

Ducks take fifth in tough Pac-10 play

By Steve Mims
Emerald Contributor

Led by a senior in her final match and two freshmen competing in their first conference championship, the Oregon women's golf team finished fifth in the Pacific-10 Conference Championships in Tempe, Ariz., last weekend.

Oregon senior Leigh Hornung made a big push to get into the NCAA Championships by firing a 10-over-par 226 to finish in a ninth-place tie with teammate Shannon Maier. Hornung is hoping to earn an individual berth in the national championships but must now wait a couple of days for her ranking.

The most pleasant surprise for the Ducks was the play of freshmen Shannon Hare and Karly Mills. Hare paced the Ducks in the opening round with a 2-over-par 74 and finished in 13th place, and Mills fired second- and third-round 76s to finish in a tie for 20th place.

"I'm very happy with the play of our freshmen," Oregon head coach Renee Baumgartner said. "They played solid throughout the tournament."

Five teams went into the tournament ranked in the top 11 in the country, so the Ducks set a goal to defeat one of those

teams and finish in the top five. Oregon reached that goal by defeating 11th-ranked USC by 19 strokes.

The Ducks shot a school record 298 in the second round to move within one shot of third place. They faded a bit in the final round, shooting a 307, but still finished only eight shots out of second place.

"It was fun. We played really well," Baumgartner said. "Our goal was to finish in the top five, and we did."

Arizona ran away with the team title, defeating runner-up Arizona State by 33 shots. The Wildcats were led by individual champion Annika Sorenstam, who shot a 2-under-par 214 for the tournament.

Oregon's season is over, but there is optimism surrounding next season. The Ducks will lose four seniors, but they have three redshirt players returning along with four freshmen who have signed for next year. Included among next year's freshman class is Leanne Wong from Los Angeles, a player who Baumgartner said is "a blue-chip prospect."

"Next year should be exciting. We have young players who will play right away," Baumgartner said. "We aren't losing too much we can't replace."

Oregon places 4th at weekend golf tourney

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The Oregon men's golf team rebounded from a poor opening round to finish fourth at the U.S. Intercollegiate in Palo Alto, Calif., last weekend.

The Ducks struggled in the first round with a 298, beginning the tournament in 13th place. They rebounded quickly, shooting a 284 in the second round and a 286 in the final round to edge out Fresno State by one shot for fourth place.

"We dug ourselves a hole early, but we came back strong," Oregon head coach Shawn Alcher said.

Once again the Ducks were led by junior Jeff Lyons, who shot a 69 in each of the final two rounds to finish in a tie for third at 211.

Oregon's Doug DuChateau and James Chrisman finished tied for 36th place with 8-over-par 221s. DuChateau came back from an opening round 79 to

shoot even par over the last two rounds.

Third-ranked Arizona won the team title by firing an 11-under-par 273 in the final round to finish at 843, breaking the tournament record the Wildcats set a year ago. Stanford finished in second, seven shots behind Arizona, followed by second-round leader Pacific in third.

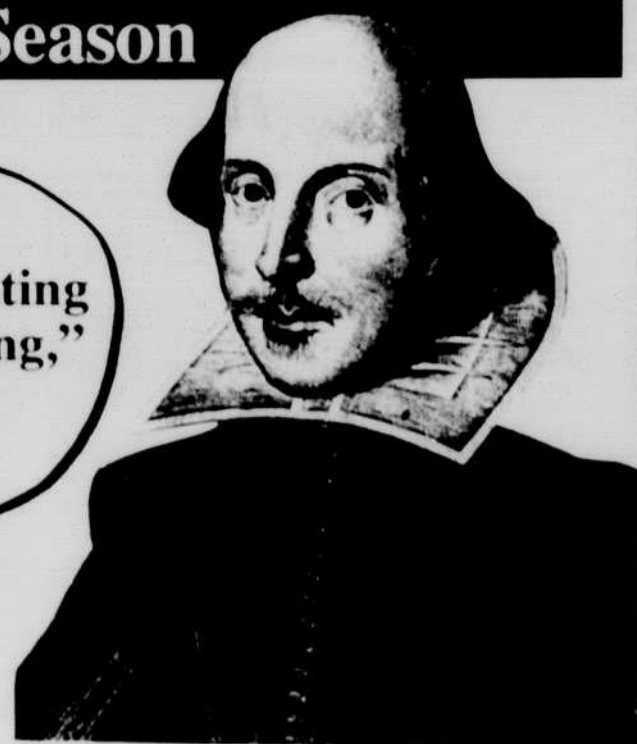
Arizona's Manny Zerman defended his individual title with a 6-under-par 207, two shots ahead of Pacific's Thomas Ljung. Zerman, who is ranked among the top five amateur golfers in the country, finished as the low amateur at the Masters two weeks ago.

The field for the tournament was strong as it included every Pacific-10 team except for Arizona State.

Oregon will next compete in the Pacific-10 Conference Championships in Corvallis this weekend.

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