

Foundations laid for future

The Oregon men's tennis team hopes to make a return trip to regionals next season

By Tim Pyle
 Sports Reporter

In a season of firsts for the Oregon tennis programs, one player from both the men's and women's teams are competing in the NCAA Individual Championships next week for the first time ever.

Erwan Kergroach and Alina Wygonowska, Oregon's No. 1

OREGON TENNIS

Season Review

players throughout the season for the men's and women's teams, are still playing, but their teams are done until next fall.

Kergroach's stellar play provided one of many season highlights for the men's team, while Wygonowska's rise to national prominence was one of the few bright spots the injury-plagued women's team enjoyed.

The men's team (11-13 overall, 0-7 Pacific-10 Conference) capped its debut season in the combined Pac-10 — up until this season it consisted of Northern and Southern Divisions — with its first-ever appearance in the NCAA Regional Champi-

onships.

Although the Ducks lost to UC Santa Barbara 4-0 in their first-round dual match at UCLA last Friday, head coach Chris Russell said their postseason berth presents them with something concrete to build upon.

"I feel like we tasted the next level, which hopefully is going to put us in a situation where the guys want to make that the norm where we are [in the post-season] every year," Russell said.

Oregon more than doubled its win total from 1997, when it was 5-17, and earned the most dual-match victories it has had under Russell, who is in his third season as head coach. Those facts seem to show it was the Ducks' best season in the Russell era.

"By far this was the most successful year," he said. "I feel like realistically we are [progressing], and I think the guys are going to want to get to a new level. And that's how it happens is them being motivated to get to a new level."

Oregon's progression has been evident to team captain Carlos Navarro as well.

"When I got here three years ago, we weren't ranked," said Navarro, who will be a senior next season. "After the first year, I think we were [No.] 100 or 90.

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NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

Erwan Kergroach made the most of his one season at Oregon, compiling a 20-10 record and earning a trip to the NCAA Individual Championships.

CLUB SPORTS REPORT

Short-handed Ducks win tournament

Oregon's co-ed water polo team avenged a one-point loss to OSU a week ago on its way to a first-place finish

By Eric Collins, Jeanette N. Diaz and Mirjam Swanson
 Freelance Sports Reporters

It was all about sweet redemption for the Oregon Club Sports water polo team last weekend.

Despite not having their entire squad, the Ducks won a six-team tournament in McMinnville.

"We didn't go into it thinking we would take it because we didn't have a lot of our main players," team member Ben Gottlieb said. "But we won the whole thing."

On Saturday, Oregon played the first three games of the co-ed tournament. The team beat Linfield 16-5, the Tualatin Hills Masters Club 16-4 and Oregon State 14-11.

Two weeks earlier the Beavers upended the Ducks by one goal in the final seconds of the game. It was a different story Saturday.

For a few of Oregon's key players, the last game on Saturday was the last game of the season, so the win over Oregon State was an inspiring one.

"We really wanted to win," said Gottlieb. "We went all out. We completely shut them down during the first half and then when they started to catch up, it really didn't matter, we were so far ahead."

On Sunday, the Ducks beat the Newberg Masters Club 14-12 in what was "the

hardest game of the tournament," according to Gottlieb. Oregon finished the tournament with a convincing 13-8 victory over Willamette University.

Some of the Ducks' leading contributors were Bryan Hansen and Tod Spieker, who each scored seven goals on Saturday. Gottlieb scored 15 goals on the weekend.

"Sean Amberg played really strong in goal," Gottlieb said. "Renee Gauthier stepped it up, too. For never having played at this high of a level, she played really well."

Winning the tournament was an ideal way for the team to end a successful season, Gottlieb said.

"We really had fun," he said. "We had a great time and we saw what the team can do. We're well within grasp of our potential."

The Ducks lose a few key players to graduation but will have a solid core returning next year, and they hope to pick up some talented newcomers as well.

"Next season we want to start turning some heads," Gottlieb said. "We want to make people start looking to the Northwest for water polo."

Women's lacrosse

One of the brightest stars on the Oregon Club Sports women's lacrosse team will be representing the Northwest in the USWLA's national tournament next weekend. Juliet Baker, the Ducks' player-coach, will be returning home to Mary-

land as a part of the Northwest regional all-star team when it competes in Baltimore.

Baker, a second-year graduate student, recently finished her first season with Oregon at the Northwest Regional Tournament, where she took part in the tryout for the all-star team.

The midfielder was by far the Ducks' most experienced player last season, having played lacrosse since she was in the seventh grade. As an undergraduate, she was a part of the Virginia lacrosse team, with which she won two NCAA Division I national titles.

Her presence in Oregon's program was certainly beneficial and appreciated by her teammates.

"It's very inspiring to play with Juliet," team member Stephanie Erba said. "She has such a passion for the game."

"As a developing team, having her at practice gave us an extra lift," team member Susan Barnes said.

Baker, who coaches at lacrosse summer camps in places like Colorado Springs, Colo., thinks it does help having someone with her level of experience on the team.

"I really enjoy teaching the sport," Baker said. "We didn't have a lot of success this season, but there was definitely a lot of improvement individually."

The Ducks will have to make that experience count next season when they lose Baker and one of the team's other top players, Kate Tierney. Baker encouraged any women who are interested in playing

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Wells plays in charity golf tournament

David Wells participated in The Carl Rosen Celebrity Golf Classic the day after throwing a perfect game for the Yankees

By Christine Hanley

The Associated Press

WILTON, Conn. — David Wells' mood was less than perfect Monday. But then he made another perfect pitch.

After a night out in Manhattan to celebrate his perfect game, the Yankees left-hander was a bit grumpy when he pulled his black BMW into a country club, an hour late for a charity golf event.

He seemed to come back to life after a perfect pitch, so to speak, at No. 9 on the Rolling Hills Country Club course. After his approach shot fell about 45 feet short of the pin, Wells lofted a shot toward the green with his wedge, and it rolled in for an eagle.

"Pick it up. We're done here," Wells said to one of his partners waiting to line up a putt of about 15 feet.

After avoiding reporters, he agreed to entertain questions after the eagle.

Of course he had gone carousing with some of his teammates.

"You've got to go out and celebrate something like that," he said.

And like the crowd at Yankee Stadium,

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