

# Club soccer plays its best at championships

In a national championship battle, the men's club soccer team entered the tournament in fourth and finished second

By Jesse Thomas  
For the Emerald

Oregon not only took its luggage to Texas but also brought along the familiar Northwest weather of pouring rain and sub-30 degree temperatures.

Most importantly, though, the Ducks traveled with big enough hearts to challenge the best.

The road to the final match, in the NIRSA National Championship tournament, wasn't an easy one for

the Oregon men's club soccer team. The team's first game, out of the six played in a three day period, was against Middle Tennessee State. The 6-0 win was easily obtainable, but in the second game, Oregon fell to Rice, 1-0.



After that game, Oregon stood on the verge of elimination. If the Ducks didn't win their next game, then their championship hopes were finished.

But they were not about to let fifth-ranked Weber State finish them off early in the tournament, as there was too much unfinished business to take care of.

"We had to give it 100 percent," said coach/player Ross Minckler. "It was like our most important game of the season, and we gave it our all."

With the win, Oregon moved more than halfway to the finals match, but in the men's quarterfinals game, the Ducks would have to face top-ranked Virginia.

The game turned into a battle of who wanted it more, and the teams found themselves in double overtime, knotted at 2-2. With everyone running on pure adrenaline, Oregon sophomore Michael Kubas scored the game-winning goal with just 30 seconds left to secure the nail-biting win.

"It was so awesome," Kubas said. "[Forward] Matt Tassos passed me

the ball and I took care of business."

"It was a great feeling," Tassos said. "Winning this was like one of those feelings you get inside that you just can't describe."

With spirits rejuvenated, Oregon inched only one game away from the highly anticipated finals match. The semifinals game was against third-ranked Howard, which Oregon defeated, 3-1, for a respectable win.

Finally, the finals game against James Madison arrived for the Ducks.

One team would leave glorified with the championship crown, while the other would finish in second place. Both teams fought hard for the right to be labeled national champions, but the Oregon men left the field with second place af-

ter their narrow 2-0 defeat.

"Our goal was to win it all, so we didn't get the perfect season," Minckler said. "We came into this tournament ranked fourth, so we were still very pleased."

Oregon finished regular season play at 7-1, and three players made the All-Tournament team. Next up for the Ducks is the indoor soccer season, which takes place in the winter, and then they return to outdoor competition in the spring.

In a game that requires skill, stamina and a lot of heart, the men's club soccer team left Texas with the second-place trophy and an experience they will never forget.

"This was amazing," Kubas said. "This is what it all comes down to."

## Sports Brief

### Fiesta Bowl 'wide open' to team considerations

PHOENIX—The Fiesta Bowl selection committee held its first meeting Monday and emerged

carefully, not counting out any potential teams for the Jan. 1 game.

"We've decided that we're still wide open on the possibilities," Fiesta Bowl executive director John Junker said.

If Notre Dame beats USC this weekend to improve to 9-2, the Fighting Irish are a strong con-

tender despite their No. 11 ranking in the BCS list. Notre Dame's national reputation, huge following and attractiveness to ABC-TV could overwhelm any other factors.

"It would be very tough to say no to Notre Dame," Junker said.

Oregon State (10-1) is No. 5 in

the BCS standings, represents a rags-to-riches story, and has fans hungry for a trip to a major bowl game.

"Those are all positives," Junker said. "I don't know how the network would view Oregon State as a national game."

If Oregon State ends up left out

of the picture, the Beavers probably would wind up in the Holiday Bowl.

Pac-10 commissioner Tom Hansen has promised to lobby heavily for Oregon State to go to the Fiesta Bowl.

The Associated Press

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### Horoscope by Linda C. Black

**TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 21).** Join friends in spiritual inquiry and find the balance you've sought. You'll become more outspoken in the process. Questions lead to study through December. It's OK to have nice things in January. Answers lead to new questions in February. Rely on your elders' wisdom in May and children's enthusiasm in June. Your path leads you to learn about wealth in July. Your revelations inspire action in October.

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)** — Today is a 5 — Watch what you say and do. Instead of taking action, get a partner to do it for you. The other person will be more effective. Why fight a battle you can't win? Get somebody with different skills to stand up for you.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)** — Today is a 7 — It's a busy day, and quick thinking is required. Luckily, you can do that now. Your partner gives you good information, and that helps a lot. If you spot a problem brewing, ask for help before you need it.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21)** — Today is a 7 — A romantic partnership could work well and might involve a frank discussion. An intellectual relationship might become more intimate if you decide the time is right. The two of you don't always agree, but that adds to the excitement.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22)** — Today is a 7 — Somebody at home needs your attention today, and something at home needs to be cleaned up, too. Be careful working around sharp objects, however. You and your partner can finish a project, but don't rush. Haste makes waste.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)** — Today is a 6 — You're learning quickly, so take on a challenge. You like to fix things, and others like it when you do that. This project is more difficult that it appears, so stay relaxed. Find the manual and read it before you start.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)** — Today is a 6 —

Money could be a concern. How will you get enough? You want to fix up your home or move to more beautiful surroundings. That might be possible, but it will take planning. Consult an expert before you decide which route to take.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)** — Today is a 6 — You're active and thinking quickly. You're moving quickly, too. You want to get things done, and you don't want to talk about it any longer. Making decisions now is easy, but don't get hasty. Listen to feedback from people you trust.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)** — Today is a 5 — You're careful about what you say, but others aren't as wary. That's good because they'll tell you whatever you want to know. Get them to talk, and you'll be able to put all the clues together.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)** — Today is a 5 — You may have to keep a secret from a friend. If you gave your word, you can do it. The whole thing will be out in the open soon, anyway. Meanwhile, work on a project with others, but don't gossip.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)** — Today is a 7 — You have the opportunity to advance your career. If you're going on a friend's recommendation, you're probably in the right place at the right time. Give yourself a push and be assertive. Your confidence could make the difference.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)** — Today is a 5 — You're in good communication with a person from far away, but getting there's difficult. Later tonight or this week will be better. Don't despair. Other work needs to be done before you take time off, anyway.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)** — Today is a 7 — Money that you share with other people needs your attention. Figure out how much you'll be paid and how much the job will cost. Also, learn about a controversial topic to be in a better position to make an upcoming decision.

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