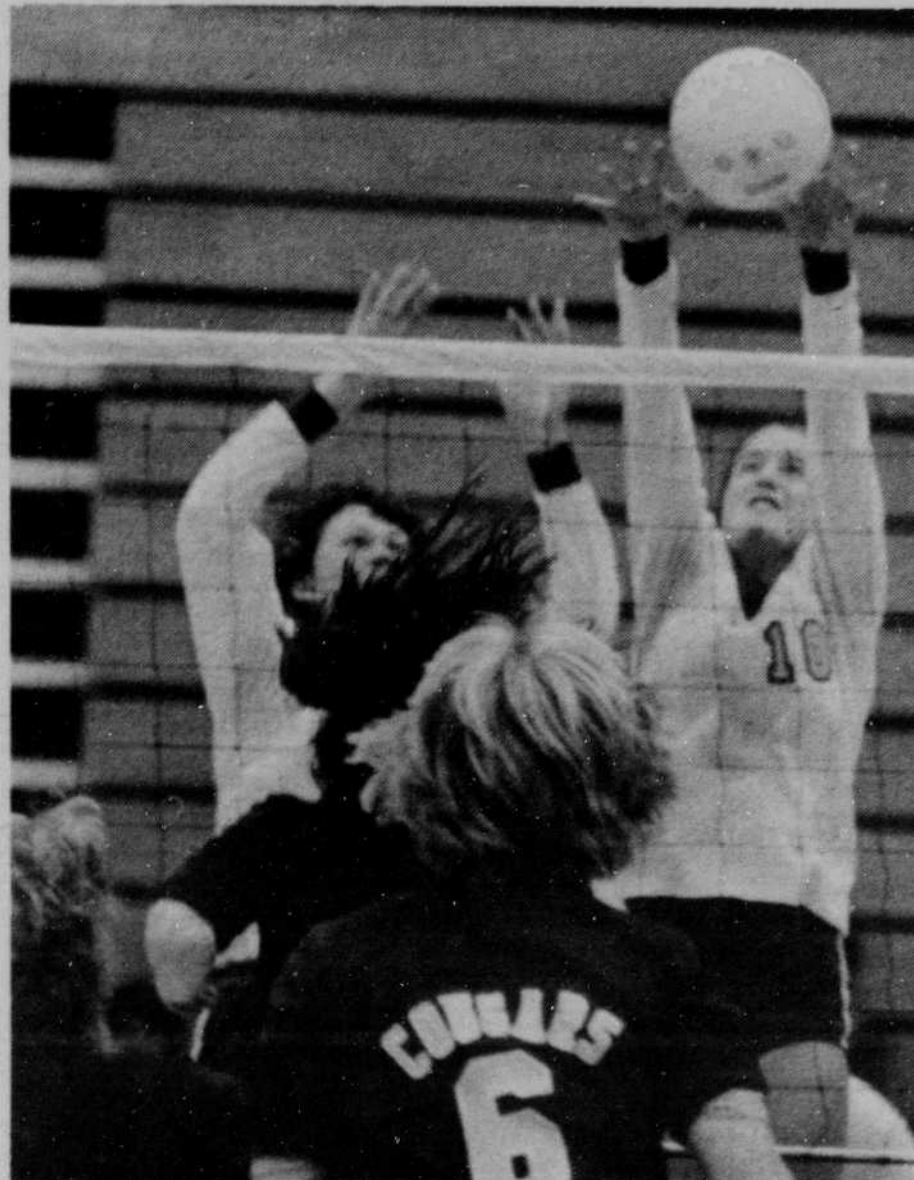


Photo by Joe Schnabel

Strong defensive play by Oregon's Kim Jessup (right) earned her a selection on the Oregon Invitational All-Tournament team.

Sports wrapup

Rugby squad falls to Beavers

Oregon's rugby club battled to a second place finish behind the Oregon State Beavers in the first annual U. of O. Rugby Tournament. The Coos Bay Rugby club finished in third place, followed by Willamette University.

Oregon lost 11-0 to the Beavers in the championship game played Saturday afternoon in the rain. Despite a fine effort by the Duck forward pack, Oregon was unable to sustain any kind of an attack.

Earlier in the day, Oregon outthrustled the more experienced Portland Pigs, 4-0, on Tracy Hart's second half try. Against Willamette, the Ducks had to come from behind on Robin Tait's 3 point penalty kick last in the second half to claim a 11-9 win, putting them in the championship match.

In the women's division, the Corvallis Cosmos claimed the championship with a victory over the Portland Zephyrs.

Crew riding wave of success

The University crew team turned in a strong performance at the Head of the Willamette Regatta last Saturday in Corvallis.

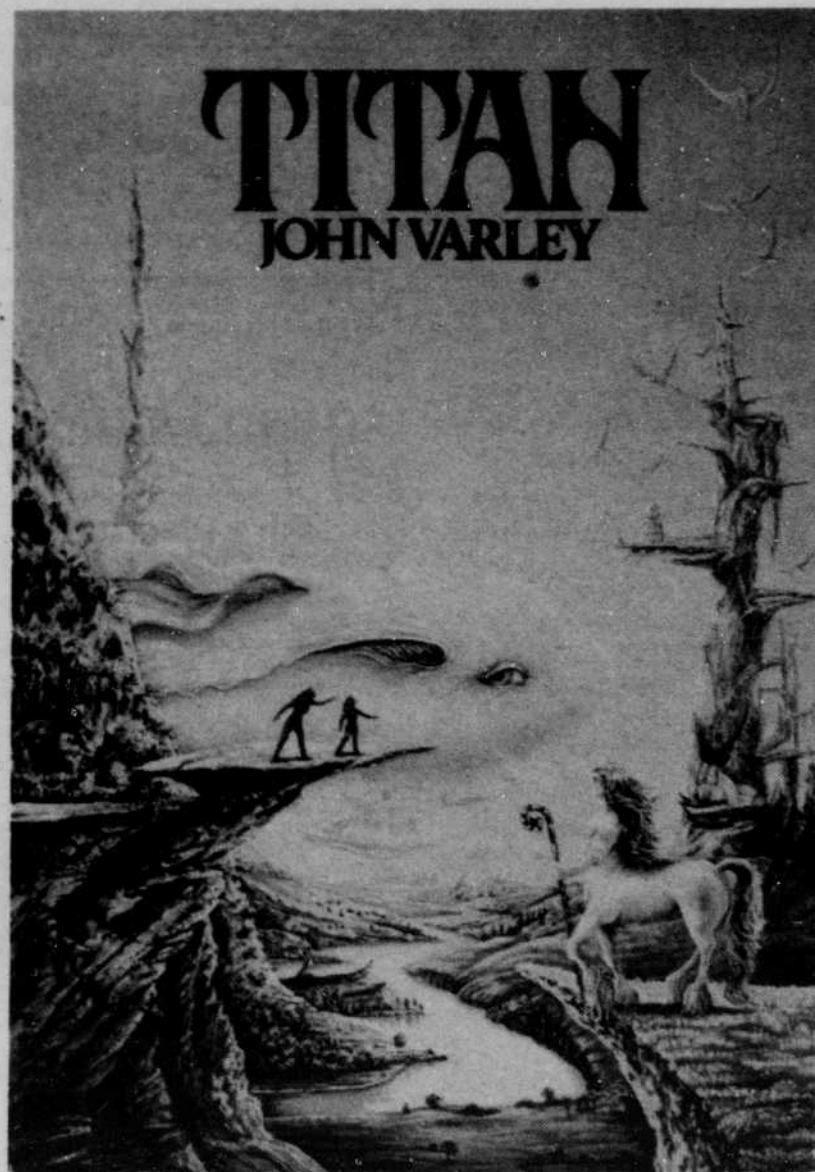
The women's four, consisting of Lisa Lowell, Pam Bennett, Robin Reardon, Sylvia Stanley and coxswain David Waterfall, placed first in their division, easily outdistancing the second place team by a full two minutes. The men's four, which includes Steve Norris, Joe Meier, Dane Nickerson, Mike Holcomb and coxswain Vicki Wooster, placed second in their race.

Lance Baughman rowed a single in the event and placed first in his division.

Oregon's mixed eight placed second in their category, a minute behind first place Oregon State University. Other teams competing included the Portland Rowing Club, the Willamette Rowing Club and Reed College.

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