

Sports

Snyder Continued from Page 11

bearable.

Snyder's doctor sent her straight to the hospital, where a staff infection was discovered in her knee. Doctors performed another operation to clean out the knee, but the trouble had not been completely alleviated.

After three more days in the hospital, a blood clot was discovered in the right knee. Snyder was put on another IV and remained in the hospital for nine days.

She was finally allowed to return home, but she had to remain on a portable IV for three weeks.

"That also messed up my rehab," she said. "You need to start doing your rehab right after your surgery and here I am three weeks later and I'm still in bed."

Snyder was forced to get out of bed by the doctors after her surgery. The ordeal had her wondering whether or not volleyball was in her future.

"I told Gerry, 'Gerry if I had a phone in my hand I would have quit right then I was in so much pain,'" Snyder said.

An attitude change in Snyder resulted from the knee injuries and it was a change for the better.

"Right now I'm seeing life as being a lot more important than just volleyball," Snyder said. "And maybe the three years before that I made volleyball my top thing and if that wasn't going well then the rest of my life probably wasn't either."

"I really see how my future is going to be and that in two months volleyball is done," she said.

The rehabilitation process was made tougher by the complications and delays.

Snyder remained at Oregon for the summer in order to attend summer school and catch up on some missed classes. Another important reason for spending the summer up here was to work out and get back into shape.

A lot of time was spent in the McArthur Court treatment center riding the stationary bike and doing leg lifts with weights.

"I started just working my rehab and working out and I thought 'I can do this,'" Snyder said. "I like to finish things that I start and I didn't think I could leave the team."

The impact of Snyder's play on her team is apparent and no one recognizes that more than Gregory.

"She's doing a great job as a leader," Gregory said. "She's setting the ball accurately. She's playing the best defense that I've ever seen her play before."

"All the areas of her game are very solid and she's just doing a great job as our team captain so I'm very pleased with what Stephanie's doing for our team," he said.

Snyder's career at Oregon has been an impressive one. Her freshman year she was named the team's Rookie of the Year and was also selected to the Pac-10 all-freshman team. She also led the nation in assists with 13.2 per game.

"My freshman year we had a young team and we beat a lot of teams that people didn't think we should beat," Snyder said. "We had a really basic offense and we were just all power."

Statistically, Snyder's sophomore year was not as impressive.

"I don't think I was as good my sophomore year. I had gained about twenty pounds from the 'Freshman 20,'" Snyder said. "We were a little disappointed our sophomore year with what had happened, especially after our freshman year."

Last year was a real disappointment as the Ducks suffered a 13-match losing streak to end the season and finished with a 8-19 overall record, 2-16 in the Pac-10.

"Last year for me, well for everyone, was kind of really a heartbreaker thing, but I think maybe that it was just something we had to go through," Snyder said.

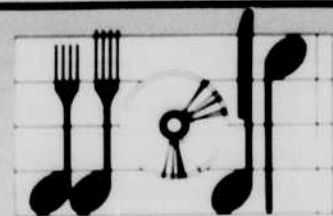
The current season is going great. The Ducks are on a winning streak and are ranked No. 19 in the NCAA poll with an overall record of 15-3, 4-3 in the Pac-10.

"This year seems to be great. I'm loving it. I would say that this year is my best year as far as enjoying the team and having fun," Snyder said.

"Right now I'm really happy with how things are and we're working hard and doing really well and the team gets along really good."

This is the kind of season that Snyder would like to end her career at Oregon with.

"I couldn't ask for a better ending and I feel really fortunate that way because I know it doesn't always turn out that way," Snyder said.



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The River of Heaven

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