

# Ducks brace for another tough "D"

Mark McTyre

Oregon Daily Emerald

After last weekend's tough loss to Washington State, the Oregon Ducks have yet another high hurdle to get over this weekend, against the California Golden Bears (3-2 overall, 1-1 in conference).

The meeting between these two teams last year was one that many Oregon and California fans will never forget. Oregon traveled to Berkeley as a major underdog to face the 15th-ranked Bears. The Ducks posted a solid 30-7 halftime lead before a mammoth comeback by the Dave Barr-led Bears produced a stunning 42-41 California victory.

This weekend the Ducks will be running into another tough California team that is strong on both the offensive and defensive end. After starting the season with two-straight losses, California has turned its game around with three-consecutive victories to remain atop the Pacific-10 along with Arizona and Washington State. In California's first two games of the season, the Bears averaged only 13.5 points

a game, but in their last three games they are averaging over 35 points a game.

California's success this season can be largely attributed to the efforts of its defense. The Bears are giving up only 14.2 points a game in their first five games — the school's best average since 1979 when the defensive squad allowed only 11.8 points a game. The Bears' 12th-ranked defense, second best in the Pac-10, is allowing just 268 yards a game.

California's defense is most effective during the first half. The Cal defense has only allowed an average of seven points, 115.8 yards and 6.4 first downs in the first half this season and have yet to allow a point in the first quarter.

"Their defense is going to get a look at what Washington State did to us and figure they can do as much damage," Oregon head coach Rich Brooks said. "I've been very impressed with the play of their defensive front as a group."

One thing that could hamper the Bears is the injury of starting quarterback Dave Barr. During the

second quarter of the Bears win over UCLA last week, Barr went down with a broken left collar bone and is expected to be out 4-6 weeks. Backup Kerry McGonigal, a graduate of Hood River Valley High School and the 1991 Oregon 3A Player of the Year, filled in nicely for Barr against UCLA and will get the start against Oregon. Last year, McGonigal made one start for an injured Barr against Washington State completing 10 of 27 for 107 yards and a touchdown.

"California is in much the same situation without their starting quarterback that we were two weeks ago," Brooks said. "Kerry McGonigal knows what to do and he did a good job against UCLA."

The Ducks are trying to regroup for this game, but injuries are a major concern right now for the coaching staff. Oregon has lost at least two more players for an extended period of time due to injuries incurred in last weekend's game. Junior flanker Cristin McLemore (left ankle) and sophomore quarterback Tony Graziani (right ankle) are sidelined indefinitely after being sent

to the locker room in the first quarter against Washington State.

"We have work to do to just put our team back together because of the injuries we've sustained," Brooks said.

The defense is the one part of the game that is still holding tough for the Ducks this season. Senior strong safety Chad Cota finished the Washington State game with 10 tackles and helped limit the Cougar passing attack to under a 50 percent completion ratio. Two others on the defense that are playing extremely well are senior free safety Jeff Sherman and junior cornerback Alex Molden. The duo each recorded seven tackles last weekend and Molden made a hit on tailback Frank Madu that made ESPN's "Plays of the Week".

With a Duck win, Oregon could possibly move into a tie for second place in the Pac-10. If Oregon posts another loss, all chances for the Rose Bowl could be lost.

"We need to win a game this week — try to win a game, so we still have an opportunity to do something," Brooks said.

# Difficult weekend ahead for volleyball team

Kris Henry

Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon volleyball team goes up against two powerful and nationally ranked teams in Los Angeles this weekend.

Oregon faces 4th-ranked UCLA on Friday night and 15th-ranked USC on Saturday night. The Ducks are still looking for their first Pacific-10 Conference victory and also their first triumph in the City of Angels since 1990 when Oregon downed USC.

"We expect to see two great teams in USC and UCLA," Oregon coach Gerry Gregory said. "But I think they both have some weaknesses that we will try to get to. Overall, the team is ready to go and is looking forward to this weekend."

After opening the season quickly with a 6-1 mark, the Ducks have lost nine-straight matches and are 6-10 overall with an 0-7 conference record.

Oregon has had some difficulty lately after suffering injuries to two of its season opening starters in the past two weeks.

Sophomore swing hitter Amy McNeel will be out at least four weeks and possibly the season with torn ligaments in her left ankle.

The injury was sustained in the third game against Oregon State on Oct. 5. A two-year starter, McNeel was one of the team leaders in kills, digs, aces and blocks. Freshman quick hitter Dani Cordova sprained her left ankle against California on Sept. 30. She has sat out since but could possibly return to practice with the team in 1-2 weeks.

"We are a little thin right now without Cordova and McNeel," Gregory said, "but I feel somebody will step up in their place."

"There are always adjustments in a season and their injuries created learning experiences we weren't anticipating. I think the adjustments are going to start being made."

The Ducks looked confused on their assignments in last Friday's loss to Cal State Northridge. Trying to offset the loss of McNeel, Gregory shuffled the opening line-up and the new faces were not able to make adjustments. Trailing by eight or more points in each game, Oregon consistently put itself in a hole early against the Matadors and were unable to dig its way out.

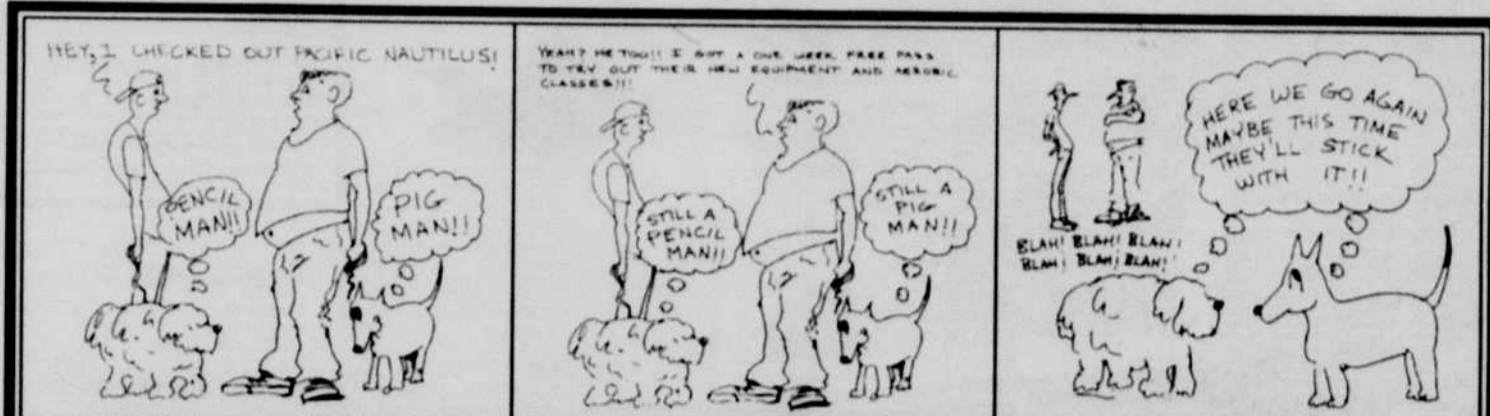
"We had some bright spots in our last two matches," Gregory said. "We just did not play well at the start of the match. Our biggest

issue is to start playing harder earlier in the match. That will be the key to how well we perform (against UCLA and USC)."

UCLA leads the rivalry with Oregon, 19-1, with the only Duck victory coming in 1987 at McArthur Court. Oregon also falls short against USC, 13-6, with the Trojans enjoying a seven match win streak. Gregory is 1-15 against UCLA and its coach Andy Banachowski. He is 6-11 versus USC and 2-8 against Trojan coach Lisa Love.

The Bruins (14-2 overall, 5-1 in conference) dropped out of a first-place tie with a loss to Stanford last weekend at home. UCLA is led by Annett Buckner, the conference leader in kills (5.18) and a .312 hitter, as well as Alyson Randick, who hits at a .371 clip. Kim Krull has a 1.68 block mark, second in the league, while Randick adds 1.54, good for fourth in the league.

USC (10-3, 4-2) is third in the league and is paced by four players with at least three kills per game. They are Kelly Kuebler (3.0), Lauri Yust (3.5), Meika Wagner (3.7) and Vesna Dragicevic (3.7). Yust is hitting .378, Wagner .319 and Dragicevic .300 in helping the team hit .277.



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