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# Hockey returns to its home ground

■ After a week off, the Ducks are healthy and ready to rebound from tough losses

By Inge Scheve  
for the Emerald

The Oregon club hockey team faces off with Western Washington University this Friday and Saturday for its last home games of the fall term.



The Ducks don't expect an easy opponent in the Vikings, said Oregon captain Tyler Shaffar.

"Last year they were a really good team," he said, noting that the Vikings field one of the best players in the league in forward Julien Lalonde from Quebec, Canada.

"They're underrated," Shaffar said. "They have a really solid organization, top notch."

Oregon defenseman Tim Gibbons agrees: "I'm expecting a tough game. We'll work hard and give it 60 minutes of focus."

In preparing for the weekend's games, the Ducks have looked back on what didn't work leading up to these games. The last few games have been frustrating for the Ducks, especially in Seattle where Oregon dropped two games to Northwest rival Washington.

This week's practice has revolved around simplicity, Shaffar said. Simple vortex, quick passing and timing to refocus what's happening on the ice.

"We have the better skills, but we're not executing. We just don't work together," Shaffar said. "We should not be 6-7 right now."

On a brighter note, almost everyone is back injury-free after a gameless weekend that healed the wounds from Seattle.

Josh Hardin will be back as the main goalie, but the starting line for Friday has not yet been picked, Shaffar said.

Friday is also a mini-Greek night, Shaffar said.

"We're hoping to get a decent-sized crowd this weekend," he said.

Both games will be played at the Lane County Ice Arena at 7:30 p.m.

## Pac-10 may consider withdrawing from BCS

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Pacific-10 Conference could withdraw from the Bowl Championship Series if No. 5 Oregon State isn't picked for the Fiesta Bowl.

"I think the BCS has been very good for college football, but it has to be good for all the participants," commissioner Tom Hansen told the Los Angeles Times on Tuesday.

The Fiesta Bowl is preparing for Sunday's pick of teams to play in one of the BCS's four major bowls.

No. 2 Miami and No. 11 Notre Dame are the leading teams for the Fiesta Bowl. Oregon State (10-1), whose only loss was by three points at Pac-10 champion Washington, could lose out on the big payoff of a BCS bowl. Relegating the Beavers to the Holiday Bowl would cost the Pac-10, which shares bowl revenues, about \$4 million.

The Pac-10 contract to take part in the BCS expires in 2006.

"There is an extra burden on the Fiesta Bowl this year. I hope they feel that," Hansen said of the possibility that Fiesta officials could ignore Oregon State's higher BCS standing and go for a Notre Dame-Miami matchup.

Another scenario has No. 8 Kansas State getting an automatic Fiesta berth if it beats current No. 1 Oklahoma in the Big-12 title game. That would give the Fiesta selectors just one at-large choice for their game, which has a \$13.5 million payout.

The Rose Bowl is in the BCS rotation to have a No. 1-2 game once every four years. But the No. 2 team in the Pac-10 has regularly been shut out of the other premier bowls in the BCS. Arizona was the only at-large selection for a major bowl in recent years, going to the 1994 Fiesta Bowl.

In 1997, No. 5 UCLA was bypassed by the Sugar Bowl in favor of No. 9 Ohio State. UCLA instead went to the Cotton Bowl.

"The Pac-10 may be better off going back to the Rose Bowl and forgetting the rest," Hansen said. "I wouldn't want to continually subject our teams to the anticipation of being selected and fairly considered when it just doesn't happen."

The BCS rankings have Oregon State at No. 6 and Fiesta Bowl officials have said the Beavers are still a high consideration.

## Holiday hooks 'Horns

By Bernie Wilson  
The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The Holiday Bowl has hooked the Texas Longhorns for its game Dec. 29.

Or, as Texas coach Mack Brown sees it, the 'Horns hooked the Holiday Bowl.

"I feel the Holiday Bowl is really excited about this team, but they can't be more excited about us than we are about going," Brown said after the Longhorns accepted the Holiday Bowl's invitation Wednesday.

The No. 12 Longhorns (9-2) have a lot to look forward to on their first trip to San Diego, which happens to be the hometown of Ricky Williams, who won the Heisman Trophy at Texas in 1998.

The Longhorns wanted to play in this game not only for the chance to play a top 10 team from the Pacific-10 Conference and hopefully finish

in the top 10 themselves, but also for recruiting exposure in Southern California.

"They really, really want to be here," Holiday Bowl executive director John Reid said.

The Holiday Bowl would like to bring in No. 5 Oregon State (10-1), but the Beavers remain in the Bowl Championship Series picture. If the Beavers receive an invitation to a BCS game on Sunday, the Holiday Bowl will invite No. 9 Oregon (9-2).

Regardless of the opponent, Brown got a head start on scouting. "I got the Oregon-Oregon State film out today and started watching it," he said during a conference call. "I figured that's about all we can do between now and Sunday."

The Longhorns are on a six-game winning streak going into their third straight bowl game under Brown, and their 40th overall.

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