

Sports

18th-ranked Ducks hit the road; can tie for league championship

By Dennis Fernandes
Of the Emerald

The Oregon women's basketball team is now in control of their own destiny.

Going into the final weekend of the Pacific 10 Conference season, the Ducks, University of Washington and USC are knotted at the top with identical 13-3 records.

If Oregon, who moved up two notches to 18th in The Associated Press poll this week, can win their remaining two games, tonight at Stanford University to play the Cardinal and Saturday's game against University of California at Berkeley, they are guaranteed at least a share of the Pac-10 title.

"This is it," said Oregon coach Elwin Heiny. "It's a great opportunity in that we can control what happens to us. If we can win this weekend, we are guaranteed at least a tie for the league championship in its first year."

However, in Oregon's game with lowly Washington State University last Saturday at McArthur Court, they looked like anything but a contender for the league title.

The Ducks needed 11 points from Gabi Neumann in the final 3:47 to rally from a five-point deficit and keep their 10-game winning streak intact. And this was against a Cougar team they had demolished 101-55 earlier this year in Pullman.

"Really, Saturday was the biggest letdown of the season," Heiny said. "I feel that everyone realizes what happened. Now, I think we're going in with a positive attitude, and we're going to play as tough as we can."

Seventh-place Stanford, 7-9, does not propose much of a problem for the Ducks, but the Cardinal did give the Ducks some problems when they fell short of a 65-51 count earlier this year at McArthur Court. "Stanford is a



Photo by Dan Wheeler

Coach Elwin Heiny hopes to lead Oregon's Kris Glidden (22) and the rest of his troops to wins over Stanford and Cal.

very physical team and good at each position," Heiny said. "We can't key on any one player so you have to stop them all."

California, 8-8 and 17-9 overall, is the conference's second hottest team (behind the Ducks) with a six-game success streak. First team all-conference selection Jennifer Bennett has been on a tear while leading Cal with 22.1 points and 9.5 re-

bounds a game.

Oregon completely dominated the Bears, 94-70, the last matchup while limiting Bennett to just 18 points and four rebounds. But Cal has a knack for upsetting top teams at home — they have turned back both USC and Washington there — and Bennett has turned in 40-plus-point games in both those wins.

"With Bennett, they have a good combination of inside-outside," Heiny said. "We are going to have our hands full."

Oregon's chances for an invitation to the 40-team NCAA tournament appear to be good, regardless of what happens this weekend. Even if the Ducks close out the season with two losses, they will be 21-7, still an impressive mark.



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Sports shorts

Keith Balderston, a 6-foot-7 forward for the Ducks, has been selected to the GTE Academic All-American basketball squad's third team. Balderston has maintained a 3.75 GPA in pre-medicine. The junior from Portland was a second team choice last year. He is averaging 7.7 points and 5.6 rebounds for the Ducks. . . . Oregon's Anthony Taylor has been named to the Pacific 10 Conference's first team. The 6-foot-4 junior from Portland has tallied 18.8 points a game this season as the Ducks leading scorer.

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