

Men's tennis team honors new court

■ Men's tennis is happy in its new home while the women have mixed results at Rolex Regionals

By Robbie McCallum
Oregon Daily Emerald

Home sweet home. That's where the Oregon men's tennis team is right now — home indoors, out of the cold, rain and wind. The Ducks' first competition in the new Student Tennis Center was a successful one.

"It feels good to be able to play on your home court," men's tennis coach Chris Russell said. "Having [a home court] has affected the quality of our practices and our matches."

The Duck Classic was a three-day, round-robin tournament involving Pacific-10 Conference rivals Washington and Portland.

Sophomore Oded Teig had the best outing for the Ducks, as he won three of four singles matches and went 2-1 in doubles matches with freshman Buck Mink. Teig upset the No. 84-ranked Jeremy Berman from Washington, 6-2, 6-3. Teig was unsuccessful in his second upset bid against the Huskies' No. 50-ranked Matt Hanlin.

"Oded played good for most of the weekend, going three-for-four," Russell said. "He's seeing what he needs to do to get to the next level of play."

A doubles tandem of David Becker and Jason Menke provided excitement during the weekend. Becker and Menke upset Washington's top doubles team of Hanlin and Berman, 8-5, Friday and earned an 8-5 come-from-behind victory against Portland's Jeff Nunnenkamp and Quinn Brochard Sunday.

"Hopefully, we can take stuff

from this weekend and make adjustments," Russell said. "This was a really good barometer to where we need to be. And it gives us a good measurement for what we need to work on."

The Oregon women will have to wait until next year for their home opener. Instead, the Ducks traveled to Palo Alto, Calif., for the ITA Rolex Regional Tournament.

After a strong start Thursday, weather and injuries put a damper on the Ducks' spirits.

Sophomore Jeanette Mattsson defeated Portland's Samantha Kluger 6-2, 6-1 to advance to the round of 32, as did sophomore Monika Geiczys with a first round bye. Oregon's four other entrants lost in the first round of play.

Mattsson then swept Washington's Amy Allen, 6-0, 6-0. Geiczys, the No. 14 seed, defeated Pacific's Melinda Kocsis, 6-4, 6-3.

Freshman Courtney Nagle and junior Vickie Gunnarson rebounded with 8-1 wins in consolation play.

Rain postponed Friday's second-round action and forced the cancellation of the consolation and doubles play for the tournament.

Geiczys beat Fresno State's Simone Jardin 1-6, 6-3, 6-0 to advance to the quarterfinals but was forced to withdraw from the tournament with an aggravated wrist.

The doubles team of Geiczys and Nagle had advanced to the quarterfinal round, but they were forced to withdraw because of the injury.

"Monika has a strained muscle in her wrist, and it just got too painful to continue playing," women's head coach Jack Griffin said.

Geiczys and the Oregon team will have two months to recover. Their next competition is Jan. 12 in the Pac-10 Indoor Championships.

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watched the Beavers trounce Arizona on the road Saturday night, 33-9, knows that next week's game will be just that — hard.

But in a way, you knew it all would come down to this. It would have been too simple to just beat California and have Oregon State lose. It wouldn't have had the necessary drama for the 2000 Ducks if they were to take the field in Corvallis knowing that they were already going to the Rose Bowl.

It would have made it much too easy on the fans, who have grown accustomed to holding their breaths, clutching their hearts and squinting their eyes as their Ducks come from behind to win — as was the case again against Cal.

And you know what else? It wouldn't have made next Saturday's game as much fun. Yeah, that's right. I said that this Civil War will be fun.

Two teams from the state of Oregon battling it out with the rights to the Rose Bowl on the line? Amazing. The national media will be eating this game up. The storylines are just too good.

There's Oregon State head coach Dennis Erickson's unbelievable turnaround of a football program in only his second year on the job.

There's the pathetic history of this game, including a forgettable 0-0 tie in 1983 that has been dubbed the "Toilet Bowl."

And there's the national rankings of both schools, with Oregon being No. 5 and Oregon State sitting at No. 8. (When Oregon athletic director Bill Moos heard of the

recent rankings of both schools Sunday afternoon, he let out two words: "That's amazing.")

But it's clear that some people still need to do their research on the teams. During halftime of Oregon State's game against Arizona, Fox Sports Net analyst Kellen Winslow — a former San Diego Charger whom I have great respect for — analyzed the Civil War game with his hosts. While he got all of the players' names right, he mistakenly referred to Oregon State being located in Beaverton, instead of Corvallis.

Which is just another reason why this Civil War is so important. Regardless of the outcome, for one Saturday afternoon, the nation's eyes will be focused on two teams from a state commonly forgotten about.

"It's obviously great for the Northwest," Moos said. "My hat's off to Oregon State. And for Oregon, you always want to settle it on the field. I could sense in the locker room afterwards that our team was saving the celebration for next week."

As is Civil War week tradition, Moos will embark on a six-city tour that takes him through Bend, Klamath Falls, Medford, Roseburg, Salem and Portland. He will be joined by radio announcer Jerry Allen, who will help him hype Saturday's game to legions of Duck fans who seem to dread a make-or-break game taking place in Corvallis.

And just think, this could have been a column about Oregon securing its fifth Rose Bowl berth in school history, and its first in seven years.

But as you and I both know, it couldn't have been that easy.

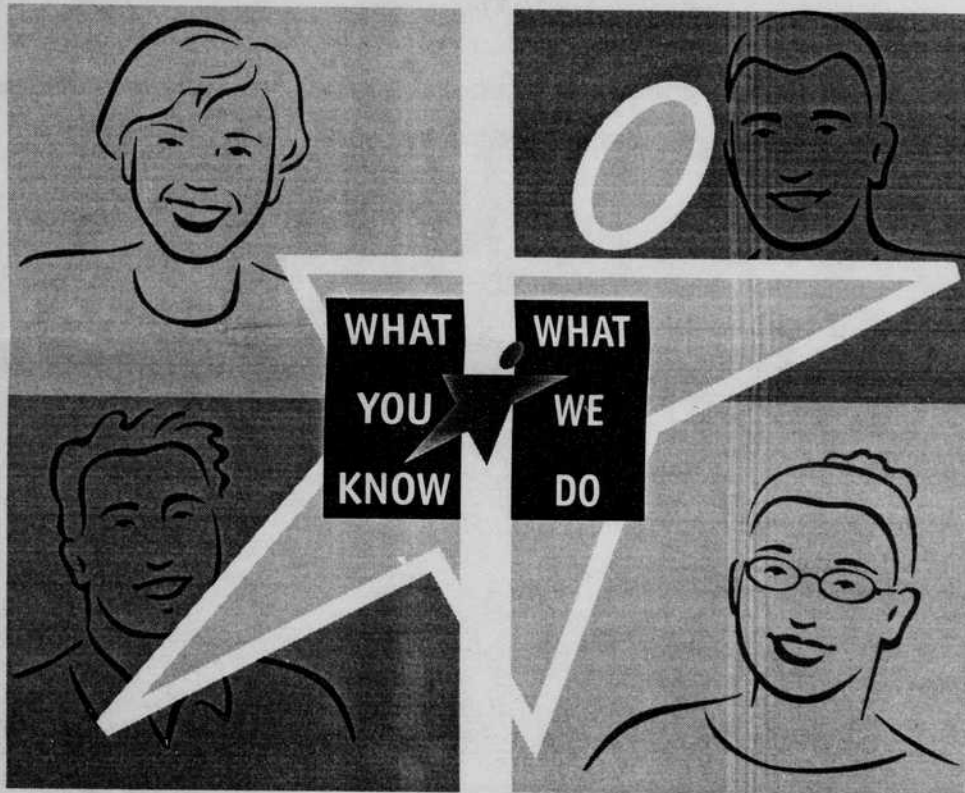
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