Volleyball seniors play last home game tonight

By Jayson Jacoby Emerald Sports Reporter

When the Oregon volleyball team takes on in-state rival Oregon State tonight in McArthur Court, it won't just be the final home game of the season or the rubber match in this year's series with the Beavers.

The 7:30 p.m. contest will also mark the final appearance of five Oregon seniors in front of a home crowd, as Dawnn Charroin, Mindee Adams, Molly McGrath, Julie Jeffery and Ali Watkins take to the Mac Court floor for the last time.

Although it has been a disappointing season for the Ducks, 13-14 overall and 3-12 in the Pacific-10 Conference, a high point has been the play of Charroin, a four-year starter at Oregon.

Charroin, who has led the Ducks in kills in 16 of the 27 matches this season, should be a candidate for post-season honors.

"Dawnn is a legitimate All-America candidate," Oregon coach Gerry Gregory said. "But she'll suffer because the team hasn't been winning."

Charroin, whose 323 kills tops all Oregon players, said individual accolades don't mean that much to her.

"I'm not really a big fan of post-season awards," she said. "It's really a reflection of the 'It all boils down to your senior season. If you win, everything — all three years of hard work — really pays off. But if you don't, it makes it really tough.'

 Dawnn Charroin, Oregon volleyball senior

team to me. I would be really surprised to get anything."

Charroin said the Ducks' season, hampered by major injuries to three-year letter-winners Adams and McGrath and to one of the team's top blockers, Marcie Price, has really dampened a senior season that started with high hopes.

"It's been a huge disappointment," Charroin said. "I really felt we had the potential to finish at least third in the Pac-10 and maybe make it to the NCAAs. Then you come off a 9-0 start, and all of a sudden the season's in shambles.

"I'm a very competitive person. I hate to lose probably worse than most people do. There's more to life than playing volleyball, but for four months of your life, it is your

But Charroin, an English major, said the losing season has pushed her to continue her volleyball career after Oregon.

"Oregon is not the last place I want to play competitive volleyball," she said. "I plan on playing in Europe or somewhere else. Since we haven't won this season, it makes me want it all the more somewhere else. It all boils down to your senior season. If you win, everything — all three years of hard work — really pays off. But if you don't, it makes it really tough."

But regardless of the team's record. Charroin has left her mark on Oregon volleyball in her four years in Eugene.

Her 1,233 career kills rank fourth on Oregon's all-time list, and she has also amassed 1,141 digs in four years.

Charroin's contribution to Oregon volleyball really shouldn't come as a surprise, though, given the credentials she brought to Eugene in 1988.

A prep All-American in 1987 at Marina High School in Huntington Beach, Calif. Charroin also earned all-league and allstate honors her junior and senior seasons and was named her team's MVP both years.

She didn't break stride after coming to Oregon, making the Pac-10 all-freshman team while ranking 17th in the country in blocking average her first year in a Duck uniform.

In 1989 Charroin led Oregon in blocks, was second in kills and third in digs. She was named to all-tournament teams at the Lady Ute Classic and the Oregon Invitational, as well.

She made two other all-tourney squads last season while leading the Ducks with 349 kills and being named Oregon's Mental Toughness/Extra Effort award winner.

But Charroin's career hasn't been without adversity. She switched positions two years ago, moving from middle blocker to outside hitter.

"She had never played that position before," Gregory said.

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