

Sports  
reporting is  
an adventure

First let me say that Andrea needs to get a clue."

Yes, it has been a wonderful year for me.

When I was hired as a sports reporter last June, I was asked in my interview if I expected my gender to play a role in my job. I knew that it would, but I told the men who hired me that I could take any sort of heat, and I could handle being a woman in a male-dominated profession.

Was I wrong? Many people thought so, especially after a couple columns I wrote at the end of the year.

I had people tell me that it took a lot of "balls" to write an anti-Blazers column in the state of Oregon. Problem is, I am a woman. I have no "balls" in the first place.

Others told me that I was suicidal. My mother was even surprised that I had the "guts" to write the column because

she always considered me to be thin-skinned.

I'd like to say that I didn't expect to get the outrage that I was subjected to, but I did. I knew the letters would come, I just didn't expect them to attack me so personally.

I was called "an ignorant piece of #S%!", a "dumb chick," and a "bitch" just to name a few. Wow! I was perfectly content with people not agreeing with my opinions, but I now have the feeling that I am the most hated person in sports.

Did this have anything to do with the fact that I am a woman? If one of the men on the sports staff had written a similar column, would they have gotten seven letters?

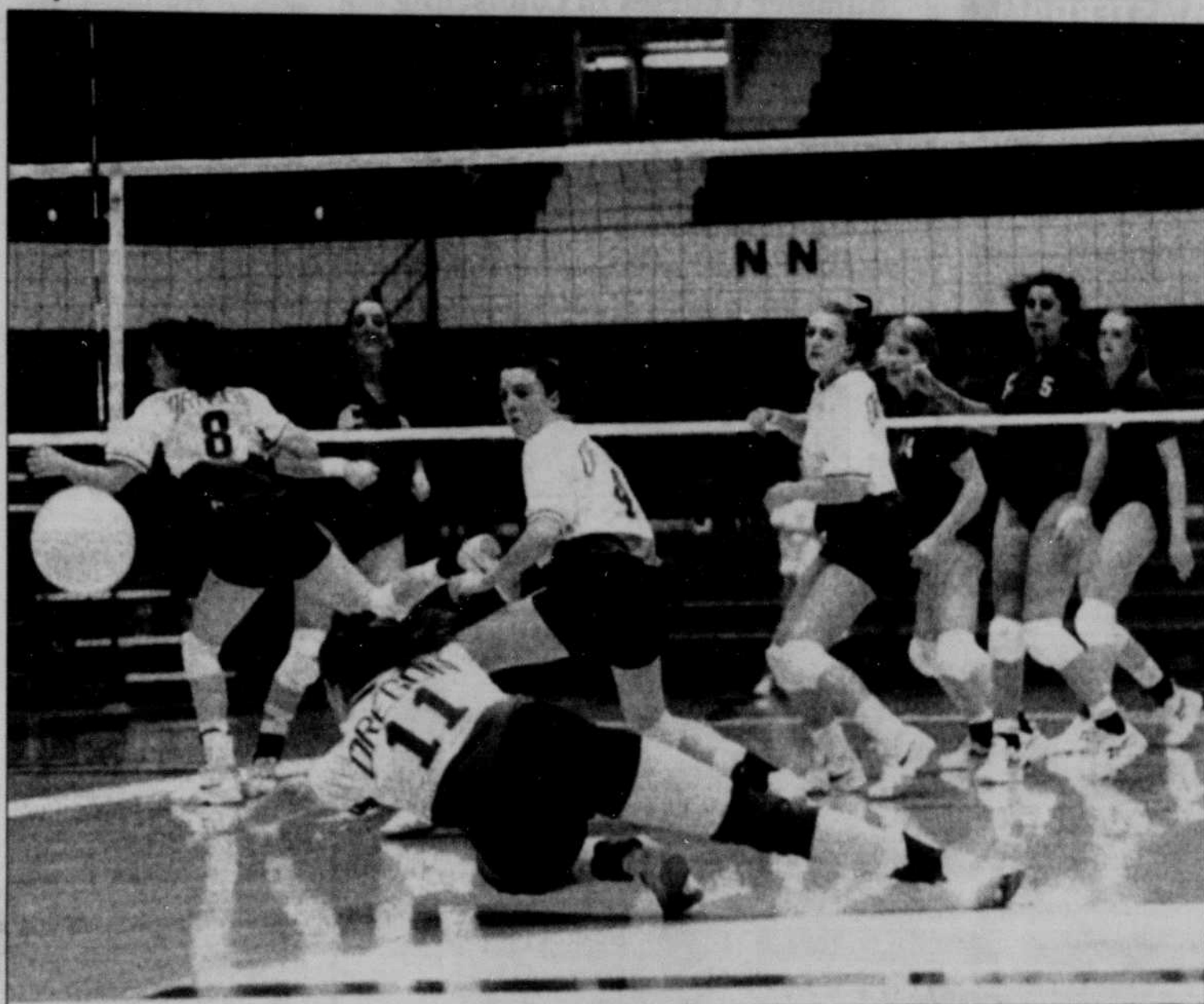
My co-workers tell me they are envious that I got so many responses. My total for the year was 11 letters to the editor, phone calls, or e-mail messages.

That's about 11 more than anybody else got. They tell me that means people are actually reading my columns. I guess I should feel special. But it's hard to feel good about your writing when it's getting responses like "DeYoung annoys, should be forced out of Oregon."

Actually, I did get some positive responses about my columns, even the Blazers one. Unfortunately, supporters never bother to write letters to the editor.

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## Slip and slide



Junior Lara Weigel dives for the ball as junior Amy McNeel (left) and sophomores Shelby Edwards (middle) and Tia Stewart (right) look on. The volleyball team won only one Pacific-10 Conference match, but it wasn't for lack of effort as they took many matches to five games.

ANDREW BRACKENSKI/ Emerald

## Colorado beats Florida with second-period flurry

■ **HOCKEY:** Avalanche took Game 1 of the Stanley Cup Finals from the Panthers 3-1

DENVER (AP) — The Florida Panthers had surprised three consecutive playoff opponents with Game 1 victories. This time, there was no surprise — except on the Panthers.

The Colorado Avalanche finally solved Florida's suffocating defense and super-steady goaltender John Vanbiesbrouck with a three-goal flurry in 3:49 of the second period and won the Stanley Cup opener 3-1 Tuesday night.

Scott Young swung the momentum to the Avalanche and their pompom-waving fans with a seemingly soft goal that defused the importance of several early Florida defensive stands.

Mike Ricci and Uwe Krupp quickly followed with goals as Colorado seized what history shows is often a series-swinging victory.

"We came out a little hesitant in the first period," Ricci said. "They played very solid hockey; they work very hard. We didn't come out with our best effort. We picked it up a little bit, got our forecheck going, and we caught a couple of breaks."

Since the NHL switched to a best-of-7 playoff format, the Game 1 winner has gone on to win 45 of 57 Stanley Cup championships, just as the New Jersey Devils did in upsetting the Detroit Red Wings last season.

Game 2 will be Thursday night in Denver before the Stanley Cup takes its most southerly swing ever by shifting to Miami for Game 3 on Saturday night.

The Panthers, whose unyielding defense is similar to the Devils' oft-copied neutral zone trap, were 3-0 in Game 1s before Tuesday, beating Boston, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. But Colorado countered with a more telling statistic — a 34-20 second-period playoff scoring advantage.

Patrick Roy, who already owns two Stanley Cup rings and is trying for a third with a team that was still the Quebec Nordiques a year ago, preserved the lead with 25 saves in his record-setting 133rd playoff start.

He broke the record set by Billy Smith, formerly of the New York Islanders and now Florida's goaltending coach.

The Panthers, making the cup finals in only their third season of existence, weren't supposed to be here — and in Colorado's fatal and near flawless second period, they weren't.

Maybe it was the mile-high atmosphere getting to a team that stockpiled canisters of oxygen in their dressing room. Or maybe it was effects of playing a third critical game in a six-day span during which the Avalanche only relaxed.

But the Panthers fell as flat as the McNichols Arena ice midway through the second period after their defense dictated the early tempo, and playoff star Tom Fitzgerald's

goal at 16:51 gave them a 1-0 lead.

Florida had just killed Colorado's second power play of the period when Young deftly sailed a 25-foot slap shot by a screened-off Vanbiesbrouck's left shoulder at 10:32 of the second.

Vanbiesbrouck, whose 93.7 save percentage was the best of the playoffs, likes to stay low to prevent tip-ins and deflections and never seemed to read Young's shot as it came out of a crowd of three players.

With the momentum now shifting their way for the first time, the Avalanche seemed convinced Vanbiesbrouck was beatable. And he was.

Ricci, making up for a subpar regular season, made it 2-1 at 12:21, taking the puck off the back boards and directing it by Vanbiesbrouck while falling face-first into the net.

After that, it was the Panthers' offense that fell flat, managing only five shots in the period.

Fitzgerald, who had game-winning goals in Games 1 and 7 in the Eastern Conference finals against Pittsburgh, took advantage of a rare Colorado defensive breakdown to score the first goal.

Three Colorado players converged on Bill Lindsay, allowing Fitzgerald to chop the puck by an unaided Roy at 16:51 for his sixth career playoff goal. Fitzgerald has four goals in Florida's last eight playoff games after scoring only 13 all season.