



(Left to right) Lindsay Murphy, Julie Gerlach, Sydney Chute and Halie Mazza look to unite in Washington tonight.

Kevin Calame Emerald

# Duck volleyball has chance for premiere Pac-10 victory

■ Three last-place teams face off in Washington this weekend; a sweep for Oregon would be its first since 1991

By Adam Jude  
Oregon Daily Emerald

It's not going to get any easier for the Oregon volleyball team.

In a clash of bottom-feeding titans, the Ducks (7-8 overall, 0-7 Pacific-10) will travel north to face Washington (4-10, 0-7) and Washington State (10-6, 1-6) this weekend.

The Ducks have not won consecutive Pac-10 matches since 1991.

"I really want to sweep them," freshman outside hitter Lindsay Murphy said. "And realistically, we should."

If Oregon can get past the slumping Huskies on Friday, then the contest against the Cougars should be even better for head coach Carl Ferreira's club. Over the past two weekends, the Ducks have had little success on Fridays, but have come out strong on Saturday night.

"In our last two series, our best performances have come against the best teams, which is not what

you want to see," Ferreira said of Oregon's losses to No. 1 USC Sept. 30 and No. 6 Arizona last Saturday.

The Huskies — whose last Pac-10 victory came over Oregon last season — have lost eight straight matches, but have won nine of the last 10 meetings with the Ducks.

Junior outside hitter Monique Tobbagi is confident of the team's chances this weekend.

"We know we can beat them," she said. "If we can be a little more efficient in our attacks, then we'll run circles around people."

Although the three teams are in the "Conference of Champions," Oregon, Washington and Washington State haven't played anything like champions this season. The Ducks have the worst hitting percentage in the conference, and the fewest number of blocks, digs and assists. The Huskies have the lowest kill total in the Pac-10 and are hitting just .207.

Washington State's only Pac-10 victory this season came against Washington.

It should be an interesting weekend.

"It's been a rough beginning in the Pac-10," sophomore middle blocker Amanda Porter said. "But

up in Washington we'd like to take advantage of those teams and finish off the first half of Pac-10 play on a positive note."

Saturday's match in Pullman will be a homecoming of sorts for Murphy, who is a native of Spokane, Wash.

"I'm going to have some friends and family there, so I'm really excited," she said. "I just want to play and contribute as much as I can."

Ferreira will also be heading back to familiar territory. During his tenure as the head coach at Idaho, Ferreira was located just seven miles from the Washington State campus.

"Washington State is one of the toughest places to play in the conference," Ferreira said of Friel Court, which is averaging 939 volleyball fans per match this season.

Ferreira also noted that the matches against the Washington schools are important in terms of recruitment.

"We want to attract the best talent in the region," he said. "We want Oregon volleyball to be the school of choice."

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