

Sports

Oregon Daily
Emerald



Best Bet

NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs,
Philadelphia vs. New Jersey
4:30 p.m., ESPN

Scoreboard

SWIMMING

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — After 19 years, it's goodbye, Mary T. Swimming finally has a new Madame Butterfly.

In just 2 minutes, 5.81 seconds Wednesday, Susie O'Neill erased swimming's oldest record in the 200-meter butterfly and part of Mary T. Meagher's legend with it. Backed by a crowd of 10,000-plus, the 26-year-old Australian shaved 0.15 off the longest-standing world record in the sport after six years of frustratingly close calls.

O'Neill had just turned 8-years-old when Meagher set the world record of 2:05.96 on Aug. 13, 1981, at Brown Deer, Wis.

Now with Olympic and world championship gold medals to her credit and still possessing Meagher's autograph that she gained as a starry-eyed teen, O'Neill secured the only prize she thought might elude her.

"Finally," the 26-year-old said after a celebratory dance on the pool deck following the record-setting effort in the finals of the Australian Olympic trials. "I saw the time and saw the world record flash up. It was one of the greatest moments of my life."

TENNIS

ROME (AP) — Venus Williams routed Chanda Rubin in the Italian Open on Wednesday and put aside retirement talk — for the moment.

Playing only her third match since returning to the tour from a six-month layoff, Williams was overpowering. She won 6-1, 6-2 to move into the third round of the clay-court tuneup for this month's French Open.

Williams, seeded third, served well and seemed comfortable on the clay as she began defense of her Italian title.

Richard Williams, father of Venus and younger sister Serena, caused a stir this year when he suggested Venus might retire to devote time to her studies and investments. He even hinted she might enter politics.

"I still have fun playing tennis," Venus Williams said. "This is what I want to do at this point ... If I decide this is not good for me, I'll definitely retire."

SOCCER

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Riot police fired tear gas in a city square near Tivoli gardens today, and at least three people were stabbed during mayhem prior to a major soccer championship.

Rival fans tossed chairs and bottles after a night of violence in the hours before a title game between Galatasaray of Turkey and Arsenal of England.

Ducks start NCAA tournament play

The No. 19 Oregon softball team traveled across the country to take on a familiar foe in Southern Mississippi today in Baton Rouge

By Matt O'Neill
Oregon Daily Emerald

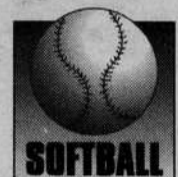
The road couldn't get any tougher for the Ducks.

Not only do they (34-24 overall, 6-15 Pacific-10-Conference) have to travel across the country for their regional tournament, but they also have to face the NCAA all-time strikeout

leader in their first game in Baton Rouge, La., against Southern Mississippi (56-10) and Courtney Blades.

But don't tell that to head coach Rick Gamez or his team. After playing in the grueling Pac-

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Sophomore catcher Missy Coe and teammates hope to extend their postseason as long as possible.

Kevin Calame Emerald

Humble hitter



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

Even though his consistently low scores have been so important to Oregon's success, co-captain Ryan Lavoie keeps his head, saying he likes to "be a gentleman."

Oregon's best runs the course modestly

Senior co-captain Ryan Lavoie has a long list of accomplishments as an Oregon golfer, but he doesn't want you to know about it

by Peter Hockaday
for the Emerald

On the first tee of his final practice round before the NCAA West Regionals Monday, Ryan Lavoie stepped up to his ball and surveyed the scene.

With little hesitation, the Oregon co-captain slapped it 250 yards straight down the first fairway at the Eugene Country Club. As his teammates sarcastically applauded what must have been a routine shot for Lavoie, he turned to them with a sheepish grin. No comment, no arrogant walk, just a simple, heart-felt smile.

This is how Ryan Lavoie has come to lead the Oregon men's golf team.

The Pasco, Wash., native shoots low scores but tries, in his words, to "be a gentleman" off the course. This year, he became just the third Oregon player in 21 years to earn all Pacific-10 Conference first team

honors, but, as co-captain Andrew Tredway says, he is "a quiet guy."

Ryan Lavoie is not an ordinary athlete. On the brink of ending his Oregon career, the soft-spoken senior is still as humble as he was as a freshman.

"I'm trying to lead by example," he said.

"I was always the rookie. I know how I looked up to the other guys, so I know what they're looking for. Your scores, I think, are the last thing the younger players look at."

Lavoie has certainly provided the scores to complement his off-course attitude. He won the Peter Jacobsen Award as Duck newcomer of the year in 1997, and this year has the team's lowest stroke average. As if those honors weren't enough, he has a No. 41 national ranking to go along with his first team all Pac-10 honors.

Last summer, Lavoie played in six tournaments as an individual, won four of them, and qualified for the U.S. Amateur. All that, combined with a 23rd-place finish at the NCAA Championships last year and two top-five finishes in the fall, made him Pacific Northwest Golf Association golfer of the year in 1999.

But ask him if any of those individual accomplishments mean anything to him, and he politely changes the subject.

"The team is more important than you as an individual," he said. "Our main goal is to go out as a team and play well. Anything individual is a bonus."

Lavoie has led the Ducks in seven of 12 tournaments this year, and at five of those tournaments the team finished fourth or better. There is no doubt that his scores boost his team.

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Ryan Lavoie leader