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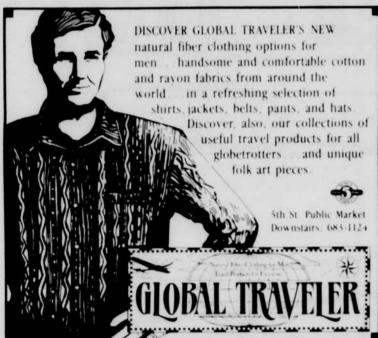
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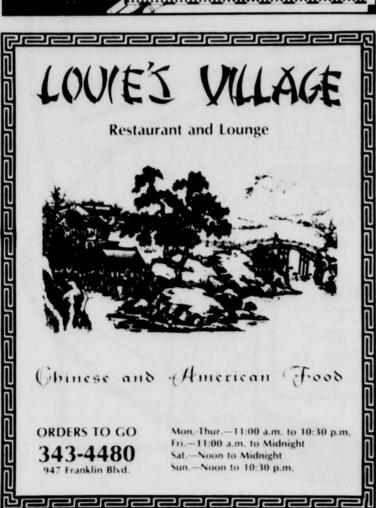
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# Undaunted by previous losses, netters return to league's elite

By Cam Sivesind Emerald Sports Reporter

Oregon volleyball coach Gerry Gregory and his team would like to let the Pacific 10 Conference and the nation know that last year's losing season was a fluke.

The Ducks finished 8-19 overall and 2-16 in Pac-10 play and

Enough has been said about last year. This is a new year, a new season, and the Ducks are playing like a new team.

Oregon jumped out to its fastest start ever with nine straight victories before dropping three in a row against Pacto foes.

The Ducks have merged back on to the winning trail, however, and have conquered their last five opponents, including upset victories last weekend over nationally ranked California and Stanford.

"What a lot of people don't remember is last year in the Pac-10 we were very competitive," Gregory said. "We lost a lot of five-game matches with a very young team."

The Ducks were young, losing only three senior letterwinners and one starter to begin the 1989 season. This year's roster consists of five seniors, one junior, five sophomores, and three freshman.

"I think this year the big difference is that we're not making as many foolish mistakes," Gregory said. "The leadership on the team is outstanding."

The players seem to be having a lot more fun this year as well.

"They sure had fun on Friday and Saturday night (at Cal and Stanford)." Gregory said. "They work hard in practice and I think their attitudes are that they really want to be pushed, and when they don't get pushed they are disappointed."

Defeating the nationally ranked conference rivals Cal and Stanford sent a wave of elation throughout the Duck team.

"It was great," said senior outside hitter and last week's Pac-10 Player of the Week Michele Krebsbach. "I think the it's probably the best I've felt in a long time."

Krebsbach, voted the team's most valuable player last year, also earned all-Northwest Regional honors for the third year in a row. Can a player of Krebsbach's caliber improve? If this season is any indicator, she has.

"I think she's more determined. She's worked harder."



Outside hitter Melissa Terzian has helped the Ducks to a three-game Pac-10 winning streak. The women play Oregon State in Corvallis tonight.

Gregory said. "She knows this is her last year. She wants to have it be a great year and she is willing to pay the price for it."

Krebsbach may get a lot of print in the media, but she is the first to admit that the 1989 Ducks play as a team.

"Everybody's doing a great job," she said. "I mean we couldn't win unless there were six people on the court and the rest of the team cheering for us."

"I think in the past we probably had relied on one dominant hitter, or maybe two dominant hitters," Gregory said. "This year we distribute the sets evenly. I think that's one of our strengths."

One player that has been contributing more this year is sophomore outside hitter Julie leffery.

"She's a wonderful right side hitter." Gregory said. "When her timing is on she is virtually unstoppable."

Jeffery has also noticed a difference in this year's team.

"Our attitude on the court is a lot better," Jeffrey said. "I think we're more mentally tough than last year. We're working really hard in practice and I think it's paying off."

Setter Molly McGrath is another sophomore that has seen increased playing time.

"I think she's got the confidence of the team." Gregory said. "The team knows that when she comes in that she can definitely do her job. She's probably our best defensive player as well. When she comes in the back row, good things happen."

"I got a chance to set a lot in the off season because (Stephanie) Snyder had her (knee) surgery." McGrath said. "That helped me a lot and gave me a lot of confidence so I could come in and do better."

Snyder, the Ducks' senior setter and team captain, has overcome three knee surgeries to come back and direct her team's offensive attack.

"She's our strongest leader on our team," Gregory said. "She has gotten in the best shape of her life. She's just leading by example. She's playing the best defense I've ever seen her play. She's one of the top team players in the Pac-

Snyder feels that last weekend's sweep of Cal and Stanford was a culmination of the team's effort this season.

"We've been working so hard and we've been coming really close and it finally clicked," Snyder said. "I think

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