

Ducks to meet UA

By Scott Simonson
Oregon Daily Emerald

There may be no place like home, but right now the road looks just fine to the Oregon volleyball team.

The Ducks, 3-8 overall, will be looking for their first conference victory when they travel to the Arizona schools this weekend. And after home losses last weekend against UCLA and USC — ranked No. 2 and No. 6 nationally when they came to Eugene — facing the the Wildcats and the Sun Devils almost amounts to a respite.

"The two Los Angeles schools are definitely the toughest combination to face in the Pac-10 this year," Oregon head coach Gerry Gregory said. "I would guess Arizona and Arizona State will be a cut below USC. They will be a real challenge, but we can compete with them."

Oregon plays Arizona on Thursday and Arizona State on Friday. Neither opponent is exactly a patsy: The Wildcats are ranked 20th nationally, and the Sun Devils were also ranked before losing to Stanford last weekend.

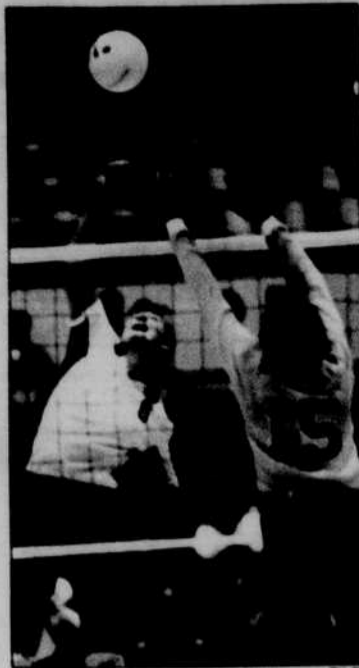
However, Oregon's match against USC showed that the Ducks are capable of staying with a nationally ranked opponent. Gregory said the team must now work on turning competitiveness into successful results.

"It's a matter of us not making errors and staying in position," he said. "In the USC match, we missed a service attempt and played a ball as it was going out of bounds at 13-13. When we get to that point in the game, we need to put the final nail in the coffin."

Blocking has been a strength for the Ducks early in the season. Oregon leads the Pacific-10 Conference and ranks fifth in the NCAA with a 3.62 blocking average.

Quick hitters Karissa Meith and Angee Henderson are among the national leaders in blocking average. Meith ranks 16th and Henderson is 20th.

Gregory said the Ducks are a good blocking team, but need to improve their blocking in order



FILE
Oregon's Karissa Meith will lead the Ducks at Arizona tonight.

to win against a team like USC.

The Ducks' lineup for the weekend is still undetermined because of injuries, he said.

Gregory said Henderson and swing hitter Kristen Ruschiensky, a freshman who made her first collegiate starts over the weekend, "have seen very limited practice time" this week. Co-captain Nicolle Hedberg remains sidelined with an ankle injury that already has kept her out of six matches.

In addition to difficulties presented by injuries, a young team and a tough schedule, Oregon is trying to pick up the intricacies of a new offense. Gregory said that learning the modified swing, 6-2 offensive system has improved the team. It has also meant the beginning of a learning process that is far from finished.

"The outside hitters are adjusting to their roles," Gregory said. "And the setters are still learning, too. We've only scratched the surface of the offense. We're a better hitting team, and I really think the change has paid off so far."

New coaches ready

By Andrew Scales
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

Women's volleyball has a new look at Oregon this year with first-year assistant coaches Patty Jayne and Kirsten Frazier.

Jayne, who has had coaching stints at Ohio State and Pacific University, comes to Oregon with her sights set on establishing the team as one of the best in the Pacific-10 Conference.

"If you can play competitively in the Pac-10," Jayne said, "you can play competitively with anyone."

While the Pac-10 is home to the 1992 champions and runners-up in Stanford and UCLA, respectively, Jayne has a Division II championship to her credit, playing for Portland State in 1988. In addition, she was named coach of the year by the Northwest Conference of Independent Colleges in 1991 and 1992 for her work at Pacific.

Jayne said she is eager to impart her winning attitude and experience to a young Oregon team.

"Because I was a setter in college," Jayne said, "I work specifically with the setters here. Getting them better prepared and improving their physical as well as their mental ability is impor-

tant. The setter is a combination of being a leader and a thinker. They control everything on the court and have to be thinking all the time."

Frazier is no stranger to Oregon volleyball, having played for the Ducks in the early 1980s. She coached at Churchill High School for the past six years.

This year will be Frazier's first taste of college coaching, and she said she is very excited to get started. She will be responsible for bringing in new recruits as well as focusing on defense and serving.

"I want to make us as competitive as we can be in those areas," she said.

Frazier said she would someday like to be a head coach, but as an assistant she wants to institute certain values and philosophies on the team.

"On a coaching level," Frazier said. "I want to bring a lot of intensity and heart to the team. Personally my nature is one of a communicator. I'll take time out to explain some of the whys behind whatever it is we are doing. I don't want to be a dictator. I tend to be a positive individual who wants to help players become not just good players, but good people too."

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