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Ducks to be tested on road trip

■ **WRESTLING:** Oregon faces four tough teams, including two nationally ranked squads, in four days

By Ryan Halvorsen
Sports Reporter

A four-day, four-match road trip is never pleasant, but this one may be extra challenging for the Oregon wrestling squad. The Ducks, undefeated in the Pacific-10 Conference at 3-0, will travel to California to face conference foes Stanford tonight, Cal Poly on Friday, 12th-ranked Cal State Bakersfield on Saturday and non-conference opponent, 16th-ranked Fresno State on Sunday.

The Ducks were tied for 29th in the last coaches' poll but are expected to move up after their defeat of 18th-ranked Oregon State last week. Two Oregon wrestlers are also in the top ten in the nation in their weight classes going into this weekend. Scott Norton (19-1) is sixth at 150 pounds and Jeremy Ensrud (9-4) is eighth at 134 pounds.

Norton, who has been competing this season at 158 pounds to wrestle against tougher competition, will come back down to his usual 150 pounds this weekend against the California schools. Norton needs only five more wins to reach 100 career victories at Oregon, a feat that only six other

wrestlers have accomplished in school history. Sean Morgan (9-5) and Jake Sellers (5-7) are slated to fill the gap at 158.

The Ducks have five wrestlers ranked in the top four in the Pac-10 going into this weekend. Norton is first in his class and Ensrud is second. Kevin Keeney is third at 167 as is David Perkins at 126.



Royce Repenn is ranked fourth at 190 pounds.

Stanford is the only team out of this California group that the Ducks have been able to contain in recent years. Oregon has won 10 out of the last 11 meetings between the two schools. The Cardinal only has one wrestler ranked in the top four in the Pac-10 this year — Scott Chapman who is ranked fourth at 167 pounds.

Cal Poly is another story, having wrestlers ranked in the top four in the conference in seven out of the 10 weight classes. Oregon dropped their last match with the Mustangs a year ago at McArthur Court 22-15.

With two wrestlers ranked in the top five in the nation, Cal State Bakersfield will be the Ducks' most formidable opponent of the trip. Oregon has lost the last four matches against the Roadrunners,

the last victory dating back to 1992.

Stephen Neal is the third-ranked heavyweight in the nation and Jason Ramstetter is fifth in the nation at 142 pounds for the Roadrunners.

The Ducks haven't beaten Fresno State since 1991, five meets ago, but as Oregon State witnessed last week, winning streaks don't last forever.

"They are all pretty tough teams," Oregon head coach Ron Finley said. "Stanford is much improved and they have some sound wrestlers on their team. They are doing quite well this year. Cal Poly is a fairly tough team and then Bakersfield and Fresno State are both nationally ranked, so I think it's going to be a pretty challenging road trip for us."

Finley is also closing in on a milestone in his career. He is just four wins short of 300 career victories, easily placing him as the all-time winningest coach at Oregon. Finley has 182 more wins than all of his predecessors combined.

"It means you've been in the game for a long time," Finley said. "There are only 16 dates that you get so it's pretty hard to build up very many wins in a year. It's been a long time trying to reach 300, and we're four away from it at this point. Hopefully we can make it this year."

WNBA dishes out top players to teams

■ **BASKETBALL:** All eight franchises received two players to start their rosters with

The Associated Press

SECAUCUS, N.J. — The Women's NBA is here for the long haul and already thinking about expansion, the league's president said Wednesday as the eight teams received their first two players.

Speaking on a variety of issues after the league's first 16 players were allocated, Val Ackerman said there was no timetable for expansion, although some NBA franchises have inquired about operating a women's team.

Ackerman said that the most important thing is for the original teams to be successful the first season.

Ackerman said the league is considering downsizing arenas for games after the season starts in June. She said there will be a team salary cap, which she would not disclose, and that college players would not be allowed to leave school early to join the league, which is owned equally by the 29 NBA teams.

The eight-team league will start June 21 and finish Aug. 30. The teams will play 28 games.

Houston will play in the Eastern Conference with New York, Cleveland and Charlotte. The Western Conference will have franchises in Los Angeles, Phoenix, Sacramento and Utah.

Sheryl Swoopes, regarded by many as the top women's player, was assigned to Houston along with

guard Cynthia Cooper. Swoopes is expecting a baby on June 21, the day the league begins its first season.

Fellow Olympic gold medalist Lisa Leslie was assigned to Los Angeles along with guard Penny Toler. Phoenix got Australian Olympian Michele Timms and Jennifer Gillom. Sacramento was assigned Ruthie Bolton-Holifield and Bridgette Gordon, and Utah got Russian Olympian Elena Baranova and Lady Hardmon.

Former Connecticut star Rebecca Lobo was assigned to New York with Teresa Weatherspoon. Janice Lawrence Braxton and Michelle Edwards went to Cleveland, and Vicky Bullett and Andrea Stinson were assigned to Charlotte.

Ackerman said the league plans to sign another 16 players soon and assign them by the end of February. A draft will be held on April 28.

"This is definitely a dream come true," Swoopes said. "We sit home and watch the draft, and we see the men getting their caps and everything when they know what team they are going to. It's great to see we're having that same opportunity. It definitely brings a lot of excitement."

Ackerman wouldn't speculate about how much money each team would have to make to break even.

"This is something that will have to build over a period of time," she said. "We are 50 years behind where the NBA is and many years behind where women's college basketball is. We're in it for the long haul."

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12	Wed	5:00-9:00	1st Aid
17	Mon	5:00-9:00	Adult
18	Tues	5:00-9:00	1st Aid
19	Wed	6:00-10:00	Child/Infant
24	Mon	5:00-9:00	1st Aid
26	Wed	5:00-9:00	Adult

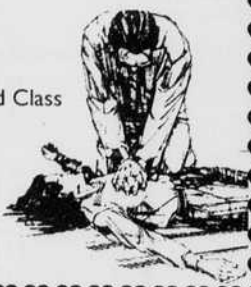
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