

## Fegent gets to savor Oregon a little longer

**W**hen I go to the movies, I like to get a huge tub of buttery popcorn that I can munch on throughout the show.

At first, the kernels fly into my mouth at a furious speed. I eat handfuls at a time, savoring the warm flavor as if it were the spice of the earth. About halfway through the movie, I realize that I don't have enough popcorn left to continue gulping it down at my torrid pace.

Reluctantly, I force myself to slow down and really appreciate my popcorn. As the movie draws to a close and my hand begins to scrape the bottom of the tub, I begin to eat just one kernel at a time to relish and enjoy the wonderful sensations that my popcorn gives me.

Before I know what hits me, the movie is over, and all that is left in my once-brimming tub is nothing but sticky imitation butter, salt and duds. No matter how slowly I force myself to eat the corn, I am always left wanting just one more bite after it is all gone.

Just one more nibble, one more taste to bring me back to the sweet sensations of popcorn munching. I dream of the time when I had so much uneaten corn that I thought it would never disappear.

If you haven't guessed by now, this opening passage was a metaphor of sorts. I don't know if Oregon center Renae Fegent likes popcorn or not, but these days, she must be feeling like I would if I could have just one more taste of that beautiful corn.

On Monday, Fegent was awarded an extra year of playing eligibility by the NCAA. This 1994-95 season was supposed to be her last, and the Ducks' game against Oregon State on Friday was supposed to be her regular-season finale in an Oregon uniform.

But a recent change in NCAA rules regarding eligibility for student athletes that initially enroll at a university after their 21st birthday changed all that. Fegent, who will turn 24 later this week, originally enrolled at the University when she was 22. Because the rule change in eligibility requirements was made retroactive at the 1996 NCAA coaches' convention, Fegent was given another year of playing NCAA basketball.

"I'm still kind of in shock about it," said Fegent, who is having her most productive season as a Duck. "I had never heard of anyone getting another year before or having two senior years. The NCAA usually takes years away when they can. It will be fun next year getting all the perks of being a senior twice."

"It's probably a good thing that I thought it was my last year, because I thought it was my last couple of games, so I've been giving it all I've got. Now I've got another 30 or so games to do it again."

The 6-foot-3 center and native of Frankston, Australia, has established

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## Ducks face tough field of competition

■ **SOFTBALL:** UCLA, Arizona and Washington will highlight a tough Pacific-10 Conference

By **Chris Hansen**  
Sports Reporter

The Oregon softball team hopes to improve its 6-10 record when it begins its Pacific-10 Conference schedule this weekend with games at Stanford and 10th-ranked California.

With four teams ranked in the top 10 in the national polls, the Pac-10 is arguably the best conference in the country. Defending national champion UCLA and defending Pac-10 champion Arizona are ranked No. 1 and No. 2, respectively. The Washington Huskies are ranked fourth.

With such tough competition ahead, head coach Tami Brown refuses to speculate on how successful her team will be in the conference, but she remains optimistic.

"How far we go depends solely on where the kids feel we can go," Brown said. "I am not going to say where we will place because [the Pac-10] is even stronger than it has been in the past. It is not just dominated by Arizona and UCLA any longer. It just depends on how tough we are mentally in each game and what our players decide to do when they walk on the field."

And it should help that the Ducks faced several ranked teams during their tournament play the past three weeks.

"We know that our record should be much different than it is," Brown said. "As far as the experience we gained, it should help us to fare very well."

Inconsistent play is as much to blame for the Ducks' poor record as the level of their competition. Eleven unearned runs were the Ducks' downfall this past weekend, and it was the pitching the two weekends before that.

"The only thing we can do is put them on that practice field and work them extremely hard, and I know we will do much better than we have done," Brown said.

The pitching has started to come around, led by senior ace Kim Kampfer, who is 2-3

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Senior pitcher Kim Kampfer will provide the Ducks with some needed strength and experience on the mound. Oregon softball's record is currently 6-10.

## Cornhuskers questioned about possible recruiting violations

■ **NEBRASKA:** The school is being investigated for its actions regarding the recruitment of a basketball player

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The NCAA is questioning Nebraska about its attempt in 1992 to recruit a Nigerian basketball star, the *Houston Chronicle* reported.

Coach Danny Nee has denied any wrongdoing and, specifically, an allegation that he sent \$8,400 to a North Carolina man to recruit the African player, the *Omaha World-Herald* reported in today's edition.

"It's not true," Nee said. "I'm not budging. I know what's right. We didn't mail any \$8,400 to a guy in North Carolina."

"It's like I asked the reporter from Houston, that you're telling me I talked to a guy on the phone who I've never met, and I mailed him \$8,400 in cash to bring a 7-foot African to Lincoln? I mean, c'mon," Nee told the *World-Herald*.

Al Papik, Nebraska's senior associate athletic director for rules compliance, acknowledged the NCAA has inquired about Nee's

involvement with Osita Nwachukwu, a 6-foot-8 player now a senior at Wisconsin, the *Chronicle* reported Monday.

Papik and athletic director Bill Byrne were unavailable for comment Monday night and this morning and could not be reached by The Associated Press. Nee, who has coached the Cornhuskers since 1986, also could not be reached.

The *Chronicle* detailed a series of events in a two-month period in 1992 involving Christopher Pond — a former Peace Corps volunteer who steered Hakeem Olajuwon to the United States — Nee and a former Nebraska assistant basketball coach.

The newspaper said Pond called Lynn Mitchem, then an assistant Husker coach, to tout the Nigerian player.

What transpired over the next two months between Pond and Nee is a matter of dispute.

According to the *Chronicle*, Pond claims Nee wanted him to travel to Nigeria on Nebraska's behalf and sent him \$8,400 in cash to pay for the trip. Pond said he eventually backed out of the trip but kept the cash.

## ASU coach saddened by controversy

■ **FRIEDER:** The recent arrest of three ASU recruits on suspicion of assault nearly caused Bill Frieder to retire

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP) — Disheartened by the arrests of three freshmen basketball recruits on suspicion of assault, Arizona State coach Bill Frieder said Tuesday he initially considered resigning.

However, he said he quickly reconsidered because "that would be running away from a tough situation. That would be running away from my kids."

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