

Softballers win five over weekend

By Jayson Jacoby
Emerald Sports Reporter

The Oregon softball team finished an eight-game weekend Sunday by splitting a doubleheader with 20th-ranked Arizona State in front of 173 fans at Howe Field.

Rachelle Taylor threw a five-hit shutout in the first game and senior catcher Tracey Simmons singled in the game's only run to give the Ducks a 1-0 win.

The Sun Devils came back in the second game with two runs in the first inning en route to a 3-1 win.

Oregon's marathon weekend was the result of adding two make-up games against Stanford to the three doubleheaders already scheduled.

The Ducks started it all Friday afternoon by winning three straight non-conference games against winless Stanford. Saturday Oregon dropped two games to second-ranked Arizona before capping the tripleheader with another victory over the Cardinal.

Oregon won the first game Friday 11-0, the second 11-1 and the third 10-0. On Saturday, the Ducks lost 6-0 and 1-0, and in the Saturday game against Stanford, Oregon won 4-0.

The Ducks finished the weekend with a 23-27 overall record, 4-12 in the Pacific-10 Conference.

Despite having pitched 14 innings the previous two days, Taylor was nothing short of dominant Sunday against Arizona State (27-21 and 7-9).

After allowing a lead-off single to Dottie Conroy, the sophomore from Citrus Heights, Calif., retired the Sun Devils in order in the second and third innings.

Then the Ducks picked up the only run they would need in the bottom of the third. Kim



Oregon's Anna Poore (25) readies herself for an out at first base. The Ducks won five of the eight games they played over the weekend.

Manning doubled to center field with one out, then stole second base. After Lynn Kinnaman struck out, Simmons lined a single to right, scoring Manning and giving Oregon a 1-0 lead.

Taylor and the Ducks dodged a bullet in the top of the fourth, when Arizona State All-American Rachel Brown was thrown out at the plate on a contested play.

Brown had earlier singled, then moved to second on Wendy Johnson's single. Chori Keller followed Johnson by grounding out to second. Brown ran into Oregon third baseman Patty Pyles, then was thrown out trying to score.

Arizona State coach Linda Wells spent the next 10 min-

utes discussing the play with the two umpires, while the small crowd grew more and more unhappy — not to mention vocal — about the delay.

The field umpire had called interference on the collision between Pyles and Brown, and Wells contended that Brown was entitled both to third base and to making an attempt to score. The umpire made the judgment that Brown would have been thrown out regardless of the interference, but that didn't prevent the delay.

The Sun Devils didn't make any serious scoring threats thereafter, as Taylor breezed to her sixth shutout of the season.

Taylor said pitching with the 1-0 lead after the third inning made things a lot easier.

"When you have a lead, you

have insurance, and so it gives you more incentive to win," Taylor said. "I didn't pitch my best game, but I pitched well enough to win."

Oregon head coach Tami Brown was more generous in her praise.

"She just pitched an excellent game," Brown said. "She was very confident and poised. It was a strong performance."

"We were in the same rut we've been in for a while now," said Wells, whose team also split a doubleheader with lightly regarded Oregon State Saturday. "We had several missed opportunities to score and didn't have any timely hits."

In the nightcap, the Sun Dev-

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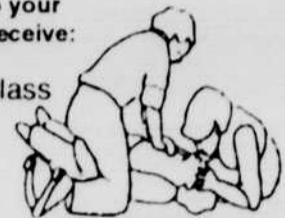
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