

## Cook will sit out games with PSU

Head coach Rick Gamez will take out ace Jennie Cook in the hopes of finding a No. 2 starter

By Joel Hood  
Sports Reporter

With two games at nonconference foe Portland State scheduled today, the Oregon softball team has reached the eye of the Pacific-10 Conference storm.

But that doesn't mean the No. 21 Ducks aren't taking these games seriously, head coach Rick Gamez said.

"Every game from here on out will be important to us," Gamez said. "We can't afford to have any mental breakdowns, and we can't take this team lightly."

That being said, ace Jennie Cook (17-9) is not scheduled to start in either game and will likely not pitch until Saturday's matchup with No. 22 Oregon State in Corvallis.

Instead, Gamez will start freshmen Bethany Smith (10-4) and Christine Birnbaum (3-1) in the hopes of finding a solid No. 2 starter for the homestretch. Smith and Birnbaum each pitched in a 4-0 loss to Stanford last weekend.

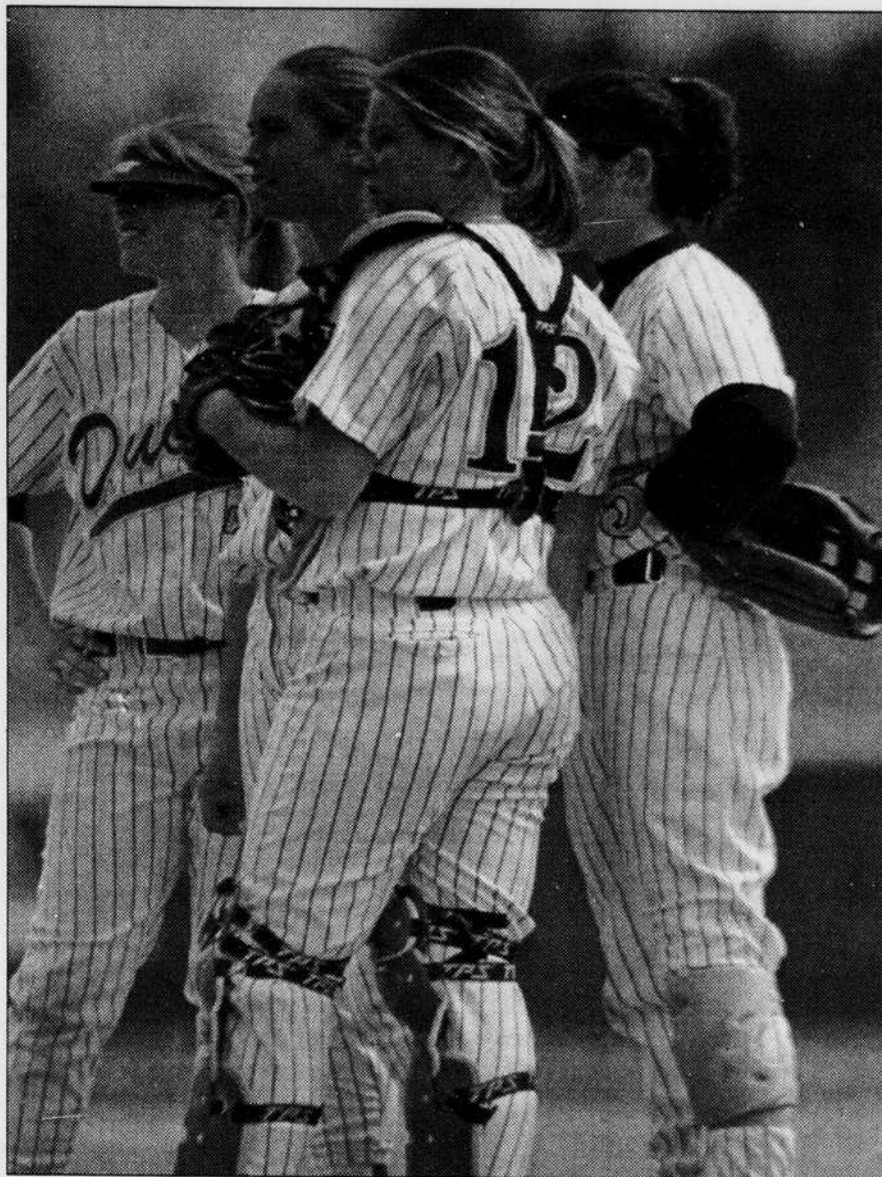
"The key to the rest of our season could be finding a capable second starter," Gamez said. "A lot of that depends on what happens against Portland State."

Smith no-hit the Vikings on March 13 to improve her record to 6-0 for the season. However, since that game Smith is 4-4, including losses in her last three starts.

Against the No. 13 Cardinal on Sunday, Smith allowed two runs and three hits in three innings of work. Birnbaum, a native of Phoenix, Ariz., came on in relief and allowed two runs and four hits in four innings.

With three conference victories in its last four games, Oregon (31-14 overall, 4-4 Pac-10) looks to keep momentum before entering the heart of the Pac-10 schedule. For Portland State and second-year head coach Teri Mariani, today's doubleheader

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Oregon softball players appear puzzled during Sunday's loss to Stanford. The Ducks hope to figure out how to beat Portland State in a doubleheader today.

NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

## Ducks flop on final day of tourney

The Oregon men's golf team finished up a disappointing tournament in 18th place with a final-round 310

By Tim Pyle  
Freelance Sports Reporter

Instead of bouncing back with a strong final round at the Western Intercollegiate in Santa Cruz, Calif., as head coach Steve Nosler had hoped, the Oregon men's golf team had its worst round of the tournament Tuesday.

After shooting a final-round 310 as a team, the Ducks finished 18th out of 20 teams at the par-71, 6,483-yard Pasatiempo Golf Course.

Nosler said he expected the Ducks to play well in the final round after struggling in the first two rounds Monday. Oregon shot a first-round 297 and a second-round 295 for a 592 score that placed it in 17th place heading into the final round.

However, the Ducks failed to fulfill their coach's expectations with their final-round score, which was the fourth-worst in the field.

UC Santa Barbara won the team title by four strokes over second-place San Jose State by shooting a 567 total. In third place and eight strokes behind first-day leader Long Beach State, the Gauchos captured first place even though they had their worst score (293) of the three rounds Tuesday.

The 49ers dropped like a rock in the final round with a 313 score to finish in ninth place.

UC Santa Barbara also claimed the individual championship as Naoya Takemoto won with a 211 total by one stroke over Kansas' Chris Thompson. Takemoto's team-



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## Evans named ASU's head coach

The ASU athletic director says he believes Rob Evans can rebuild the Sun Devils' program 'brick by brick'

By Rob Moseley  
Sports Reporter

Rob Evans, the 1997 Southeastern Conference coach of the year, was named head coach at Arizona State by Sun Devils athletic director Kevin White in Tempe on Tuesday.

Evans, 51, replaces interim head coach Don Newman, who took over for Bill Frieder less than a year ago and led the Sun Devils to 18 wins and an appearance in the National Invitation Tournament this season. Arizona State lost to Hawaii in the first round of the NIT.

"Arizona State University is a position that has great opportunity," Evans said. "I want to win championships, and the potential is here to win them."

Evans compiled an 86-81 record in six seasons at Mississippi, taking the Rebels from 10-18 in 1992-93 to their second straight SEC West title and a 22-7 record this past season.

"We were looking for someone to rebuild this program, brick by brick," White said. "[Evans is] someone who has showed he is able to do just that."

The sportswriters' choice as SEC coach of the year in 1996-97, Evans was the Basketball Times' all-South coach of the year

this season after leading the Rebels to a No. 4 seed in the NCAA Tournament. They lost in the first round, 70-69, on a last-second three-pointer by Valparaiso's Bryce Drew.

It was the Rebels' second consecutive NCAA appearance, the first back-to-back appearance by Mississippi in school history.

White first encountered Evans while White's son Michael, now a junior at Mississippi, was being recruited.

"I wondered what the [Ratings Percentage Index] of Ole Miss was back in those days," White said. "They were 226 out of 300 schools in Division I. Today they are 10th. This is clearly a program that has come a very long way in a short amount of time."

Before arriving in Oxford, Miss., in March 1992, Evans served as an assistant under Eddie Sutton at Oklahoma State for two years. Prior to that, he worked for 15 years as an assistant to Gerald Myers at Texas Tech.

Arizona State loses Pacific-10 Conference leading scorer Jeremy Veal and his 20.8 points per game, as well as Veal's backcourt mate, Ahlon Lewis, to graduation this season. Evans will be able to build around the nucleus of juniors Mike Batiste and Bobby Lazor and sophomores Eddie House and Jason Patton.

Lazor, the 1997-98 Pac-10 newcomer of

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## Smith rejoins team following suspension



SMITH

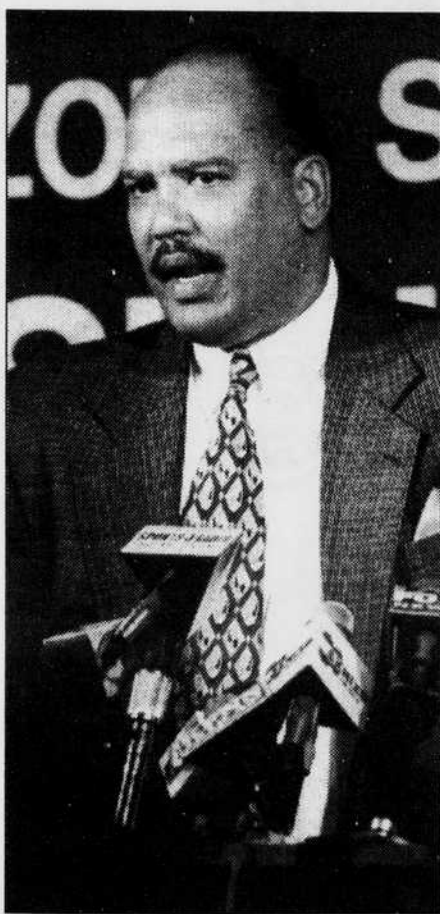
Oregon quarterback Akili Smith, who was suspended indefinitely in February for the alleged violation of team conduct policy, has rejoined the team, according to head coach Mike Bellotti.

Smith rejoined the Ducks on Tuesday and took part in the Ducks' second workout of spring practice, which began Monday.

Bellotti said Smith had fulfilled the conditions set forth by the head coach for reinstatement.

Smith was suspended following two brushes with the law in February. The first saw criminal charges filed against Smith as a result of an incident at the Mill Camp on Feb. 1. Smith also was cited by Eugene police for driving under the influence on Feb. 14.

Smith started seven games as a junior last season and helped lead the Ducks to a 7-5 record and a Las Vegas Bowl win over Air Force. Smith threw for 1,385 yards and 13 touchdowns last season.



ARIZONA STATE MEDIA RELATIONS

Don Newman was let go as Arizona State's head men's basketball coach after leading the Sun Devils to 18 wins in his first season.