



LAURA GOSS/Emerald

Annie Pogue warms up during practice prior to the Ducks showdown with Oregon State on Sept. 18.

By Allison Ross
Oregon Daily Emerald

Last year, during Oregon volleyball home games, Annie Pogue sat patiently and watched. During the away games, she sat patiently by the phone.

"I'd stay home on the traveling weekends and I'd get a call from my teammates," Pogue said. "They would say, 'We lost, but I know we can win tomorrow.'"

But the Ducks would usually return without a win, and eventually the calls stopped. It was the season that Oregon was supposed to turn volleyball into a winning program.

"It was frustrating because when I first came here I knew the program was on its way up, but I knew it was about as low as it could be," Pogue said. "I was fired up because I thought I could be a part of something really big here for Oregon volleyball."

Pogue arrived to Oregon fresh from a senior season in which she led Del Mar High School to the California Coast Section (CCS) title and was named CCS most valuable player. The year before, Pogue and her team won the CCS title for the first time in school history.

Her high school success gave her the confidence she needed to compete at the Pacific-10 Conference level, but playing with new



On the mend

After a frustrating season on the bench, Annie Pogue expects to help lead the team this year

players on a new court was a lot for the 6-foot freshman.

"As we got into practice, I guess mentally it was hard for me to get used to playing with a new team, and I didn't have a lot of confidence anymore," Pogue said. "It was just hard for me to adjust to playing with a new group of players. I was quiet on the court, so I wasn't having a chance to make an impact."

While Pogue was having difficulties adjusting, head coach Cathy Nelson was looking for players who were ready to take the program to the next level. She made the decision to redshirt Pogue for the 1997 season.

"It was evident that I wasn't going to be able to make a huge impact," Pogue said.

With last year far behind Pogue and her new teammates, Oregon has a new perspective. This team consists only of players that Nelson recruited, something she had

not enjoyed in her first three seasons as Oregon's head coach. Although Pogue was recruited by Nelson, the decision to redshirt her was something that will benefit Oregon down the road.

"[Annie] improved leaps and bounds during her redshirt year in terms of some of her skills and abilities, and although her exact role for us this year is uncertain, we are going to want to get her on the court as much as possible," Nelson said.

Pogue is considered a freshman in terms of eligibility, but that extra year of waiting and watching has her anxious to perform.

"I don't really consider myself a freshman," Pogue said. "I've put a lot of pressure on myself so far because I really want to make an impact this year. I had to watch all last year and not really do anything."

While it was frustrating for Pogue to come to Oregon ready for battle, only to be sidelined for a year, she realizes the benefits of a redshirt year. Senior co-captain and team leader in kills thus far, Madeline Ernst, spent her freshman year just as Pogue did.

With some Pac-10 experience behind her and four seasons to go, Pogue is on track to be a vital part in turning this Oregon program around.

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