



## Best Bet

AL Championship Series  
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# Lavoie leads Oregon men to third at Northwest Classic

Coach Steve Nosler cites the team's balance in its strong finish

By Scott Peszkecker  
Oregon Daily Emerald

In the highly anticipated Pre-NCAA Invitational in Tulsa, Okla., the women faced disappointment in the woe of a storm as Monday's competition was rained out.

The only rain that fell in Corvallis, however, was a barrage of well-placed shots by the Oregon men. Finishing with a seven-under-par score of 569, the Ducks finished in third place at the Northwest Classic.

"We played very well. I am pleased," coach Steve Nosler said. "We got right in the hunt, which is what we wanted. If we play well again tomorrow we have a chance to win it."

Ryan Lavoie led the Ducks and was tied for eighth place overall, shooting three under par at 141. Adrian Burtner and Derek

Croskrey were tied for 17th place with scores of 143. Andrew Tredway and Ben Crane rounded out Oregon's attack by hitting an even par 144 and tying for 23rd place.

Nosler was very pleased with the way the men played, citing that the difference between the low and high strokes of the team was only three strokes. He said that having a balanced team effort is the best way to win tournaments.



"We had a low score of 141 and a high of 144, which is even par," Nosler said. "A team could have a guy win the tournament but the team could still finish 20th."

Leading all other teams was San Diego State, which scored 565, 11 under par. Fol-

lowing in second place, just two strokes behind, was UCLA with 567. Oregon was only two strokes behind UCLA and four behind leading San Diego.

However, Colorado State and Washington were tied for fourth place with 571. Nosler said that while the Ducks are looking to win the tournament, they must remember the competition behind them.

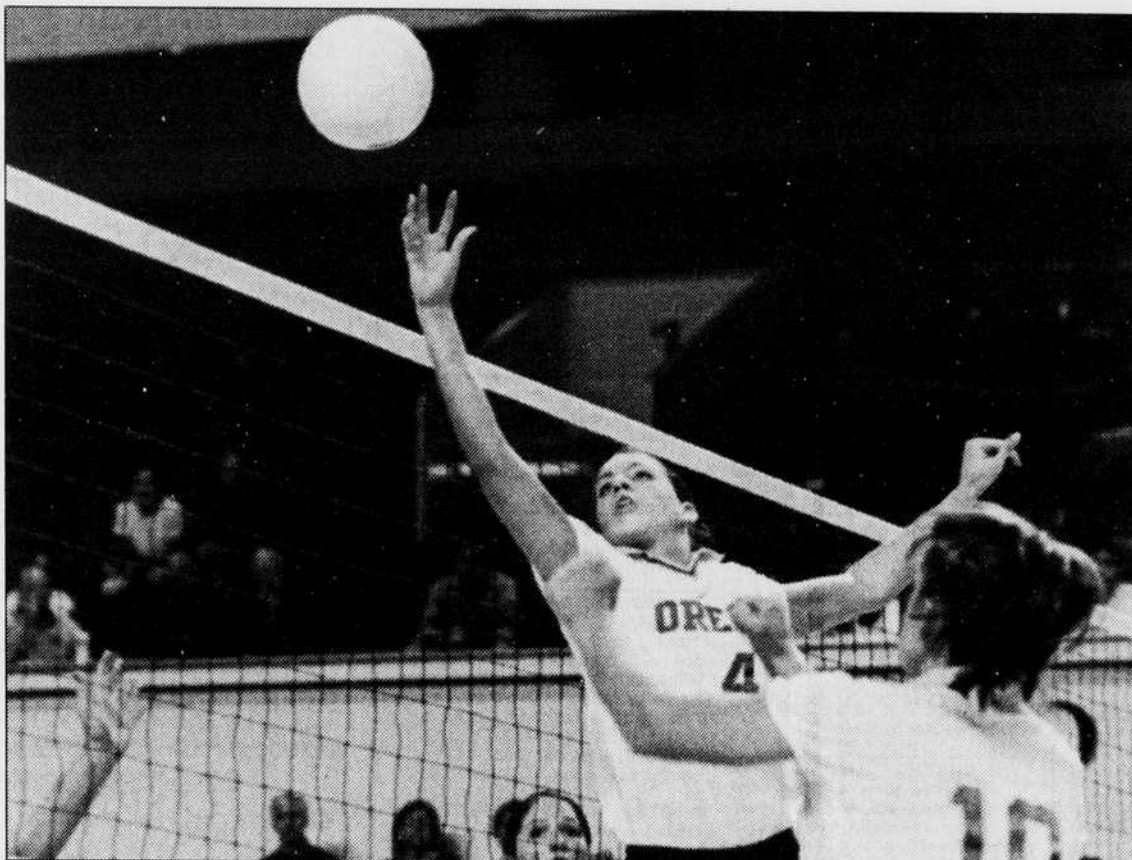
"We're looking ahead, but there are some very good teams just two strokes back, too," Nosler said. "Hopefully we can go out and sink a few more puts than we did today and win tomorrow."

Leading in the contest for the individual champion was B.J. Schlagenhaut of UCLA, scoring an eight-under-par 136. Robby Stephenson of Colorado State was in second place with 137, and Jason Semelsberger of UCLA was in third place with 138.

## Leaderboard

1. Schlagenhaut UCLA	136
2. Stephenson Colorado St.	137
3. Semelsberger UCLA	138
4. Piercy San Diego St.	139
4. Wolf Pacific	139
6. Lewis Iowa St.	140
6. Scutt Washington	140
8. Lavoie Oregon	141

## OREGON VS. PORTLAND



Oregon setter Julie Gerlach tips one over the net to make a kill in Sunday's game against the Wild-cats.

Matt Hankins/Emerald

## Ducks may be better than the record shows

A year ago in this very space, a young, brash and inexperienced (and familiar) columnist wrote a terse denunciation of the Oregon volleyball team.

At that time, the Ducks were on their way to a 9-21 overall record, including a league-worst 1-17 mark in the Pacific-10 Conference.

To the casual observer, it would seem that this year's version of the Ducks is on its way to a similar, if slightly improved, showing. Oregon is a respectable 6-7 overall, 1-2 in the conference, after being swept last weekend by Arizona and Arizona State, the one team the Ducks managed to beat last season.

But to those of us who've watched the team over the past two seasons, the improvement in Oregon's level of talent, if not success, is marked.

As the match against Arizona State last Friday proved, the biggest similarity between the Ducks of this year and last is the distinct lack of confidence when they're behind. In 1997, Oregon would drop the first game of the night and the look in every player's eyes said the same thing: "Here we go again. Another night, another loss."

On Friday, the Ducks fought through an off night for two games before giving in to the Sun Devils. Oregon had one of its worst hitting performances thus far this season in Game 2, when it hit minus .143 but lost just 15-9. It wasn't until Game 3 that the confidence, and thus the Ducks chances, began to fade.

But while the Ducks' lack of confidence doesn't seem to have changed much from last season, the biggest difference between the two teams is also evident. In 1998, Oregon has the talent and the athleticism to overcome off nights and win tough matches. Last year's Ducks were a subdued, gritty group that battled an overall shortage of talent with the experience of a six-woman senior class and flashes of superstar potential from junior outside hitter Madeline Ernst.

This season, Ernst is realizing that potential, as evidenced by her ranking among the nation's leaders in kills. But she is no longer alone.

## Opinion



Rob Moseley

## Coaches reunite in pivotal contest

Oregon sees its match against Portland as a chance to regain momentum before facing Washington this weekend

By Allison Ross  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Cathy Nelson and Patty Jayne know how to win volleyball matches. Ten years ago, they roomed together at Portland State as members of the Viking volleyball team that won the Division II-A national championship.

Fast-forward to 1998. These veteran coaches, and long-time friends, have to battle each other to keep their respective teams alive for a possible postseason berth.

And while tonight's Oregon vs. Portland match at the Chiles Center is not a Pacific-10 Conference match for the Ducks, Nelson fully understands the importance this game could have on the remainder of Oregon's season.

"We need to have a full-out effort," said Nelson, who is in her fourth season as Oregon's head coach. "We can't just assume that we're going to win. We need to come out and perform."

Oregon is coming off a pair of devastating losses to Arizona State and Arizona last weekend, which dropped the Ducks' record to 6-9 overall, and 1-4 in the conference.

But if the Ducks have to use their slow start as motivation, then Portland will likely be just as motivated. The Pilots opened their West Coast Conference play at home last Friday with a 15-9, 15-4, 15-10 win against San Francisco. Then on Sunday, the Pilots came out against No. 17 San Diego similar to the way the Ducks came out against the Wild-cats at McArthur Court — strong in game 1, but frail in games 2, 3 and 4.



While the Ducks' egos may have been bruised a little by the losses, they have a healthy line-up, which is something the Pilots are not as fortunate to have. Veteran middle blockers Cheyanne Morteck and Christy Novitsky were both forced to red-shirt this season after suffering season-ending injuries in the preseason.

"We don't have a lot of depth this year because of the injuries," Jayne said. "But we've had some people really step up and do a tremendous job."

The biggest challenge to the Pilots will be to contain Oregon's outside hitter, Madeline Ernst.

"I don't foresee us being able to stop her," said Jayne, who is in her fifth season as coach of the Pilots. "I think we need to realize that she is going to get kills. We need to at least get a hand on the attack and also try and make it difficult for them to get

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