

# Duck: Ensrud ranks fourth in nation

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To say that Ensrud is cat-quick is more than a little misleading. There are few cats, if any, that could throw down a 130-pound man in this manner. A violent frenzy of lunges and leg curls, a twitch of his right arm and Ensrud's prey had fallen. It never had a chance.

"He is an attacker," Finley says. "That's something that will never change. He is a very intense wrestler who doesn't really think about what he's doing on the mat; he just reacts."

"He does things with athleticism that you don't see many people do. He is so much fun to watch."

Ensrud's teammates wouldn't have him any other way.

"He is one of the definite leaders on this team," 158-pound junior Sean Morgan says. "He leads by keeping the team loose in the locker room and is always joking around with everyone."

He leads on the mat as well. Ensrud was the only Duck who won his championship match last Saturday at the Great Plains Tournament in Lincoln, Neb. As improbable as No. 30 Oregon's win was, Ensrud hasn't played the underdog role often in his

## Jeremy Ensrud File



■ **YEAR:**  
Senior  
■ **SIZE:**  
5-foot-4,  
134  
pounds

■ **STATS:**  
Ranks first in Pac-10 at 134 pounds... ranks fourth in the nation in weight class ... has compiled a 19-1 record this season ... defending Pac-10 champion at 134 pounds ... All-American last season

wrestling career.

During his redshirt freshman season in 1994-95, Ensrud defeated the Pac-10's premiere 126-pound wrestler in the finals of the Southern Oregon Open in Ashland. Hours later he was named the tournament's most outstanding wrestler. Days later he received his first conference ranking — fourth of the 10 conference wrestlers in his weight class.

"It was a pretty good feeling," Ensrud says. "I was surprised at first. I didn't really know what it meant."

Needless to say, Ensrud has overcome his confusion. Amateur Wrestling News currently ranks him as the nation's fourth-best wrestler at 134 pounds. But Ensrud has defeated two of the three wrestlers ranked ahead of him in the standings this season.

The difference is confidence.

"I've become more confident in myself," Ensrud says. "I've learned how to keep my composure in big events and learned how not to get upset. I think that's something that a lot of wrestlers never learn, how to keep control of yourself during a match."

Ensrud is currently ranked eighth on Oregon's all-time wins list with 90. He is just two wins shy of Curt Strahm's career mark and another eight away from sixth-place wrestler Danny Vidiak. At his current pace, he will eclipse both wrestlers by the end of the season and possibly crack into the top-five.

But that too is the end of the story. Ensrud still has 12 matches and nearly 100 practices to go.

# Moseley: Not even defending champs receive due respect

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Last season, the Pac-10 placed four teams in the NCAA's Sweet Sixteen, including conference champion UCLA, Stanford, California and eventual national champion Arizona. The Wildcats won the tournament by defeating three of the four No. 1 seeds after finishing their conference schedule in fifth place.

This season, UCLA couples a talented group of veterans with the top recruit in the country and the Cardinal finds itself ranked seventh in the nation on the strength of a tremendously deep front-court and a clutch group of shooters. But the kicker is that Arizona returns all five starters and its top three reserves from that title team. That amounts to 98 percent of the team's production from last season, when they finished fifth yet won the national title.

And the Pac-10 is still only the seventh-best conference in the country?

Hell, even the bad teams deserve more respect than that. Both Arizona State and Oregon State currently have more wins than they did all of last season, and the Pac-

10's least talented team, Washington State, is 7-5!

All of this amounts to undeniable proof that the Pac-10 is, at worst, the nation's third-best conference in basketball, and with the No. 1 ACC invisible in football, in my mind the Pac-10 can easily stake a claim to the title of the nation's best.

Following the presentation of the Heisman Trophy in recognition of the nation's top college football player to Michigan defensive back Charles Woodson, ESPN reported that the governor of Tennessee, believing Volunteer quarterback Peyton Manning more deserving of the honor, signed a petition claiming regional bias among the Heisman voters.

More appropriate, I think, would be for the commissioner of the Pac-10 to circulate a petition claiming that same regional bias among the coaches of the NCAA, who go to sleep every night unaware that at that very moment, championship level football and basketball is being played on the other side of the country.

Rob Moseley is a sports reporter for the Emerald

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