

## Softball team awaits opponent in NCAA toumey Ducks top seed in Midwest Regional

By Tracy Sumner  
Emerald Sports Editor

The 1990 NCAA Softball Championships begin today for Oregon much the same way last Friday did: The Ducks will be waiting.

Last week at this time, Oregon (35-21) was waiting for an all-but-assured bid to the NCAAs. It finally came Sunday night with the news that the eighth-ranked Ducks would be the top seed in this weekend's Midwest Regional in Columbus, Ohio.

Today, the team will wait again. This time it will be to see who Oregon will play in its

first NCAA tournament game.

The other Midwest Region teams — Ohio State and Kent State — start play today at noon EDT, with the loser to face Oregon at 2 p.m. The Ducks then play the Kent State-Ohio State winner at 4 p.m. A fourth game will be played Saturday with a possible fifth added if necessary.

On paper, Kent State appears to be the kind of softball power that could cut the Ducks' 1990 NCAA appearance short.

The unranked Golden Flashes captured the Mid-American conference title this year with a 20-4 conference record and an overall ledger of 40-7.

Kent State's record wasn't filled the kind of competition Oregon endured this season (none of the team's 47 games was against any team currently in the nation's top 20), but the Flashes' team statistics could portend a tough challenge for the Ducks.

Five Kent State players hit better than .300 on the season on the way to the team's .303 average.

The Flashes' top hitter is junior outfielder Pauline Maurice, who carries an impressive .436 average into NCAA play. The 5-foot-0 Maurice also led a balanced Kent State attack with 65 hits, 37 runs and five triples

this season. She also chipped in with 16 RBIs, a home run and 16 bases on balls.

Catcher Kim Henzler hit .306 this season and led her team in RBI with 29 and in doubles with 13.

Kent State scored its runs from all over the field this season. In addition to hitting for average, they have power (12 home runs), they run (61 stolen bases on 77 attempts) and they also hit with discipline (137 bases on balls as a team).

Solid, if not spectacular, pitching anchors the Kent State defense. The team ERA of 0.71 is led by sophomore Darby Seegrist, who had a 27-5 record on a 0.65 ERA this season. Seegrist also exhibited good control, striking out 90 while

walking 57.

Ohio State, which was co-Big Ten Champion this season with a 17-7 conference record, didn't have the glittering record of Kent State (38-23 overall), but a quick glance at the Buckeyes' schedule shows them to be a team of quality.

Like Oregon, Ohio State had to overcome a tough schedule to gain its bid to the tournament. In addition to facing Big-10 rivals Iowa and Indiana (rated 12th and 18th, respectively) four times each, the Buckeyes played ranked teams such as Cal-Berkeley (won 3-2), Arizona (lost 3-0), Arizona State (lost 4-1) and Oregon (Lost 6-3), all of which will be playing in the NCAA tournament.

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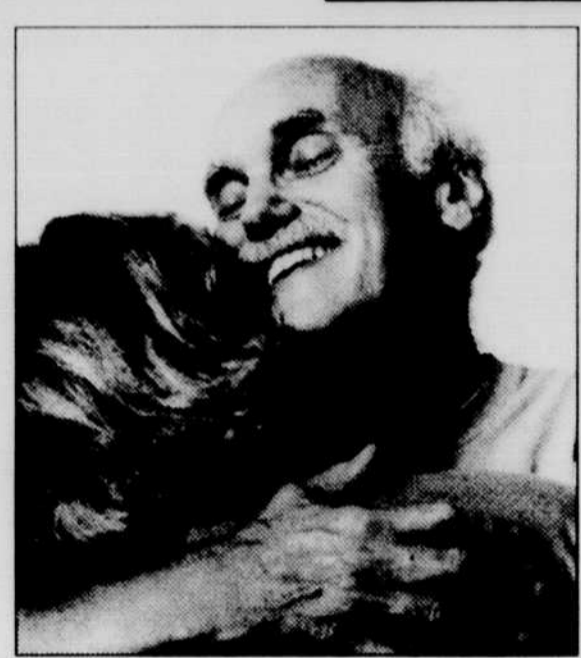
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