



Oregon's Dan Vidlak (left) will lead the Ducks in two non-conference home wrestling matches with Brigham Young and Portland State.

## Wrestlers roll out mat for BYU, PSU matches

By Lyle Crouse  
Emerald Contributor

The Oregon wrestlers will make a long-awaited appearance in McArthur Court at 7:30 tonight for their first home match of the season.

The momentum the Ducks gained in their recent seven-day, five-victory tour of California may make it an unpleasant visit for their winless opponents, the Brigham Young Cougars.

"I think they'll feel good about wrestling at home," Coach Ron Finley said of his team. "The hometown crowd really makes a difference when you get on the mat. Their cheering really gets you fired up."

Oregon is 6-0 in dual meets

this year and ranked 21st nationally as well as having won 17 straight dual meets. The Ducks are also in the hunt for the Pacific-10 Conference title, and they're gearing up for the title drive with two non-conference dual meets starting tonight.

"I think we've got a shot at the Pac-10 championship this year," Finley said. "(Pac-10 rival) Arizona State seems to be dropping a little bit. They've got some injuries. If we keep going strong, I think we have a definite shot at the Pac-10."

The Ducks caught a glimpse of BYU in the Nov. 17 Lumberjack Open in Arcada, Calif., and Finley knows that Rick Evans and Phil Armstrong will lead the Cougar attack.

"I know for a fact that the key match of the night is going to be between Curt Strahm and Rick Evans," he said.

Strahm is ranked 12th nationally in the 190-pound class and sports a 17-1 record. Evans has a 13-2 record.

Finley said another crucial match will pit Oregon's Pat Craig against Phil Armstrong in the 150-pound bracket. Craig is 12-6 and Armstrong 10-1-1.

BYU is 0-2 in dual meets this season, but Finley isn't taking the match lightly.

"They're always a tough team," he said. "They're always in the top one or two in their conference."

Portland State invades Mac Court on Saturday at 7:30. The Vikings, ranked fourth in Division II, fell to the Ducks in Oregon's first meet of the season, 35-13.

Finley said a crucial win in that Nov. 9 match was freshman Jeff McCoy's pin of Tony Champion, the Division II national champ in the 177-pound class last season.

"He's going to be out to avenge his earlier loss," Finley said of Champion.

Dan Russell is Portland State's "star," Finley said. Russell finished fourth in Division I last season after taking the Division II individual title at 177 pounds.

Russell faces a rematch with Oregon freshman Mat Sprague, who Russell defeated in the waning seconds in the finals of the Dec. 29 Oregon Classic.

Oregon's senior laden team is led by Curt Strahm and fellow seniors Rob Stone (17-8, 134 pounds), Scott Glenn (19-2-1, 142 pounds), and Cam Strahm (12-8, heavyweight). Glenn is ranked seventh nationally and Sprague is ranked 12th at 167.

But the momentum for each match begins with all-American junior Dan Vidlak, ranked second in the 118-pound bracket with a 9-0 record.

"He's the first match and he sets the pace," Finley said. "When you come off with a lead right off the bat, that really helps the team and we can get some momentum rolling. It's hard to stop a team with a lot of momentum."

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