

Sports

Ducks to face tough road trip

Players able to rest during last week's play

By Gary Henley
Emerald Sports Reporter

The Oregon volleyball team, hampered by injuries all week, will travel to southern California this weekend for what may be its toughest two-match road trip of the season against national powers UCLA and USC.

The Ducks, 11-5 overall and 7-2 in the Pacific-10 Conference, are ranked 13th in the nation in both the Tachikara/American Volleyball Coaches Association and NCAA polls released Tuesday.

Oregon won the state bragging rights for at least another year with victories over Oregon State and Portland State in last week's second annual Oregon Safeway Challenge Cup at Corvallis.

Battered and bruised as the Ducks are, Oregon head coach Gerry Gregory was grateful for the wins.

"I'm pleased that we overcame the adversity that we faced. We were able to play through some injuries that we had and we were playing teams that were on top of their game."

Among the Ducks on the mend are outside hitters Teri Kramer and Michele Krebsbach.

Gregory said he was able to rest Krebsbach in the tournament, and said Kramer has responded well to a sore shoulder and should be back at full strength this weekend.

Starting sophomore setter Stephanie Snyder injured her right knee in the win over the Beavers and was forced to miss the match against Portland State.

"Stephanie will probably

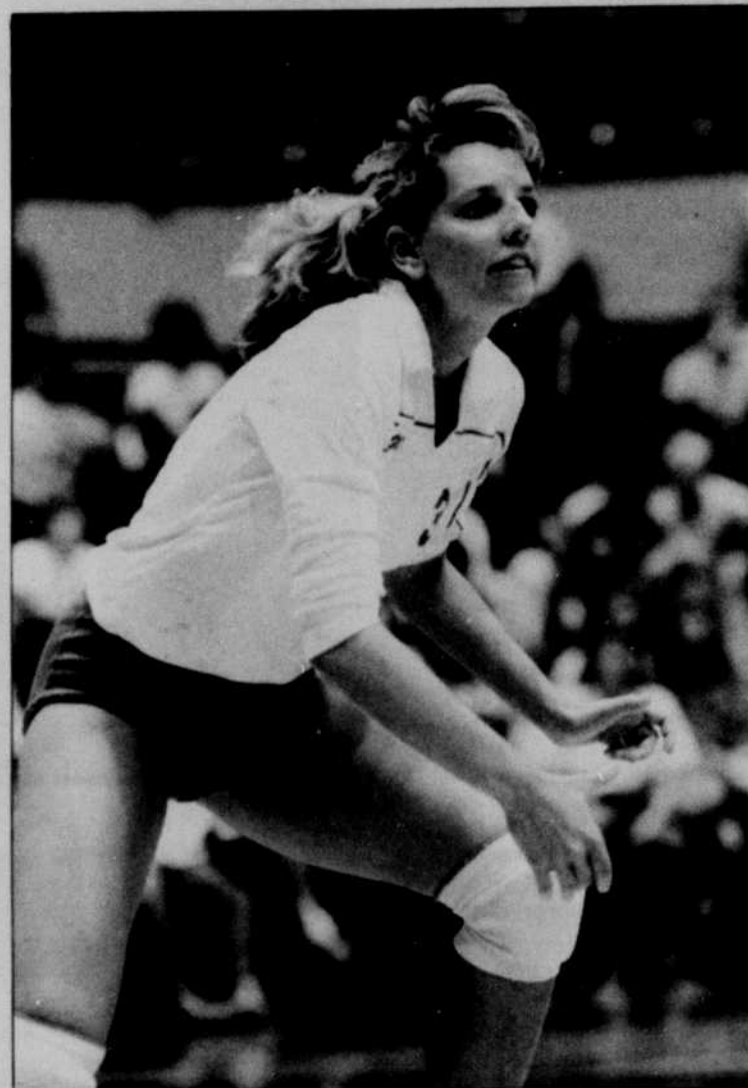


Photo by John Guistina

Starter Michele Krebsbach will be back in action this weekend against USC and UCLA after sitting out the Safeway Challenge Cup because of an injury.

sore shoulder.

"The rest did me good," Krebsbach said. "The shoulder's coming along slow, but it's getting better. I'll be ready to go."

Junior backrow specialist Michelle Crowston said, "We learned a lot of things last week.

played them the last time, and our injuries are healing, so I think we're ready."

Despite the matches that remain on Oregon's schedule, including this week's confrontations with UCLA and USC, Gregory said his team may have passed over its roughest season.

"This week has been very trying. We had a lot of injuries, fatigue, and distractions. The players had a difficult time but I think they've gotten through the worst part of the season."

That doesn't imply that the Ducks have smooth sailing ahead, by any means.

Oregon's tough schedule includes road matches at fifth-ranked Stanford and California in early November, and home dates two weeks after that against Arizona State and nationally-ranked Arizona.

Oregon is currently one game behind 8-1 Stanford and a half game behind second-place UCLA (7-1) in the Pac-10.

Gregory said California (6-3) could push the Ducks for third place.

"Cal is playing better than anyone in the conference right now. They're really playing great ball."

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— Gerry Gregory

have to deal with some discomfort, but she'll come back. If she's still injured, Tina (Adolph) will be next in line at setter. She did a great job after playing in the backup role for the last few weeks. We're also trying Eva (Windlin) out in the setting position in practice, and she's performing well there," Gregory said.

Windlin, suffering from a sore back, played sparingly against the Vikings, as did Krebsbach. The 6-1 sophomore has been on the sidelines with a

We showed that we could come back (after the losses to California and Stanford two weeks ago) and win with players that had to play because of injuries to other people. Oregon State and Portland State challenged us, and we played real well."

Crowston, the team's "positive mental attitude award" winner last season, showed a positive outlook for the upcoming matches with the Bruins and Trojans.

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