

Volleyball's Giant Killers

Oregon has upset four of nation's best

By Brent Paz
Of the Emerald

Like David did many years ago, Oregon's volleyball team has knocked off some Goliaths this season.

The Ducks' giant-killer ventures have marched them into the Nor-Pac conference playoffs this weekend at Stockton, Calif. Oregon, 24-16, upset 13th-ranked San Jose State University last Saturday to seal a league tournament spot, but SJSU is only one of many teams that has fallen to the Ducks.

Oregon began its upset crusade early by stopping No. 3 Southern California in a one-game match. Eleventh-ranked University of Texas was a UCLA Invitational victim, and Saturday the Spartans tumbled.

The netters also dropped some close calls to top-twenty teams. No. 10 Brigham Young University, 16th-ranked University of California and No. 19 Oregon State University narrowly defeated the Ducks.

The underdog heroics have coach Chris Voelz convinced that this year's team is special.

"This has been by far my best, most successful team," says sixth-year coach Voelz. "We never beat a California team before — we just haven't beat a ranked team ever."

And Oregon isn't through bringing top teams to their knees — Tuesday, the Ducks dealt Portland State University a convincing loss,

15-7, 10-15, 15-3, 15-10. PSU, a favorite to win an NCAA Division 2 title, had a 35-match winning streak over the Ducks until Sue Harbour and 31 kills showed up.

"I told my kids not to lose any sleep on rankings," says Voelz, and her team has heeded her advice.

"Each upset proves the last one wasn't a fluke," assistant coach Christy McFarlane says. "We weren't really suprised when we beat USC."

Wins over big-name teams are even more suprising when one considers Oregon has had to overcome crippling injuries.

Odds were the Ducks wouldn't win many games after starters Connie Riel, Shaunna Koenig and Cynthia Shepherd went down for the season, but the Ducks beat the odds.

Now Oregon has another Goliath to conquer — it plays second-ranked University of Pacific Friday.

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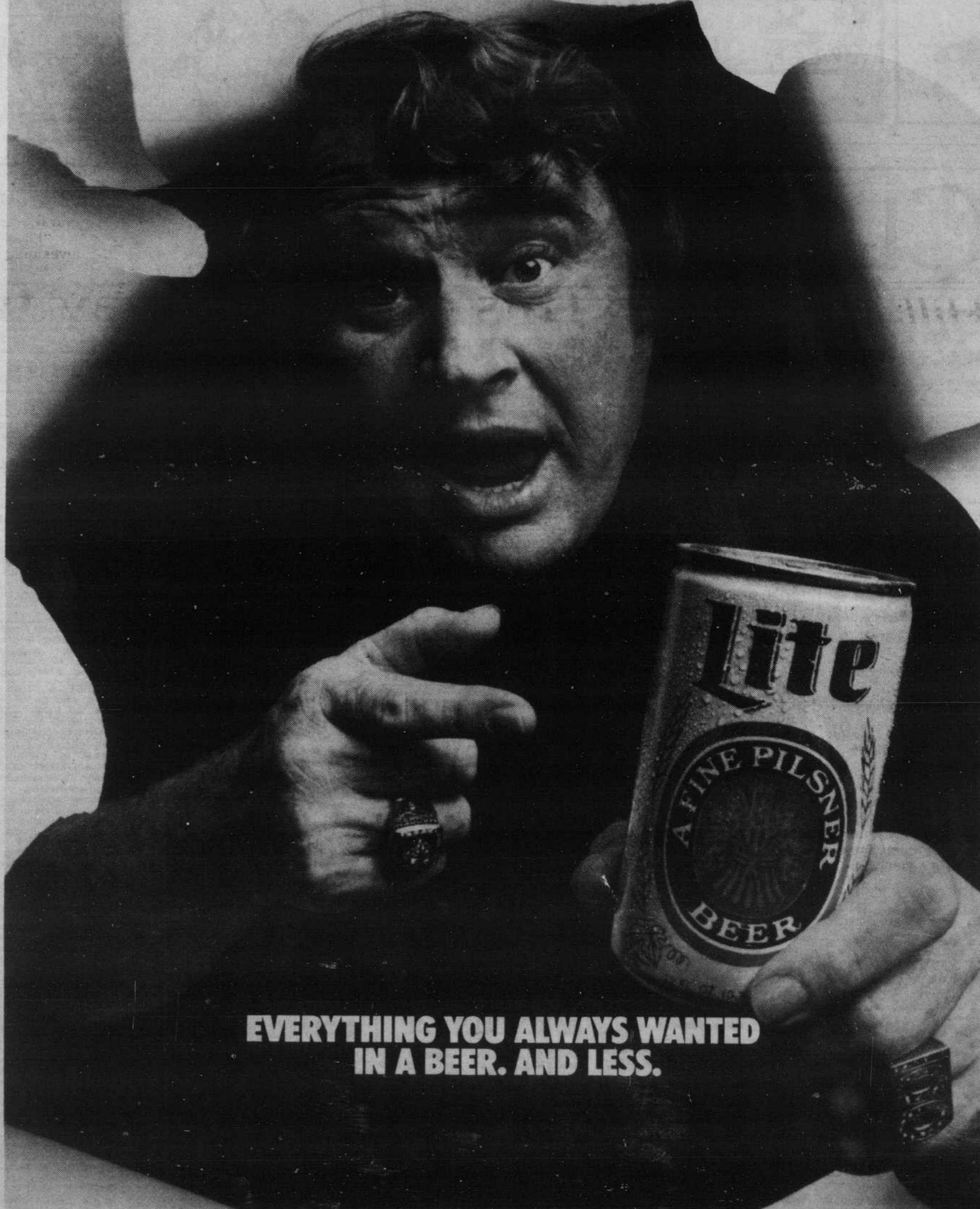
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Kickers capture '83 league title

Tim Bruger's goal with five minutes left in overtime gave Oregon's Club Sport soccer team a 2-1 victory over Portland Community College last Saturday in an Oregon Interscholastic Soccer Association final at Portland.

The Ducks advanced to the league finals with a 7-0 league record and a semifinal win over Oregon State University.

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