Volleyball gets its first Pac-10 win

By Scott Simonson

The good news was that the Oregon volleyball team played one of its best matches of the year and beat Washington on Friday night.

The bad news was that on Saturday night the Ducks rediscovered some bad habits and were drilled by a very good Washington State team.

The Ducks and Huskies both had struggled early in league play and the two seemed destined for a close match. However, Oregon controlled the contest from start to finish, winning 15-4, 15-10, 15-9

The Ducks dominated the first game, hitting .481 while the Huskies hit -.069. Washington posed more of a challenge in the second two games, but Oregon responded every time the Huskies mounted a rally or comeback

Oregon continued its improved passing and had an outstanding hitting match. The Ducks hit .330 for the match

Oregon was led by the play of quick hitters Angee Henderson, who had 10 kills and hit .563, and Karissa Meith, who had a match-high 15 kills and hit .448. The Ducks also got an excellent performance from swing hitter LaReina Woods, who had 10 kills.

The win broke Oregon's six-match losing streak and gave Oregon its first conference victory. However, the following night was a much different story. Needing a repeat of Friday's performance just to compete with the 17th-ranked Cougars, the Ducks started slowly and never seriously threatened Washington State, losing 15-8, 15-9, 15-10.

Oregon's record fell to 4-11 on the season and 1-6 in the Pac-10.

Oregon head coach Gerry Gregory gave credit to Washington State for an excellent match, but expressed disappointment with his team's play.

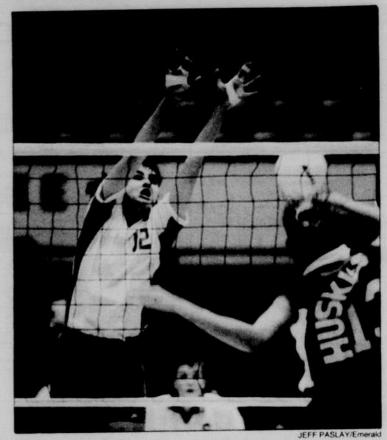
We were really pleased with the way we played last night (against Washington) and not tonight," he said. "Washington State didn't allow us to convert. A lot of the shots we hit were good ones, and they just were better than us. They blocked us or they dug us.

'But it's the unforced errors, where we get frustrated and start losing control of the ball and playing junk ball, that's what really frustrates a coach.' Gregory said.

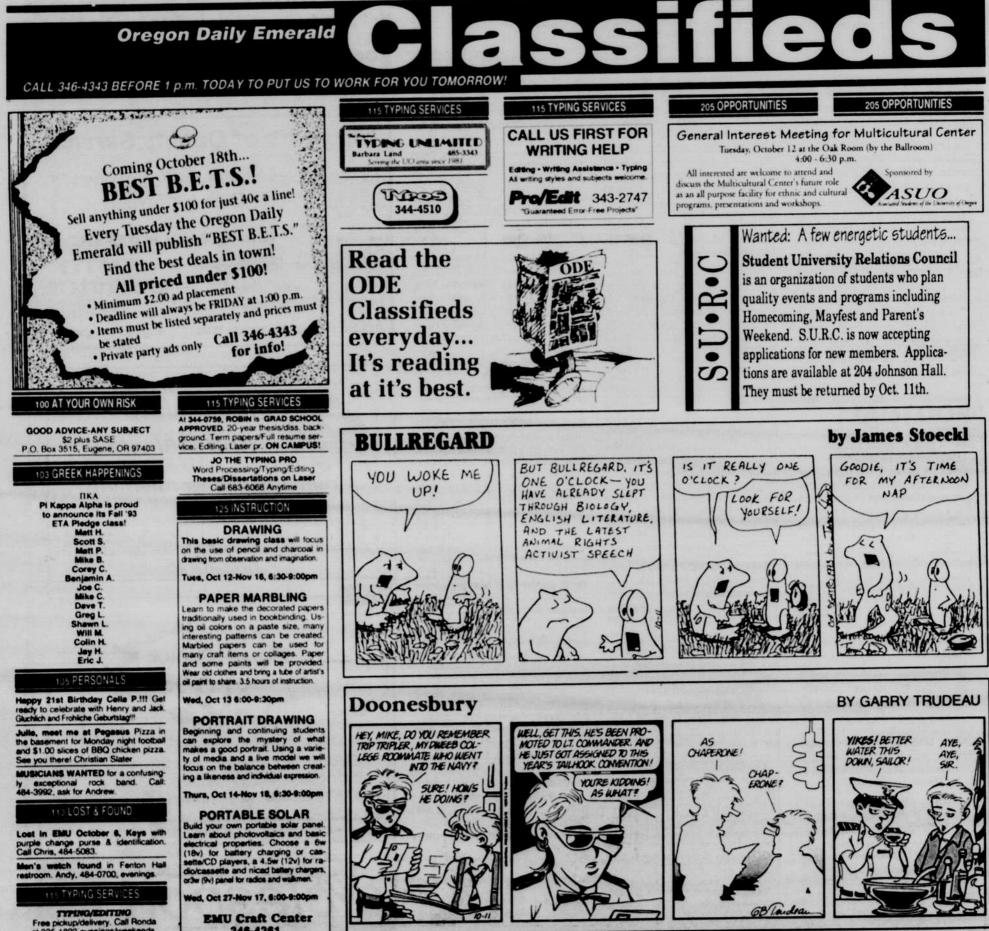
The Ducks are a young team that isn't expected to defeat opponents like Washington State, but Gregory said it wasn't the result of the match against the Cougars that disappointed him.

Win or lose, Oregon is capable of playing every match as well as they did against Washington, he said

"Our expectations are clearly set," Gregory said. "And we expect for them to perform at the level they did Friday night. That doesn't necessarily mean we win every match ... The issue isn't winning. The issue is the quality of our performance, and both were lacking (against Washington State).



Oregon's Angee Henderson had ten kills in the Ducks victory over Washington Friday night.



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