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SEASON REVIEW

Oregon's rocky season ends quietly

Chuck Kearney called his first season as head coach a year of transitions for the Ducks

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

On Sunday night, a season that began with so much potential ended quietly with a sixth-place finish at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships in Palo Alto, Calif.

It was a fitting end for the Oregon men's wrestling team.

While the Ducks finished sixth overall, four Oregon wrestlers will travel to State College, Pa., to compete in the NCAA tournament.

These four wrestlers — 165-pound Sean Morgan, 197-pound Chael Sonnen, 157-pound Daryl Christian and 184-pound Doug Lee — have been the Ducks' backbone throughout the season.

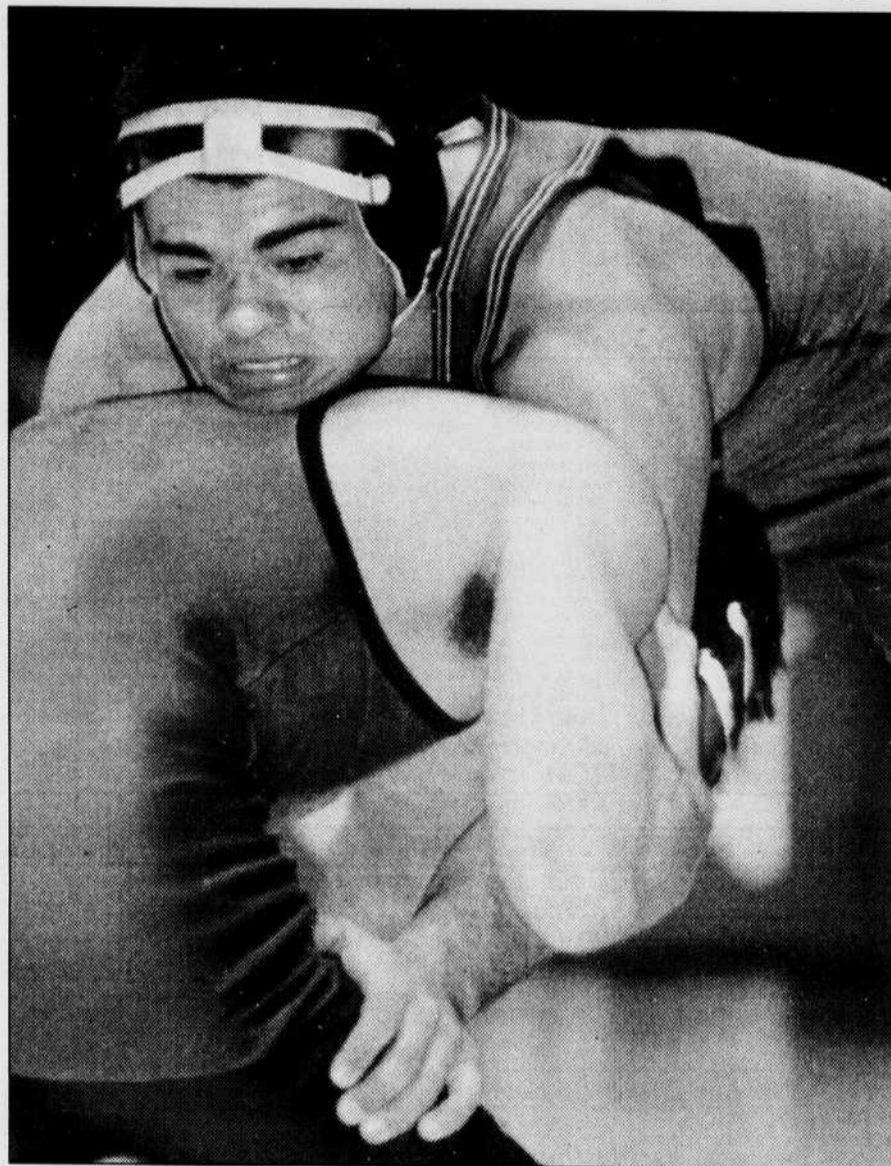
But despite their individual strengths, the big four couldn't make up for the problems the team had in its lower weights.

"Things that we couldn't control happened to us," Oregon's first-year head coach Chuck Kearney said. "It was hard to pick out just one thing; we had ups and downs individually."

The Ducks dominated in their first three dual-meets of the season. UC Davis fell to Oregon, 38-6, on Dec. 12, Southern Oregon was beaten, 25-9, the following weekend, and Stanford was handed a 28-9 loss on Jan. 6.

It was in that Stanford match that the Ducks first forfeited at 133 pounds, moving freshman Kenny Cox down to the 125-pound weight class where Cox said he was more "efficient."

Oregon handled Stanford, but the end result of the forfeit would prove disastrous later on. The Ducks lost to Cal



Sophomore Doug Lee, who qualified at 184 pounds Sunday for the NCAA Championships on March 18, corrals Oregon State's Isaac Weber at McArthur Court on Feb. 12. Lee eventually won by major decision.

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Oregon should surpass UCLA in coaches poll

All season long, UCLA has been regarded as the top team in the Pacific-10 Conference. The Bruins started off No. 7 in the country and did that ranking justice by winning their first nine conference games.

Oregon, unranked at the time, took UCLA to the brink at Pauley Pavilion on Jan. 10, losing by just four points after leading the Bruins for most of the second half. The loss confirmed that UCLA was still the team to beat.

And that's exactly what Oregon did. The Ducks not only beat UCLA on Feb. 4 at McArthur Court, they annihilated them, 106-79. It was the Bruins' worst defeat of the season and their first conference loss.

Since that victory, Oregon has ascended to the Pac-10 lead and is currently in the midst of a nine-game winning streak. Stanford defeated the Bruins, 87-84, on Feb. 12 at Pauley Pavilion, which took UCLA out of sole possession of first place in the conference.

Despite sitting atop the Pac-10 with the Bruins, Oregon never caught up to UCLA in the polls. This week, Oregon is ranked No. 15 in the Associated Press Top 25 Poll and UCLA is 16th. But in the USA Today/ESPN Top 25 women's college basketball coaches poll, UCLA is No. 15 and Oregon is No. 17.

Why Oregon doesn't get the respect of the coaches is beyond me. First of all, the Bruins suffered their third Pac-10 loss of

Oregon Women's Notes



Allison Ross

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