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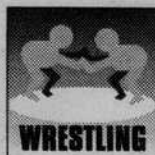
UO looks to end losing skid

■ The Ducks face long odds against a 14th-ranked Arizona State team

By Robbie McCallum
Oregon Daily Emerald

If there was ever a time for the Oregon wrestling team to break out of its slump, this would be it.

Pacific-10 Conference powerhouse Arizona State visits McArthur Court at 7:30 p.m. today for a key matchup of ranked teams. The Ducks hope to snap their three-match losing streak at home. Oregon is 7-6 overall with a 7-2 record in the state of Oregon.



Both teams are in their home stretch of the season with only two dual matches remaining before the Pac-10 Championships.

"We've got to keep our eye on the prize," Oregon head coach Chuck Kearney said. "We've got to have short memories and keep preparing for the Pac-10 Championships and the NCAA Tournament."

Arizona State recently disposed of No. 22 Fresno State, a team Oregon lost to on Friday.

With seven ranked wrestlers across the board, the Sun Devils are strong

where Oregon isn't. No. 14 Arizona State is led by Steve Blackford and Eric Larkin, both top-five wrestlers. The Sun Devils are 2-0 in the Pac-10 and 7-3 overall.

In the 184-pound battle, seventh-ranked senior Doug Lee takes on Arizona State's R.D. Pursell, ranked No. 13. Lee has hit his stride lately since an injury-plagued preseason. The All-American has been victorious in his last nine matches.

Another key matchup is the 157-pound battle between No. 20 junior Eugene Harris and the Sun Devils' No. 13 Rocky Smart.

No. 4 sophomore heavyweight Eric Webb, winner of his last seven matches, takes on his ninth ranked opponent of the season against No. 10 Kellan Fluckinger. Webb recently knocked off No. 2 Billy Blunt of Fresno State and No. 19 Bart Johnson of Boise State.

"The one guy that has been going out there and doing it every single match is Eric Webb," Kearneysaid. "He doesn't let anything get into his head and he gets it done."

No. 10 sophomore Brian Watson takes on No. 15 David Douglas at 133 pounds in another key battle.

Curtis Owens, ranked No. 20, takes on Oregon freshman Luke Larwin at 174 pounds.

In tournament matches this season, Ducks wrestlers have faced Ari-

On Tap

Who: Oregon vs. Arizona St.
When: 7:30 tonight
Where: McArthur Court

zonia State wrestlers six times, winning three times. Lee split matches with Pursell, while Williams and senior Chael Sonnen have each won one.

"We need to compete better every time we step onto the mat," Kearney said. "We have got to figure out a way to not concede points. We just have to get tougher."

The Ducks are looking forward to the return of junior Shaun Williams, who sat out Oregon's last two matches with a concussion. Williams is ranked No. 5 at 125 pounds and will take on Chris Knox.

Arizona State upended the Ducks last season, 31-12, in Tempe, Ariz., en route to a second-place finish in the Pac-10. The Sun Devils have also won the last 15 matches against the Ducks, with the last Oregon win in 1974.

The match will be Oregon's last regular-season appearance at McArthur Court before the Ducks host the Pac-10 Championships on Feb. 25-26.

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Hockey ready to face Huskies

■ The Ducks and Huskies get ready to rumble twice this weekend in a PAC-8 tune-up

By Inge Scheve
For the Emerald

The Oregon club hockey team

faces off against Washington at home this Friday and Saturday. The Ducks are down 2-0 in the inaugural I-5 Cup and must win both games to force a shoot-out after Saturday's match.

Both of the teams are evenly matched, said Oregon captain Tyler Shaffar. He added that he expects physical games against the Huskies, and that a bitter rivalry exists between the two teams.

"The team that is able to keep its composure on the ice and still play a physical game will win," Shaffar said.

In November, when the Ducks took on the Huskies in Seattle, Oregon suffered on the larger Olympic-size rink that threw its systems off. This time, things will change, Shaffar said.

"We got them on our ice surface," he said. "No hiding anywhere on our ice. We want Oregon engraved on the first cup."

Additionally, Oregon has had problems with its strategy this season and has changed systems nu-

CLUB SPORTS THIS WEEKEND

Men's Lacrosse vs. Chico State.

Sailing team competes in Seattle.

Hockey plays at home against Washington.

Bowling travels to Las Vegas.

merous times since Seattle. But the Ducks have finally settled on one to last through the PAC-8 championships later this month.

"I think we have the system in place that is going to carry us through to the championships," Shaffar said. "Winning involves executing with the systems and lines that we have in place."

If the Ducks manage Washington this weekend and bag a couple of games at Western Washington in Bellingham, Wash., the following weekend, Shaffar expects the Ducks to be in good shape heading into the championships at home.

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Jeter close to contract

By Ronald Blum
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Derek Jeter and the New York Yankees hope to agree by next week to a contract nine or 10 years long worth an average of \$18 million to \$19 million per season.

The sides have been negotiating for weeks and are trying to complete the talks before a scheduled arbitration hearing Monday in Phoenix.

They have narrowed their differences in recent days, and one baseball official with knowledge of the talks, speaking on the condition he not be identified, said an agreement was likely within a few days.

At that price, the contract would total \$162 million to \$190 million, which would be the second-high-

est in sports history, trailing only the \$252 million, 10-year deal agreed to in December by Jeter's friend, Alex Rodriguez, and the Texas Rangers.

Last winter, Jeter and the Yankees reached a tentative agreement on a \$118.5 million, seven-year contract, but Yankees owner George Steinbrenner refused to finalize the deal because its average salary, \$16,928,571, would have been the highest in baseball at the time.

Jeter and the team then agreed to a \$10 million, one-year contract. The Yankees went on to win their third straight World Series, their fourth in the five years Jeter has been with the team. The 26-year-old shortstop then was voted Most Valuable Player of both the All-Star game and the World Series.