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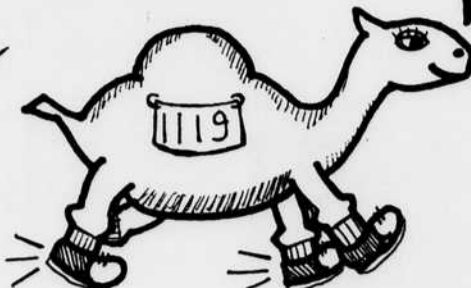
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Oregon tennis teams' fall success inspires high hopes for spring

Both tennis teams have made progress in large part because of talented new freshmen

By Mirjam Swanson

for the Emerald

For the most part, both the Oregon men's and women's tennis teams accomplished what they set out to during their fall seasons.

Spurred by the performances of several freshmen, both teams made progress toward becoming competitive in the Pacific-10 Conference.

However, it wasn't only the underclassmen who were impressive. Junior Guillermo Carter highlighted the men's season by becoming the first Oregon player to advance to the semifinals of the ITA Rolex Regional Championships at Stanford two weeks ago.

It wasn't a performance that was out of character for Carter, who is the Ducks prospective No. 1 player heading into the spring season. He played well throughout the fall, advancing to the third round of the All-American qualifying tournament to begin the season and coming up with both singles and doubles victories at the Washington Invitational last weekend.

"He's raised his game physically," head coach Chris Russell said. "Technically he's a much better player than he was. He'll be a force to reckon with in the Pac-10."

However, Carter's success may have been overshadowed by that of two freshman, Bertrand Devillers and Thomas Schneider, who have both shown improvement since their arrival to Eugene.

"[They're] two guys who'll definitely add a lot to our program," Russell said. "They're going to progress very quickly."

But there were other players who stepped up their games as well.

Senior captain Carlos Navarro had a productive fall, finishing with a good showing at the Washington Invitational. He picked up a couple of wins at the tournament, including one over Washington's No. 4 player.

"Carlos played an outstanding match," Russell said. "He really showed a good level and we were real proud of him."

On the women's side, Oregon's

returning No. 1 player, senior Alina Wygonowska, began the fall ranked 34th in the nation, but was hampered by tendinitis in her knees. She was only able to participate in singles' competition at the All-American tournament, where she was eliminated in two matches, and then in doubles at the Washington Invitational.

Women's head coach Jack Griffin said Wygonowska's return to the line-up will be gradual.

"Our feeling is that we should rest her knees until they feel perfect," Griffin said. "And even if she has to start the year a little bit slow, at least she won't be dealing with pain the rest of the year."

Freshman Valerie Young also dealt with some effects of tendinitis in her knees,

but it didn't keep her from joining Oregon's other freshmen in making an impact on the program. Young, Adeline

Arnaud, Janice Nyland, and red-shirt freshman Sarah Colistro all performed well.

"It's a great crew," Griffin said of his freshmen. "They're going to grow together and they showed that they are solid and that they can compete against the opposition that we've struggled with in the past. For them to do that in their first couple months is a good sign."

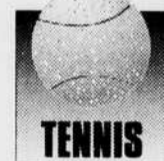
In their first collegiate tournament, Arnaud and Nyland faced each other in the consolation finals of the Washington Invitational. Arnaud won the match in three sets, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6.

Colistro also showed promise, returning to the court after being sidelined by injury last season. She advanced at both the All-American Qualifying Tournament and at the ITA Rolex Regionals.

"Sarah showed moments of great tennis last year," Griffin said. "And she's had solid results so far this year."

Griffin said this year's team could be better than the Oregon team that ranked in the top 50 nationally and qualified for the NCAA tournament two years ago.

"This team, if we stay healthy, will be much better than we were then," he said.



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