Women

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go, if either team goes at all.

It seems like a no-brainer. When a team is lower in the conference standings, it arguably means that the teams above it have had better seasons. So why should a lower-seeded team go to the NCAAs instead of a higher seed?

Check out the ratings percentage index.

Going into last weekend's matchups, Oregon State was ranked No. 119, and UCLA was No. 25.

When the dust cleared, the

Beavers swept and the Bruins were swept. The worst of

WOMEN'S Basketball The worst of UCLA's two losses came at the teeth of the orange and black.

Oregon State's

win moved it into sole possession of fourth place, half a game ahead of the now-fifth-place Bruins.

And then the updated RPIs: UCLA, No. 30; Oregon State, No. 109.

The Bruins will likely regain the fourth spot and go on to the NCAA tournament, because the chances of the Beavers beating Arizona and Oregon on the road are slim.

But the Bruins face Stanford in Pauley Pavilion on Saturday. A loss to the Cardinal could push UCLA even down in the standings.

Will that matter though?

Judging by the RPIs, it appears that UCLA is headed to the tournament — no matter how poorly it finishes.

Giant killers: Part IV

Stanford is sitting pretty in first place.

And for that reason, the Cardinal should be worried.

Each time a first-place team has

walked into the Los Angeles Sports Arena to take on Southern California, they've lost.

The first upset was Oregon's January loss. Next, the Trojans beat UCLA. A week later the Wildcats went down. USC took its giant-killing act on the road last weekend, beating the Ducks at the Pit.

Come Saturday, the Trojans hope to put on a show for last home game of the season, in front of an average audience of 652.

Beating Stanford would be more than a great ending; it could be a conclusion worthy of an encore in the NIT.

Imagine what USC's season would have been like if it would have had Portia Mitchell, its highly anticipated freshman center from Narbonne High School in Buena Park, Calif.

Mitchell, who stands at 6-feet, 4-inches tall, was a 1999 Womens' Basketball Journal All-American as a senior and a Student Sport All-American for her sophomore, junior and senior seasons. In 1997 and 1998, she was a member of the AAU National Team. Mitchell also played in the Olympians Girls League for six years.

But the freshman has yet to play a single minute this season.

USC head coach Chris Gobrecht's has a traditional rule that in order to play, one has to be able to run 1 1/2 miles in 13 minutes.

To the track-challenged, that's on pace to run one mile in just over eight-and-a-half minutes. Even for many who are not Division 1-A athletes, that's slow.

However, the Trojans' post has more than made up for Mitchell's absence. Against Oregon, senior forward Tiffany Washington posted the team's second double-double of the season with 18 points and 11 rebounds, and Danielle Golay scored 19 points and pulled down eight boards.



Forward Felicia Ragland leads the Oregon State offense with 12.9 points per game.



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