

Sports

New volleyball 'hit squad' aims to stop firing blanks

By Gary Henley
Emerald Associate Editor

The big story of the 1988 Oregon volleyball season is one that the Ducks would rather forget.

The first half of the season was simple enough: the team lost three, won seven, lost three and won one.

But on Oct. 7 in Pullman, Wash., Oregon dropped a three-set decision to Washington State which sent the Ducks into a disastrous tailspin, one from which the team never recovered.

The loss to the Cougars was the first of a team record 13 straight defeats suffered by Oregon, which landed in a last-place tie in the Pacific-10 Conference with a 2-16 record, 8-19 overall.

Members of the 1989 team, most of whom had to endure the nightmarish end to the 1988 campaign, have all but forgotten what happened last season.

It's a new day, a new time, and the Ducks are looking forward to bigger and brighter things — like regaining the top-20 status they had at the beginning of last season, and sending the five seniors on this year's team out on a winning note.

The feeling on the team, for the most part, is that the 13-game skid in '88 was a fluke.

"I know that wasn't our team," said senior Michele Krebsbach. "We're not that bad. I think it was a fluke that it happened."

Reasons for how and why it happened vary among team members.

"We just started losing, and it broke down the team unity," said senior Denise Kuhn. "It



Michele Krebsbach

was not fun to keep losing after all the hard work we put in."

"I think we all had good intentions," Krebsbach added. "Things just started falling apart. Steph Snyder was out in the middle of the season, and she's a real big leader for us. There were little things that affected us a lot more than they should have. Once we started to lose, we lost our self-confidence and we forgot how to win. We didn't know how to get it back."

"Everybody still wanted to win," she continued. "But even though we wanted it, it just got to be real tiring at the end. Mentally, it was wearing thin."

Needless to say, Krebsbach and the rest of the gang are determined not to let it happen again.

"I'm very excited about this season," said Kuhn, the 6-foot-1 middle blocker who returned last season after missing 1987 due to back surgery.

"We're all working out very hard, and I'm real confident that we have a good team this

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