

Sports

Duck spikers gun down Pilots in three games

Fall from NCAA elite jolts women to life

By Kevin Allen
Emerald Contributor

With only five matches remaining in the regular season play entering Wednesday night's nonconference battle with Portland, the Oregon volleyball team needed every victory it could get to stay alive for a berth in the National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament.

The Ducks found themselves out of the NCAA national rankings for the first time this season after their two losses last week to Stanford and California. Oregon fell to the 17th spot in the Tachkara/AVCA poll, the lowest they have been ranked in that poll all year.

Their easy victory over Portland enabled the Ducks to move one step closer to post-season play, and the relative ease of the win gave coach Gerry Gregory the welcome opportunity to rest a few of his key players.

The Ducks crashed the flight of the Pilots in three consecutive games, 15-9, 15-12, and 15-11, to up their overall record to 14-9, they remain at 9-6 in the Pacific-10 Conference. Portland, 5-6 in the West Coast Athletic Conference, dropped to 8-17 overall.

Oregon will play host to arch-rival Oregon State tonight at 7:30 at McArthur Court.

The Pilots came out flying in each of the three games played before the 369 Duck faithful, but Oregon came on late each time to put Portland to rest. In the first match the Ducks fell behind 6-4 early, but came back to tie it at eight on a serving ace by sophomore Melissa Terzian, and the Pilots were gone for good, as the Ducks opened up with a 15-9 victory.

The second game proved to be quite a task for Oregon, as once again an emotionally-hyped Portland scared the Ducks with a 10-7 lead. The Ducks rebounded, on a Laurie Krejcha kill, to take the lead 11-10.

The Pilots still had an engine left however, and Portland's Kim Kemper served for two straight points and a 12-10 lead. That was the last heard from Portland, as the Ducks, behind kills by Krejcha and Terzian, triumphed 15-12.

The third game looked almost



Photo by Bobbie Lo

Junior Eva Windlin reaches for a dig during Wednesday's victory over Portland.

like a replay of the second, with the Pilots jumping out to a quick 7-4 lead. But once again, a combination of sloppy play by Portland and fine execution by the Ducks, turned Portland's dreams into nightmares, as they watched their lead evaporate. Terzian drilled home seven kills in the final stanza, and the Ducks outscored the Pilots 11-4 to take the game, 15-11, and the match.

Leading Oregon in its victory were Terzian with 15 kills, Krejcha with 13 kills and a solo block, and Michele Krebsbach chipped in with five kills and a solo block.

Krejcha entered the game as the country's leading blocker (averaging 2.2 per game), added four blocks to her total, despite frequent substitution.

"I thought our middle attack was good. And Melissa Terzian did a great job with the sets she had," praised Gregory.

The Webfoot mentor took Oregon All-America candidate Teri Kramer out in the middle of the second game and later said, "it's nice to give Kramer a rest, it gave Krebsbach and Terzian a chance to work."

Looking ahead to tonight's game with Oregon State, Gregory said, "We need a good crowd on hand to cheer us on. Tonight everyone was in night classes. We bring out the best in the Beavers and we'll need our fans' support."

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