

## Volleyball

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frustrated."

"They are wearing her down in the passing game and her attacking game is affected," Ferreira said of Tobbagi's struggles against ASU.

As a team, Oregon hit just .087 percent from the floor on Friday. Seniors Amy Banducci and Halie Mazza, normally two of the most reliable competitors on the squad, tallied a combined seven kills and hit .100 and .167, respectively.

"It was an ugly match," Ferreira said. "For the first time this year our core chemistry struggled. All four [of the upperclassmen] had a bad night. And how they go, we go."

The weekend also featured several shifts in Oregon's lineup. Coming

off of a career match against ASU, freshman Alisha Stevens replaced junior setter Julie Gerlach in the Ducks' starting lineup Saturday. The move marked the first time that Oregon went away from its two-setter offensive system.

"Julie's been struggling," Ferreira said. "Her set to kill ratio hasn't been effective. She's been under a lot of pressure lately."

In the last two weekend series, Ferreira said his team has done a good job of preparing for the second game, but has not come out in the opening game with enough intensity.

"Two of our last four games have been sluggish, and that's not what you want to see at the mid-point of the season," said Ferreira, also referring to his team's 3-0 loss at UCLA Sept. 29.

## Pez Sez

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losing streaks. On a couple occasions, red, puffy eyes betrayed the coach.

I remember sitting on press row in Corvallis, watching the Ducks lose the first Civil War match to the Beavers. You would never know they were losing from the way they were joking around with each other, despite the scoreboard.

A reporter sitting near me said something about KidSports. Point well taken.

So there I sat on Friday, hoping to see a dramatic turnaround. I knew the Ducks' season results almost mirrored those of last season. I watched Oregon fight for a 2-0 lead over Oregon State on Sept. 19, only to have the wheels fall off again and lose in five games.

I tried telling myself as I

watched them play Friday that they commit fewer errors this season than they did last season. But the weekend's results showed 20 attack errors against Arizona State and 22 against Arizona, just a couple down from the averages of a year ago.

Is there anything different about this team? Anything positive at all?

Yes, there is.

No more light-heartedness. The Ducks have discipline. They respect themselves, even when they are down. For the first time in a long time, Oregon has an attitude.

While this newfound attitude hasn't won the Ducks many matches, it has made them tough. After a successful preseason, they took Stanford and California to five games each. Oregon also beat Portland, which it failed to do at home last October when the Pilots hadn't won a single game.



Sophomore setter Sydney Chute and the rest of the Oregon volleyball team fell hard to Arizona State on Friday. In the loss, Chute tallied seven kills and three service aces. Kevin Calame Emerald

The difference between last season and this season eludes the scorecards, but can be seen on setter Sydney Chute's face as she gives direction to her teammates between volleys.

And the origin of this potentially program-saving improvement stands calmly on the sideline during the matches, clad in a business suit and clutching a clipboard.

A new head coach can only do so much with a new team, let alone a team that spent the last nine years in the Pacific-10 Conference cellar. But Carl Ferreira has done all he can under that situation, giving his team a more sturdy foundation than anything it had last time around.

It is impossible to ask Ferreira to transform these Ducks into one of the best teams of the conference so

soon — it's another thing entirely for them to become one of the hardest-working teams around.

Last season, Nelson said it was hard to go on without the rewards of winning.

I see a single positive change: Somehow, Ferreira has found a way to do just that.

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