

Ducks fight but lose to Cal, Stanford

■ **VOLLEYBALL:** Oregon takes a game from the Cardinal for the first time in 13 matches

By Ryan Halvorsen
Sports Reporter

Oregon dropped two hard-fought battles to California and Stanford over the weekend, winning one game in each match.

The Ducks were not expected to put up much of a fight against Pacific-10 Conference leading Stanford, and after two games it didn't look like they were going to. Stanford won the first two games, 15-4 and 15-2 respectively.

Stanford started its reserves in the third game and Oregon jumped all over them, building a 12-7 lead before the Cardinal big hitters returned. Stanford's starters couldn't do much to thwart the Ducks' winning effort as Oregon took game three, 15-9.

Alli White had two scoring stuff-blocks and a kill to lead Oregon in the third game. Alison Pepe served for five-straight points to put Stanford away.

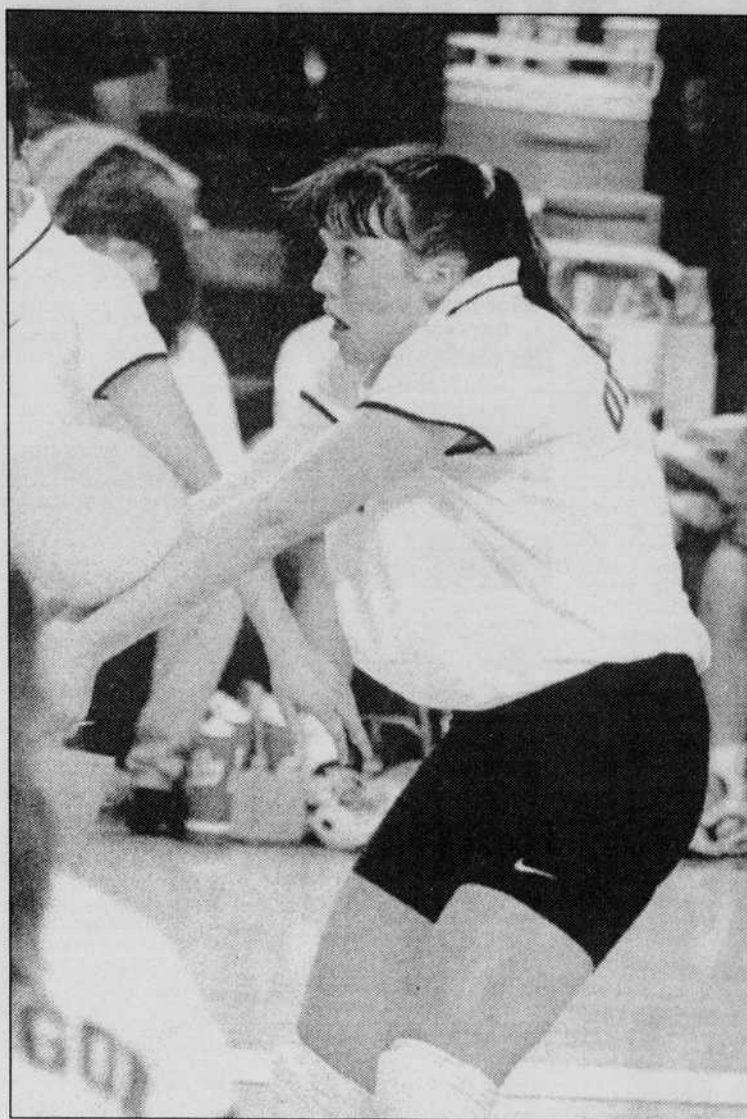
"The first two games we didn't even show up and the second two games we really fought hard," Oregon head coach Cathy Nelson said. "We can play with anyone in this conference if we play well. We are in control of our own destiny. When we play well we're a good team, and when we fall apart that's when we tend to struggle."

Before that win Oregon had not won a game against Stanford in 13 matches.

The Cardinal came back tough in the fourth game behind the hard-hitting versatility of freshman, Kerri Walsh. Walsh had eight kills in the fourth game, leading Stanford to a 15-4 victory. Walsh had 17 kills in the match against only two hitting errors.

"I think Kerri Walsh is the best player in the country and she's a freshman. I was concerned about Kerri Walsh, she does way too many things," Nelson said.

Tia Stewart led Oregon with 10 kills and White added nine. Amy Barnes had seven kills and 11 digs against the Cardinal.



Alli White came away with 10 digs against California Friday night.

ANDREW BRACKENSICK/Emerald

Oregon had hopes of taking the victory against California on Friday night, but those hopes were dashed in the third game of the match.

Oregon fought hard in the first game, but lost 17-15 to the Golden Bears. The Ducks came back to take the second game, 15-8, and seemed to have the momentum going into the third, but that was when things started to fall apart for the Ducks. Oregon gave up six aces to California and only mustered up three side-outs as the Golden Bears ran away with a 15-0 victory. California went on to win the fourth game, 15-6, and take the match.

"We just lost focus," Pepe said, "that wasn't even our team, we don't do that in practice. I don't know what happened, and hopefully we'll never do it again."

Oregon tallied up 18 kills in the second game and 46 in the match against California. Michelle Christ led Oregon with 10 kills, Barnes had eight kills and 18 digs and White had eight kills and 10 digs. Pepe came away with 13 digs.

Jessica Dinaberg led California with 13 kills and 13 digs and Michelle Wickman added five service aces for the Golden Bears.

The two losses drop the Ducks to 0-8 in the Pac-10 and 6-12 overall for the season.

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