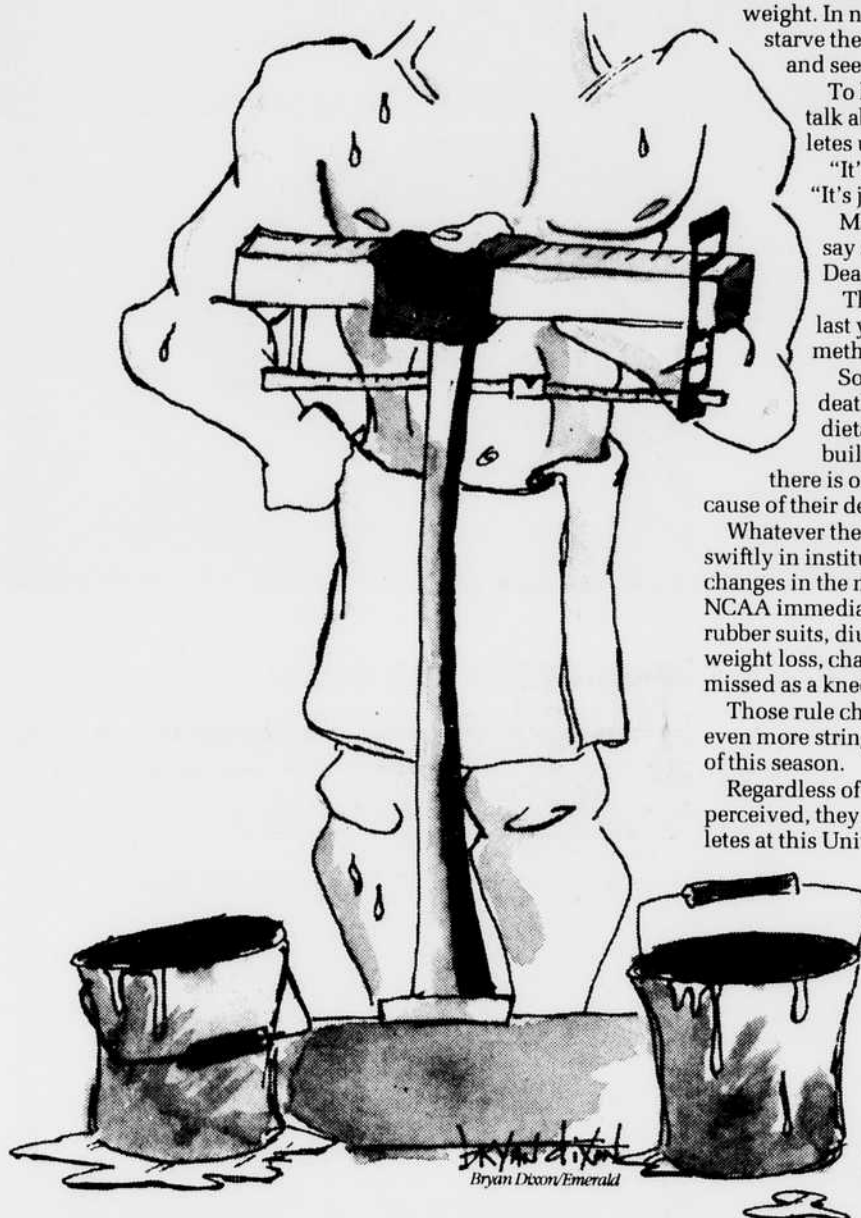


# PERSPECTIVES

## RULES of the GAME

*Despite years of tradition, Oregon coaches and wrestlers must abide by the new NCAA regulations*



Collegiate wrestling is a different culture. Not a bad culture, just different.

In no other sport does an athlete's weight have such an impact on his or her performance. In no other sport do athletes wear rubber suits to sweat out water weight. In no other sport do athletes starve their bodies of food or water — and see no problem with any of it.

To hear a wrestler or coach talk about the practices some athletes use to lose weight is scary.

"It's no big deal," they say. "It's just part of the sport."

Maybe we are being too PC to say so, but this seems wrong. Dead wrong, in fact.

Three college wrestlers died last year using now outlawed methods to lose weight.

Some people dismiss the deaths by blaming Creatine, a dietary supplement used to build muscle mass faster. But

there is only speculation about the cause of their deaths, no scientific proof.

Whatever the reasons, the NCAA acted swiftly in instituting dramatic rules changes in the middle of last season. The NCAA immediately outlawed the use of rubber suits, diuretics and saunas for weight loss, changes that some people dismissed as a knee-jerk reaction.

Those rule changes were followed by even more stringent regulations at the start of this season.

Regardless of how the rule changes are perceived, they are still the rules, and athletes at this University and other universities have not been following them.

While they are the rules, it is impossible to change decades of tradition — no matter how unhealthy those might be — with one sweeping change.

Mike Moyer, chairman of the NCAA wrestling committee, may have said it best.

"To some degree, the dif-

ficult thing is it's difficult to change 100 years of tradition in 100 days," Moyer said.

A month ago, seven sources told the Emerald that Oregon wrestlers were using these illegal weight-loss methods. Two current wrestlers even said first-year head coach Chuck Kearney knew it was happening.

Kearney made a career out of wrestling. He was an All-American at Oregon in 1988 and was an assistant coach here before taking the head coaching job this season.

For all his years as a wrestler and assistant coach, Kearney and his wrestlers were allowed to use whatever means necessary to reach their desired weights.

If anyone would have had trouble adjusting to the rule changes it would be Kearney.

During an internal investigation by the Athletic Department, two wrestlers admitted they violated the rules and were forced to miss Friday's match with nationally ranked Arizona State, possibly costing the Ducks a win.

It's now clear the Athletic Department made significant mistakes in pursuing allegations of NCAA rule violations.

In a letter to University President Dave Frohnmayer on Jan. 12, the parents of suspended wrestler Dusty Roberts alleged that Oregon wrestlers were violating NCAA rules.

The letter was forwarded to the Athletic Department, but it wasn't until after the Emerald published a story about the allegations on Jan. 15 that they took action.

At worst the Athletic Department is guilty of inaction and naivete, but it must be commended for taking the action it did. Ultimately, only the athletes and coaches can be sure the rules are followed.

And you can bet there are other violators on the team who have not been suspended, namely David Perkins, who publicly admitted violating the rules in the Emerald article.

Most coaches and wrestlers say the rule changes are good for the sport, but they may be the same ones who knowingly violate the rules.

The rule changes were drastic and may go against years of wrestling tradition, but they are the rules. It's time the Oregon wrestling team respected that.

*This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.*

## SAID & DONE

"Good God almighty, take the vote and get it over with!"

**-Richard Douglas Llamas of Washington, shouting from the Senate gallery during the Clinton impeachment trial. Llamas was arrested and charged with disruption of Congress.**

"I will win the nomination, and I will beat Al Gore."

**-Former Vice President Dan Quayle on his 2000 presidential run.**

"Given that I name all my corporations after myself, I'll name it after myself. Better than the 'Guy Who Has More Money Than Brains' Collection."

**-Comic book creator Todd McFarlane on what he's going to call his exhibit of famous baseballs. The collection includes the ball Mark Magwire used to hit his 70th home run, for which McFarlane paid \$3 million.**

"Once we knew Clinton would not be removed from office, we saw the trial as sort of symbolic spanking."

**-Gerard Dupuy, a writer for the Daily Liberation in Paris, on international response to the impeachment trial.**

"There was no one more gracious, considerate and kind; no one more hospitable and generous; no one more capable of understanding and empathy."

**-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the late King Hussein.**

## Letters to the Editor

### Rank not everything

It was very disheartening to read Ashley Bach's editorial in the Jan. 29 issue of the Emerald concerning the University falling short of excellence. I graduated from the University a year ago with a bachelor's in geography and felt for the most part that I received a good education there. (I have attended other institutions of higher learning and can compare.) I learned many things from my geography professors as well as the professors in the Spanish, English, economics and mathematics departments.

Although Bach states that the U.S. News and World Report college ranking article is the most important and widely read in the country, it does not necessarily mean that reading that issue convinces anyone to attend a certain

school, or that it is the ultimate influential decision-making tool of college-bound students or professors. Those seriously making final decisions about where to give or receive higher education utilize many reports, journals and information guides to enhance and strengthen their decisions. If, as Bach purports, most University students are unhappy attending classes, that would be truly unfortunate because most intelligent people would not pay several thousand dollars a year to make themselves miserable.

Ultimately, learning rests with the student. No matter how illustrious, renowned or provocative a professor may be. If students don't take the given knowledge and study and develop it themselves, learning remains elusive. I hope Bach's emotionally

charged editorial is not truly the overall view of most students at the University.

Janet Snyder  
Alumna

### Thumbs up to scholarships

I am a graduate of the University and loved going to the University. Even when I taught high school in Southern California, I always encouraged my students to consider the University of Oregon.

I had great professors, especially in the history department. The decision to offer automatic financial incentives to good students from Oregon is a good one, and one I have let all my students here at Bandon High School know about.

Chris Kelso  
Bandon

### Bad form, McShane

In response to Mike McShane's quitting the Ducks basketball team — good riddance! I'm sorry that he feels like head coach Ernie Kent gave up on him, but he needs to face the fact that he was never a Pacific-10 Conference starting point guard to begin with. When Darius Wright took over the starting role after McShane's ankle injury, I think that all Duck fans realized who should be playing point guard for our team.

With so much amazing guard play in the Pac-10, the 4.7 points and more importantly 3.3 assists McShane averaged last year just didn't justify him as a legitimate starting point guard in such a tough conference. And personally, I never saw him do anything in his limited minutes this year that would sug-

gest that he'd gotten much better. So I'm not sure how he can blame everything and everyone except himself for his role this season, when his play spoke for itself. Quitting the basketball program is just another example of why he isn't fit to run this team. Lack of maturity and lack of commitment have sent McShane packing.

As you leave McShane, all I ask is that you be accountable for what actually happened. You stunk, you got hurt and Kent found us a legitimate starting point guard. Nobody gave your role away; Darius Wright earned it. Don't blame Kent, buddy, it's you who can't accept your role as an average backup Pac-10 point guard.

J. Irving  
Business Administration