

# Kobayshi led swim team to successful season

By Ted Burnham  
Emerald Contributor



Despite a minimal budget and tough competition, the Club Sports swim team did surprisingly well this season, but hopes of regaining the glory of past years still elude the tiny team.

Competitive swimming is thriving in Oregon, but the University program is being left behind, said Oregon coach Mike Dirksen.

Oregon's swim team was dropped from varsity status in 1985. Scholarships are no longer given and there is no paid coach.

"Swimming was one of the original varsity sports at U of O," said Dirksen. "It's a shame that our own state will not support us."

In the past, the state of Oregon has produced eight U.S. swimming champions and six NCAA champions, two from Oregon. In the 1960s and '70s, the University swim team twice placed in the top 10 at the NCAA Championships and produced several NCAA record holders.

Now Washington is the only Northwest team left in the NCAA. Oregon State (Pacific-10 Conference), Lewis and Clark, and Willamette University, which compete in the NAIA, are the only varsity programs in Oregon.

## High school all-Americans from Oregon must move out of state if they wish to compete at the NCAA level.

The state is among the top 10 in terms of high school swimming, Dirksen said, and Oregon has the second largest masters swimming program in the world.

But high school all-Americans, from Oregon, must move out of state if they wish to compete at the NCAA level, Dirksen said.

The University, which provides the minimum amount of varsity sports — seven for both men and women — to qualify for NCAA status, has had trouble finding support for "Olympic" sports that don't pay for themselves in ticket revenues like football and basketball do.

"[Swimming] is no less important than football, band or drama," Dirksen said. "I feel all these activities are really important to provide an opportunity for students to compete and perform."

Despite funding woes, the swimming team did become a Club Sport last year, and receives limited funds from the Incidental Fee Committee. The mem-

bers are required to fund raise to help with additional expenses. This year, the team made enough money to travel to three away meets.

Pacing the Duck swimmers this year was Katsuya Kobayshi, an exchange student from Japan, whose time of 59.95 in the 100-meter backstroke placed him 67th out of a field of more than 120 swimmers at the Phillips 66-Spring Nationals held April 6 at the Goodwill Games pool in Federal Way, Wash.

The men's team also placed 15th at Northwest Senior Regionals this year, setting personal records in 12 different events.

At the Pacific Lutheran Invitational in Tacoma, Wash., the men placed fifth and the women's team placed ninth.

Students training with the team include a women's Iron Man triathlon finisher and a student from Great Britain who is ranked fourth in the modern pentathlon in Great Britain and sixth in the United States.

Dirksen plans to continue the program next year. Many of this year's swimmers will graduate, he said, leaving gaps that will need to be filled.

Eventually Dirksen hopes that a varsity swim team will be reinstated.

"We need the support so coaches can compete at the Pac-10 level," he said. "It all comes down to when the state Legislature decides how they will support our school."



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## Blazers face playoff elimination, down 3-1

PORTLAND (AP) — The Los Angeles Lakers are looking like an NBA championship team. The Portland Trail Blazers are looking like an NBA expansion team.

As a result, the Lakers can wrap up their ninth Western Conference title in the last 12 years with a victory on Portland's homecourt in Game 5 tonight.

"There's no reason for this," the Blazers' Clyde Drexler said. "I can't understand it."

That sums up the Trail Blazers' feelings after a pair of blowout losses at the Forum over the weekend. Portland, which had the NBA's best regular-season record at 63-19, went to Los Angeles tied 1-1 in the best-of-7 series.

What followed was disaster at the hands of a Laker team that obviously has figured out how to stop Portland's run-and-gun, slam-dunking attack.

The Blazers are a team that operates on emotion and they came out flat in two of their biggest games of the season. They lost 106-92 Friday night and 116-95 Sunday. Game 4 was Portland's most one-sided loss of the season.

"I think the Lakers have played great defense," Portland's Danny Ainge said. "We haven't adjusted to what they're doing. They know what we're doing. I think we've become predictable. They're just clogging the middle, making it tough on us. We're not finding the open man. Obviously, we're in deep trouble."

The Lakers know what it takes to stop Portland, Magic Johnson said.

"We got control of the tempo early, slowed up the game so they couldn't get in their transition game," he said. "The only way we can beat Portland is with defense. That was the difference in the last two games."

The frustrated Blazers have made 34 turnovers in the last two games, 19 on Sunday.

"I never thought we would play as bad as we did in these two games," Portland Coach Rick Adelman said. "I think we will come back and play much better Tuesday. I believe in my team, I know they can come back."

Only four teams in NBA history have come back from a 3-1 deficit to win a playoff series. The last was Boston, which won the last three games to beat Philadelphia in the 1981 Eastern Conference finals.

All season long, the Blazers talked about how hungry they were for a championship, how they got a taste of it in last year's finals and knew what it takes to win it all. The only team that showed that kind of hunger in the Forum was Los Angeles.

"If we play like we did these last three games, then there are plenty of doubts," Drexler said. "It's not over yet. The question is, do we want it bad enough and do we have what it takes to do it? Three-to-one is tough. We've got ourselves into this situation, now we've got to get ourselves out."

Even if the Lakers don't win tonight, they can wrap up a trip to the finals at home Thursday night in Game 6.

Still, the Blazers insist they haven't given up.

"Can we? Yeah," Ainge said. "Will we? We'll see."

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