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Women's tennis nets big victories

By Doug Carter
Emerald Contributor

Oregon women's tennis coach Tom Greider said his team took a "step in the right direction" last weekend in Washington and is on course to set a new single-season win record.

Last Thursday's match against Puget Sound was meant to serve as a warm-up for the Ducks, 15-10 on the year, who were preparing to face Washington and Washington State in the three-day Northern Pacific-10 Conference round robin tournament.

The Oregon women disposed of the opposing Loggers handily, coming up victorious in eight of the nine matches played in Tacoma. The overpowering nature of the Ducks' win gave the team some added momentum going into the tournament at the new indoor tennis facility on the Washington campus.

And the extra adrenalin paid immediate dividends for the Ducks, who enjoyed unmatched success against the Huskies.

"We won five matches against Washington; that's the most ever," Greider said. "Last year we won only three, and the two years before that we didn't win any."

Sophomore Katie Glynn got the Ducks rolling with a straight-set victory over Washington's No. 4 singles player, 6-4, 6-1. Freshman Heather Updike was also victorious in straight sets, as she gave up only two games to the Huskies' No. 6 single's player, 6-1, 6-1.

Junior Shelley Brandt helped the Oregon cause with victories over both the No. 7 and No. 8 singles players on the Huskies' roster. The fifth Duck victory was provided by sophomore Cynthia Armstrong.

Despite strides made by his squad, Greider sees room for improvement.

"We lost too many three-setters to Washington — we need to learn to close matches out," Greider said. "Right now, we don't know how to put the pressure on the opponent at the end of a tight match."

"But that's all right because you need to experience it before you can believe in it."

The Ducks didn't have the same problem against Washington State, as they coasted to 12 wins in 17 matches against the Cougars.

Propelling the Ducks past the Cougars were freshman Kara Yoshida, sophomore Krissy Barger and Glynn, who all won two matches. Oregon

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will have a chance to beat up on the Cougars again and revenge prior losses to the Huskies this weekend when the Ducks travel to Pullman for a dual match April 10 and 11.

The Ducks have already begun preparing themselves for the trip.

"Kara (Yoshida) and I are out to get the Huskies' No. 1 doubles team," sophomore Sherry Fairgrieve said.

On the men's side of the net, Oregon will host Willamette this afternoon at the University courts at 2:30.

Although its opponent has not been a great challenge in the recent past — Oregon won 8-0 and 9-0 in the two meetings last year — coach Buzz Summers is not going to let his team become complacent.

"We anticipate being heavy favorites, but we're not going to overlook them," Summers said. "Our guys will be psyched up and ready."

Summers will use the opportunity to give some younger players a shot. Freshmen Josh Prager and Dara Partovi will be playing the No. 4 and No. 6 singles matches, respectively.

"We're going to give some of the players more responsibility than they are used to," Summers said of the changes.

Oregon's Chris Gladwell will play the No. 2 single despite nursing a bad right knee. The senior tore his anterior cruciate ligament last month while playing basketball, but he said it feels stable enough with a brace.

"It feels great," Gladwell said. "I've been working with weights — I'd say I'm about 80 percent (healthy)."

Gladwell plans on having reconstructive surgery this summer in California.

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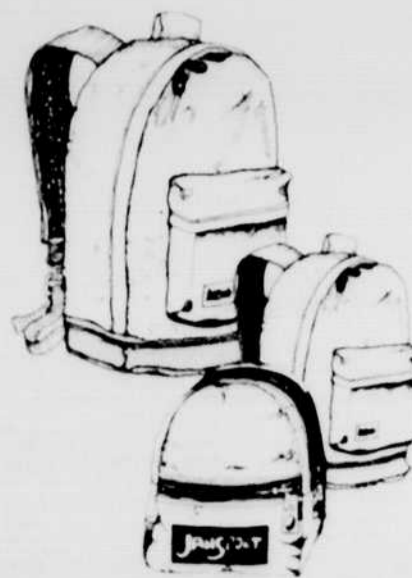
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