

Improved gymnasts ready to crack top ten

By JIM LUND
Of the Emerald

With some fine recruits joining an already talented squad, this year's Oregon women's gymnastics team is setting its sights on a possible top ten national finish.

The team showed its potential in last month's season-opener, the Oregon Open Championship. The Ducks were led by all-arounders Sara Gustafson and Dawn Haberland, who both broke the school record of 8.9 in the floor exercise by recording 9.4 and 9.05 scores, respectively.

According to coach Henriette Heiny's calculations, the Ducks team score would have placed them sixth in last year's national tournament and would also have been a new school record. "The results in this Oregon Open point out that there's going to be a different season than we had last year."

Last year, despite several injuries, the Ducks breezed to a 15-1 dual meet record, only to lose a chance at going to nationals by finishing second to rival Oregon State in the regional competition. This year, though, Heiny is optimistic.

"Our strongest adversary in our region is still Oregon State. We not only have a good chance at beating them, looking

at my squad, I'm almost thinking we are the favorites."

Two reasons for Heiny's optimism are freshmen Christine Krueger and Jeanette Stewart. Last year, Krueger won the all-around North Coast High School Championship (in California), while Stewart was the Oregon state prep all-around champion. In the Oregon Open, Krueger recorded an 8.9 in the floor exercise and Stewart took third in the bar routine.

According to Heiny, "The freshman will come right in. They already showed in the Oregon Open that they have a place right up there with the returning best people that I have."

Those "returning best" are headed by Gustafson and Haberland. Gustafson led the Ducks in floor exercise last year and was the runner-up in the vault at regionals (8.7). Her all-around score of 33.75 ranked her among the top five in the region.

Haberland posted the team's best all-around score (34.20), but missed regional because of a sprained ankle. In the prestigious Western Hemisphere Games, Haberland tied for first in the vault and was fifth in the all-around. Her bests of 9.0 (bars) and 8.85 (vault) also led the team.

The Ducks are also looking for strong performances from sophomore Gloria Shepherd and juniors Sharron Blanchard and Patti Thompson. Shepherd got off to a slow start last year, but finished strong and could be Oregon's top beam performer this year. Blanchard was one of the team's top four all-arounders at regionals last year and finished sixth in Israel's Hapoel Games last spring. Thompson specializes in the vault and should be among the Ducks' top six in scoring.

The rest of the Ducks' team

included sophomores Joan Cameron, Gail Bruner and Teri Larson, and freshmen Danelle Cyr, Julie Sayre and Ramona Shine.

The Ducks face a demanding dual meet schedule. Says Heiny, "It's very hard. We'll have some really tough competition by meeting Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, Utah State University and Brigham Young University, who seem to be very strong this year because they have recruited very well. If we can beat those schools, or have very

even scores, I think it would be right in there with the top competition in the nation. I think that's what we're looking for."

Oregon opens its dual meet season Friday against Eastern Washington at 7:30 p.m. in Gerlinger Annex. Despite the tough schedule, Heiny likes her teams' chances for the upcoming season.

"It's a very young team, but right now they are doing very well, much better than I ever expected them to. All I have to hope for is that they stay healthy."

Sports wrapup Ruggers rip Beaverton

The University rugby club traveled to Beaverton, Dec. 1, to play the newly formed Beaverton rugby club, and emerged on the top end of a 12-4 count in their final game of the season.

Oregon's forward pack dominated the Beaverton pack nearly the entire game, enabling the Ducks to score two tries by the forward pack. Jim Riley moved quickly from a penalty play and caught the Beaverton forwards completely off guard to score the first try for the Ducks. Later in the half, Terry Snider scored the second try.

In the second half, Tracy Hart broke through the Beaverton back line and scored the third try for Oregon.

Oregon ended the year with 5 wins and 2 losses.

Ducks out for revenge

Oregon's men's basketball team is out for revenge tonight when they take on the University of Detroit Titans in the Motor City.

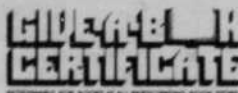
Last year in Mac Court, the Titans beat the Ducks on a tip in with no time remaining, and Oregon hopes to even the score this time around. Detroit went on to post a 22-6 record and a berth in the NCAA tournament.

Oregon, coming off Tuesday's 99-69 victory over Cal-Davis, will be searching for its third straight win of the young season on its first road game of the young season. The Titans, meanwhile, are standing at 1-1.

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