

Duck Invitational competition not up to par

By Steve Mims
Emerald Contributor

The Oregon men's golf team will face a soft field in the Duck Invitational today and tomorrow at the Eugene Country Club and Emerald Valley Golf Course.

The tournament was supposed to include stronger teams, but the mid-season resignation of coach Scott Krieger last month left a cloud of uncertainty over the event. Many teams originally scheduled to play did not receive confirmation and thus scheduled other tournaments for the weekend.

Oregon, currently ranked 24th, should face its stiffest competition from San Jose State, the only other team ranked in the top 25. Other teams in the tournament include Oregon State, Washington State, Portland State, Portland and Long Beach State.

"There's not too many solid squads because we got it together so late," head coach Shawn Aicher said. "If we play to our potential, there is no reason why we shouldn't win."

Oregon's five-man squad will feature Doug

DuChateau, Mark Aldrich, Jeff Lyons, Troy Tamiya and James Chrisman. Seniors DuChateau — who led the Ducks in their last tournament — and Aldrich — who won a tournament during the fall — shot the lowest scores during qualifying last week.

"Everyone is doing good," Lyons said. "We're playing about as well as we can."

The Ducks' biggest advantage will be course familiarity, but the players say they know they cannot count on that to win the tournament.

"We can't get overconfident because we are on our home course," Aldrich said. "Oregon weather is too unpredictable for that."

The first 36 holes will be played today at the Eugene Country Club with the final 18 on Tuesday at Emerald Valley Golf Course. Both courses have a traditional design with the biggest difference between them being the hazards. Eugene has about five times as many sand traps, as well as taller trees, but Emerald Valley is longer from tee-to-green.

Oregon is coming off an impressive sixth-

place finish at the Big Island Intercollegiate in Hawaii last month, where it defeated many higher-ranked teams. The Ducks are hoping to move up into the top 20 when the next polls are released this week.

"If we win this tournament, it should move us up a few more spots nationally," Aldrich said.

Oregon finished third in last year's Duck Invitational, 12 shots behind Washington. DuChateau finished in a tie for third at two-over par, with Lyons one shot behind.

The top individuals in this year's tourney are Aldrich, Lyons and DuChateau, along with San Jose State's Bob Jacobsen and Sal Enriquez. Aicher admitted he is unfamiliar with some of the teams and other players in the tourney, but he expects those five to be among the leaders.

The tournament gets off to a shotgun start today at 8:30 a.m. with all five Duck players beginning on the front nine. Each player will be in a different foursome with members of three other teams.

Women lose at California, drop to 14-12

The Oregon women's basketball team lost 85-75 at California Saturday for the Ducks' seventh loss out of their last nine games.

Oregon dropped to 14-12 overall and 6-9 in the Pacific-10 Conference with the loss. California improved to 20-7 and 12-5 on the year.

California's Milica Vukadinovic scored 26 points and had a school-record 13 assists in the Golden Bears' win. Vukadinovic was 9 of 15 from the field and also grabbed nine rebounds.

The Bears' Trisha Stafford also scored 29 points in the game.

Guards Jessica Schutt and Missy Stowell led Oregon with 14 points apiece. Stowell hit 3 of 4 baskets from three-point range, and despite only playing 22 minutes, Schutt connected on 4 of 8 three-pointers.

Debbie Sporcich played only 17 minutes but scored 13 points for the Ducks. The sophomore forward also had 11 rebounds.

Oregon was playing its second game in a row without lead scorer Staci Wallenborn, who was attending her brother's funeral in Washington last week.

The Ducks end their season this weekend at McArthur Court, where they have lost five of their last six games. Oregon faces UCLA Thursday night and UCLA on Saturday.

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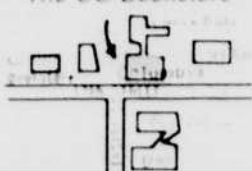
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Kenneth Helphand is a professor of landscape at the University of Oregon

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