

Club rugby struggles at tourney

■ **CLUB SPORTS:** Oregon goes winless over the weekend but gains some confidence from a strong showing in the final game

By Alex Pond
Freelance Sports Reporter

The Oregon Club rugby team ran into some tough competition at the UC Davis Cup Tournament last weekend, going 0-3 on the trip.

The Ducks got the tournament started by losing 15-14 to Travis Air Force Base in a game that was every bit as close as the final score indicates.

Oregon led all the way until Travis Air Force Base scored in the final five minutes to take the lead and eventually the victory. Keith Hegger and Cal Taylor each scored a try for the Ducks in that

game.

Next up for Oregon was national power UC Davis, and the Aggies showed why that is with a shutout victory of the Ducks.

"They are one of the top teams in the nation," student coordinator Alex Thomas said. "They just beat us in every part of the game."

CLUB SPORTS

The tournament resumed on Sunday, with the Ducks finding their way to the final of the "B" side of the tournament bracket when some other teams dropped out.

In that game, the Ducks faced UC Davis' "B" team.

They started off slowly and found themselves down 15-0 at halftime but rallied with a superb second half before eventually

falling 20-10. Mike Grippi, with his first try of the season, and Alex Sroka, with a conversion and a penalty kick, accounted for Oregon's scoring.

"We dominated the second half," Thomas said. "We were on their side of the field the whole second half, and it was good to end the tourney on a positive note."

"That was probably the best half of rugby we have played this year. We played together really well as a team. If we played like we did in that second half for an entire game, we can probably beat most [teams]."

Unfortunately for the Ducks, they came up a bit short and were left winless at the tournament.

Oregon will get a chance to bounce back this Saturday with a game at Lewis and Clark College.

Frank: Ducks beat Pilots, yet not ranked

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ahead of the Ducks that does not.

The Portland Pilots.

The Pilots are just two spots out of the AP top 25, and are No. 23 in the USA Today poll. They are 27-2, which is one of the nation's best records, but take a glance at their schedule.

The West Coast Conference is not exactly a hotbed for the national powers in women's basketball. Three of the seven teams in the conference have at least 22 losses.

In addition, Portland lost to the Ducks 76-65 back in December.

Considering the recent trend in voting, for a Pac-10 team other than Stanford to make the top 25, it is going to have to beat the only conference team in the top 25.

In all reality, the AP voters probably don't have any clue how close the Ducks were to beating the Cardinal. Nor do they have any idea how many times Oregon has been to the NCAA Tournament. In fact, the sportswriters are lucky if they check the weekend scores before voting for their respective top 25.

And the same goes for the coaches' poll.

So it appears the only way the Ducks will be playing their way into the top 25 this season is with a trip to the Sweet 16 three weeks from now.

Maybe that would earn them some much deserved respect.

Ryan Frank is a sports reporter for the Emerald. His views do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



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