

**Oregon Daily
Emerald**
Editor in chief: Laura Cadiz
Sports Editor: Tim Pyle

Sports

Best Bet
MLB Postseason
Atlanta vs. Houston
1 p.m., ESPN



Mazza, Ducks search for amazing turnaround

■ Middle blocker Halie Mazza knows about starting over, and she's trying to help the Ducks do the same tonight against OSU

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

Halie Mazza knows all about the Civil War, even though she transferred to Oregon from Texas-Arlington.

The 6-foot middle blocker of the Oregon volleyball team was born and raised in Hood River. She loved sports at a young age, inevitably learning about the intense rivalry between the Ducks and Beavers.

However, she had no idea that she'd someday be entering a Civil War game.

"I understand that it's a very big game for us," Mazza said. "We need to come out and play hard, and this would be a very big win for us."

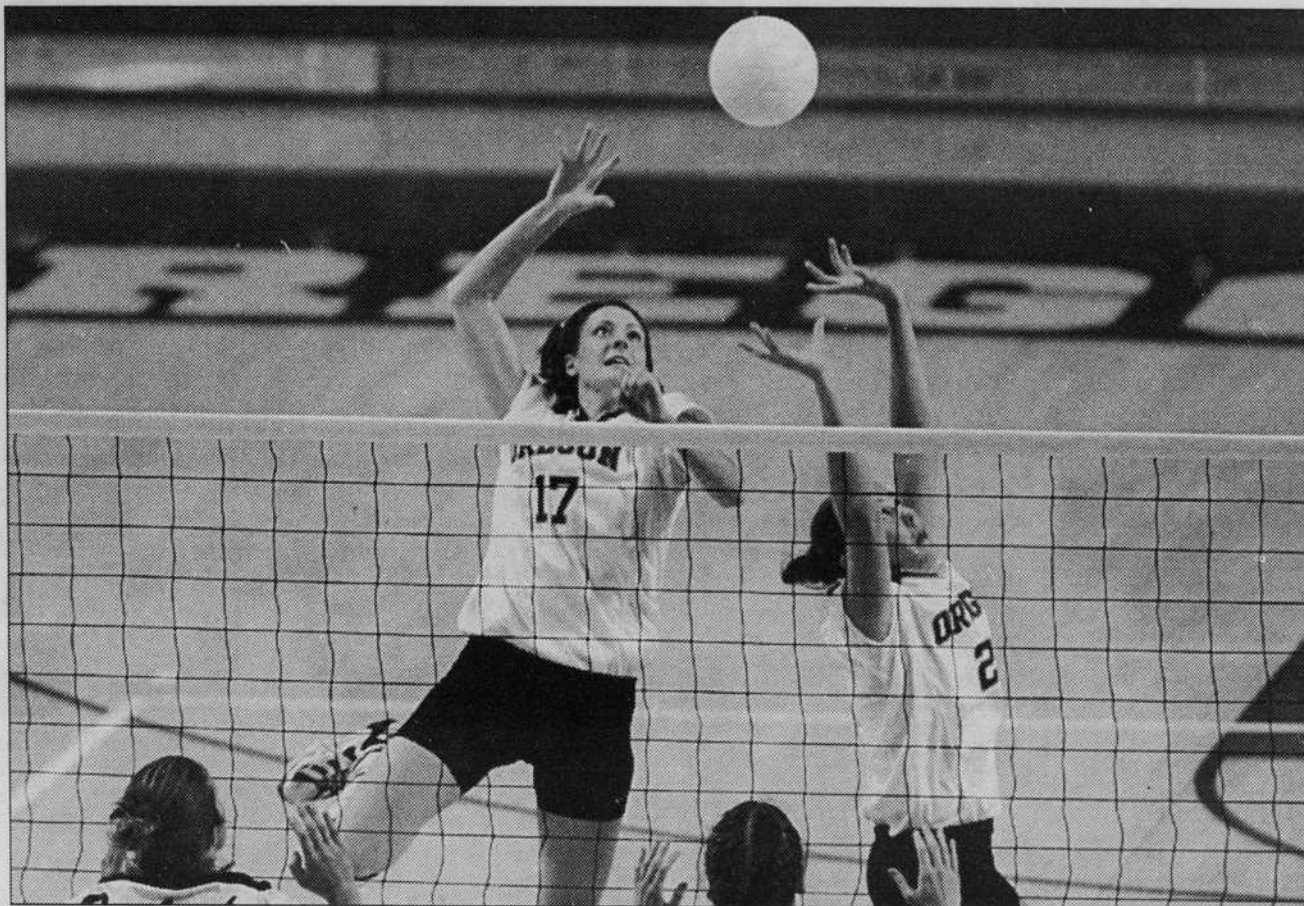
Since taking up volleyball in junior high, Mazza has had travel great distances to perform her craft. During her final two years at Hood River High School, the two-time all-conference selection made a two-hour round trip drive to Gresham three times a week to play in the Cascade Junior Volleyball Club.

"I was approached to play club volleyball, which is a really great way to get colleges to look at you to play at the next level," Mazza said.

Although she was also an all-conference athlete on her high school basketball team at the center position, Mazza set her sights on volleyball because she was aware of the many opportunities she'd have in the sport.

One of those opportunities was at Texas-Arlington.

"I took a trip there, and I decided that I liked the [team], and I liked the campus," Mazza said. "I was interest-



Middle blocker Halie Mazza attempts to continue her positive impact on Oregon volleyball tonight against the Beavers. The transfer's transition into Oregon's lineup has been successful statistically — she ranks third on the team in kills with 105 to go along with her .249 hitting percentage.

ed in going somewhere far away, and that pretty much sealed my decision."

After playing in 10 matches her freshman year, Mazza broke out during her sophomore season, leading the Mavericks in kills (402) and hitting percentage (.299). She also was second in blocks, stopping 93 for the season.

Mazza led Texas-Arlington to a 24-7 overall record in 1998 and a 19-1 record

in the Southland Conference. Both her freshman and sophomore years, the Mavericks were the Southland Conference Champions.

Yet Mazza couldn't get over the fact that something was missing from her life.

On the volleyball court, Mazza was at the peak of her game — but she had nobody close to share her experiences with.

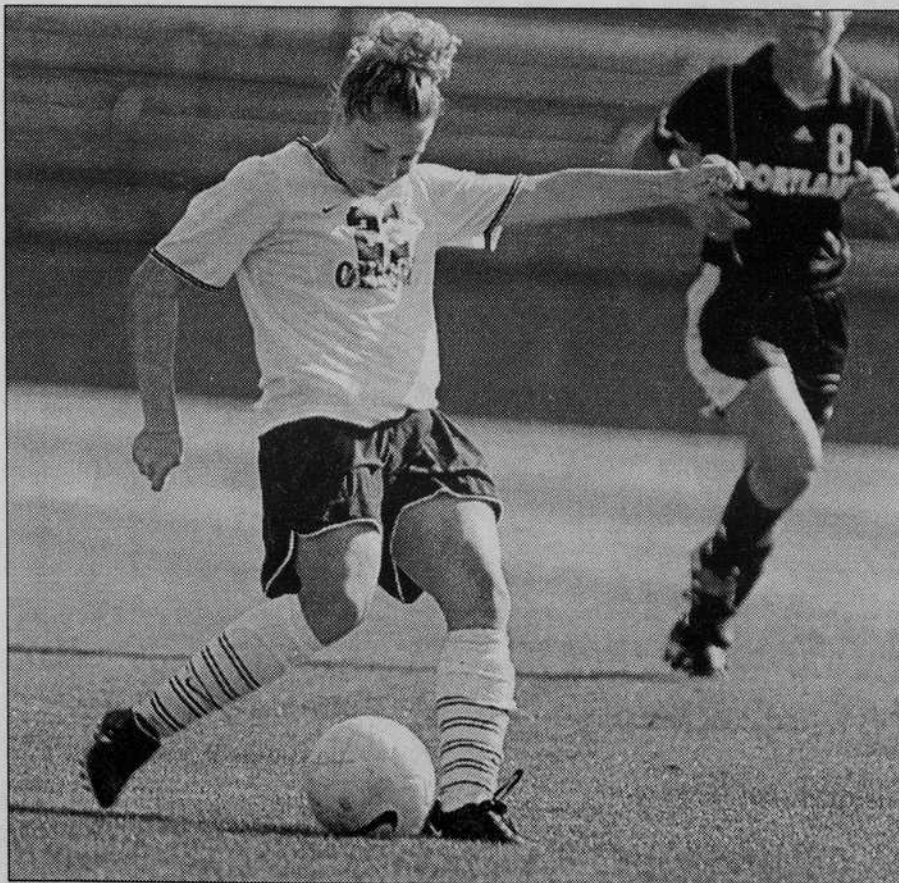
"My mom saw me play once in Texas,

and now she can come down almost every weekend to see me play," Mazza said. "That's just something that's really important to me."

Knowing that things in Texas wouldn't change, Mazza called Oregon head coach Cathy Nelson and arranged to make a visit to the Oregon campus.

"On one of the trips when I came

Turn to **Volleyball**, Page 12A



Freshman forward Julie McLellan and the rest of the Ducks aim to surprise the No. 20 Cardinal today and then follow up with a second strong performance against California on Sunday.

Oregon kicks off Pac-10 play

■ A healthy Oregon team is ready to tackle perennial soccer power Stanford and California

By Brett Williams
Oregon Daily Emerald

In the preseason, the Oregon women's soccer team proved that in the game of soccer, you can dominate a game on the field but that it isn't always reflected on the scoreboard.

That was no more apparent than in Oregon's final preseason game last Sunday against Cal State-Northridge. The Ducks had plenty of opportunities to blow out the Matadors, outshooting them 26-6.

The end result, however, was a 3-1 Ducks loss that put them at 4-6 entering their Pacific-10 Conference campaign today against No. 20 Stanford at 3 p.m. and Sunday against California at 1 p.m. at Papé Field.

Inconsistent play that has plagued Oregon all season could prove disastrous if it continues during Pac-10 play.

"I don't know if we panic or what," forward Chalise Baysa said. "We do a good job of creating opportunities, but we have to finish them."

Oregon head coach Bill Steffen has yet

to field a team that has beaten the Cardinal. The Stanford defense has held the Ducks scoreless in the only two meetings between the teams.

"We must emphasize finishing chances," Steffen said. "They're both nationally ranked, and we have to convert the chances we get."

Defender Carrie McLanahan respects Stanford's talent but expects Oregon to end its life-long scoring drought against the Cardinal this weekend.

"They have really quick strikers who are fast and have good ball skills," McLanahan said. "We haven't been able to attack in the past, but we should do well this weekend."

California barely escaped with a win against the Ducks at Berkeley last year. Oregon seemed to have the game locked up with a 1-0 lead with under a minute remaining, but the Golden Bears tied the game with only 30 seconds left and scored the game-winner only two minutes into overtime.

That last-second melt-down was hard to swallow for Steffen and his players.

"We were ahead until 30 seconds left, and afterwards we were emotionally spent," Steffen said. "We played Cal on Friday, and we were so psychologically

Turn to **UO soccer**, Page 8A