

sideline

TODAY IN SPORTS

Grapplers fall early in NCAA Championships

The Oregon wrestling team finished the 1995-96 season on a low note with an unsuccessful showing at the NCAA Championships March 21-23 in Minneapolis.

Two-time all-American Kevin Roberts was eliminated in the 118-pound consolation round by Orlando de Castro Verde of Cal State Fullerton. The loss ended a brilliant career for Roberts, who finished his career tied for third on the Ducks' all-time list for career victories with 101.

Defending 150-pound Pacific-10 Conference champion Scott Norton won two consolation matches before being eliminated, ending his season as the Ducks' leader in victories with a 33-4 record.

Oregon wrestlers John Taylor, Jeremy Ensrud and Rich Polkinghorn were also eliminated early on in the tournament.

Ducks drop three matches in California

The Oregon men's tennis team had a tough spring break in California, dropping three straight matches last week.

On Tuesday, 25th-ranked UC-Irvine won all six singles matches and all three doubles matches in sweeping the Ducks 7-0. The next day the Ducks traveled to San Diego, where they lost to San Diego 4-3 despite strong performances from the doubles teams of Dougal Williams and Hans Forsberg and Carlos Navarro and Miguel Arriaga. UC-Santa Barbara then finished off the Ducks' unsuccessful spring break by handing Oregon a 5-2 loss.

Oregon finishes break with sweep of Toledo

The Oregon softball team split the six games it played during the spring break.

After being swept by the No. 2 UCLA Bruins in their two games on March 23, the Ducks split a doubleheader with Loyola Marymount the following day, losing the first game 5-1 and winning the second contest 5-1.

The Ducks swept their next doubleheader against Toledo, pulling out an eight-inning, 4-3 victory in the first game and a 3-2 victory in the second. The Ducks improved their record to 11-15 overall and 2-4 in the Pacific-10 Conference.

Ducks light up track in sunny Arizona

■ **TRACK:** Both men and women begin Pac-10 season with victories

By Pete Schneider
Sports Reporter

The Oregon men's and women's track and field teams cruised to victories over Arizona on Saturday in sunny Tucson to kick off the 1996 season.

On the men's side, the Ducks only won nine of 19 events, but the large team Oregon sent to the meet carried the team to a 104-95 victory. The women also brought a large contingent, enabling the Ducks to blow past the smaller Wildcat team, 101-75.

Sophomore sprinter Pat Johnson was his usual self, capturing victories in the 100- and 200-meter dashes while anchoring the winning 4x100 meter relay team.

Junior Chris Nelson set a personal record in the high jump competition, utilizing the near-perfect outdoor conditions to clear 7-2½ feet. The jump met the NCAA provisional standard, one of two such performances

for Oregon during the meet. The other was a second-place showing by Karl Keska in the 1,500-meter race. The marks give Nelson and Keska consideration for an appearance in the NCAA Championships, scheduled for late May.

The men also garnered key victories with Darrell Bushnell winning the 110-meter hurdles, Paul Pappas taking honors in the pole vault, Jim Lile capturing the javelin title and Scott Nicholas winning the 3,000-meter steeplechase.

In the women's field, senior LaReina Woods sprinted to wins in the 100- and 200-meter dashes. The wins were the first two for Woods, as she skipped the Oregon Preview on March 23 to attend the wedding of teammate Lisa Bidwell. Woods edged Arizona's Dawn Mortensen in both races, winning by .02 of a second both times.

Junior Nicole Commission also secured two wins on the day, anchoring the 4x100 relay and beating out the 1994 Pacific-10 Conference champion Karen Bennett in the 800-meter run.

Sophomore Jennifer Thomas, who visited an Arizona hospital emergency room on Friday with severe stomach cramps, rallied Saturday to win the high jump competition with a jump of 5-7 and came in second in the 100-meter hurdles, behind Arizona's All-American Michelle Johnson.

Despite the high altitude in Tucson, the Oregon women posted a strong showing in the distance events. All-American Milena Glusac won the 1,500 and Vicky Fischer placed second. Melody Fairchild, another Oregon All-American runner, finished second in the 3,000-meter race despite being slowed by illness during the past week.

The women also collected victories by Katie Pearmine in the javelin, Valerie Sweitzer in the shot put, Tamara Schurch in the long jump and Kristen Kutella in the triple jump.

Both teams now look forward to returning home to Hayward Field next Saturday for a dual meet versus Washington State and Stanford. It will be the first of three consecutive home meets for the Oregon teams.

Oregon signs Bellotti to new 5-year contract

■ **FOOTBALL:** The Oregon football coach will also receive a \$95,000 raise

By Trevor Kearney
Sports Editor

Barring any major mishaps, Mike Bellotti will coach the Oregon football team into the next century.

Last week Bellotti signed a five-year, \$270,000 contract that will keep him at the Ducks' helm through the year 2000. The second-year coach will be paid \$130,000 from institutional funds and another \$140,000 from other sources such as the Oregon Sports Network, which produces the weekly *Mike Bellotti Show*.

The contract comes after a successful first year for Bellotti, as he guided the Ducks to a 9-3 overall record, including a third-place Pacific-10 Conference record and a Cotton Bowl invitation. The Ducks ended the season ranked No. 18 in both the *USA Today/CNN* and *Associated Press* Top 25 polls.

Bellotti was hired as the Ducks' offensive coordinator by Rich Brooks in 1989 and was promoted to head coach when Brooks accepted a job with the St. Louis Rams prior to the 1995 spring drills.

According to a statement from athletic director Bill Moos last week, the contract does have provisions that "protect both parties," mainly a cash buyout for the party that does not initiate the breakup of the contract.

After the Ducks lost both their offensive and defensive coordinators from last year, the contract extension is a refreshing change to the list of Oregon football coaching transactions.

"I am proud and pleased to continue my association with the University of Oregon," Bellotti said in last week's statement. "In fact, I consider it a lasting commitment on both of our parts to the football program at Oregon. I'm thankful for the efforts of Bill Moos and the administration in



Oregon head football coach Mike Bellotti signed a five-year contract last week, topping off a successful first year in which he guided the Ducks to a berth in the Cotton Bowl and an 18th-place national ranking.

structuring a package that's competitive in the open market. I consider this a vote of confidence that they choose to offer me this kind of contract, one that allows me to do what I've wanted to do all along, remain at Oregon in this capacity."

And specifically, Moos believes that the contract will set a tone in which the Ducks can

continue to build upon the recent success of the football program.

"This contract illustrates that we perceive ourselves as a high-quality program of which coaches aspire to be a part. With that philosophy, we feel we can continue to build a successful athletic program and, more specifically, an outstanding football program."

"This agreement exemplifies a continuing commitment by the University to its athletic programs," Bellotti said. "The continuity should allow us to enhance our recruiting, provide for the security of our assistant coaches and continue the evolution of Oregon football, including facility and program improvements."