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R. Ashley Smith Emerald
Junior transfer Kristi Hall (23), who played at Consumnes River College in Sacramento, Calif., last year, will be back in the northern California area this weekend. The Ducks are aiming to pull off the upset against two of the country's top teams in Cal and Stanford.

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Softball

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for the series, as he said he will decide just a couple hours before game time.

Junior Connie McMurren (8-11) and sophomore Andrea Vidlund (9-4) will most likely see action on the mound, along with sophomore Lisa Wangler (4-5), who is second on the team with a 3.11 ERA and leads the team with a .387 batting average in the leadoff spot.

Senior first baseman Triawn Custer has been hot of late for the Ducks. Custer tied Oregon's career home run list with two homers against the Vikings Tuesday. One more shot over the fence will give her 34 as a Duck, which would break the mark set by Jill Robinson last season.

Stanford (23-3) counters with Dana Sorensen, the National Player of the Week last week. The sophomore

pitcher is 17-1 on the season, including a shutout of No. 1 UCLA last week. She leads the nation with more than 12 strikeouts per game and her .024 ERA is second-best in the country.

The Cardinal is averaging nearly five runs per game, while allowing its opponents only about one run.

In a March 10 meeting with Cal, the Ducks managed just two hits in a 6-0 Bears victory. Wangler tallied the loss in that game at the National Invitational Tournament.

"Cal is a really good club," Gamez said. "They have a solid lineup one through nine."

The Bears (39-4, 0-3) are looking to bounce back from three straight losses to open conference play.

Veronica Nelson leads Cal with 13 home runs and 35 RBI this season. Defensively, the Bears' .979 fielding percentage is third-best in the nation.

"We're just gonna go down there, play hard and see what happens," Gamez said.

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Santiago

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great honor to win such a huge meet."

After recording two personal

records during day one, Lorenzo came out and scored two more PRs: a 15-9 in the pole vault and a 14.9 in the 110-meter hurdles.

What makes his performance even more impressive was that it

was his first decathlon of the season.

"He showed a lot of heart, especially at the end, passing two guys in the last 100 meters [of the 1,500]," Oregon assistant coach Bill Lawson said. "The decathlon is the most physically, mentally and emotionally demanding event in track and field, and Santiago showed his grit by gradually catching up the whole way, and refusing to let up."

"That kind of dedication and hard work is the example we want to see in all of our athletes."

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Despite the personal-record-breaking performance, Lorenzo cites his sixth-place performance on Wednesday as an example of what he needs to do to get better.

"I sucked yesterday," said Lorenzo, referring to his day one performance. "I know I can do a lot better. But everything that went bad yesterday went good today."

He knows he has plenty of room for improvement before the NCAAs begin on May 30 in Eugene and believes it will take a total score of 8,000 to be the national champion, a feat he describes as his "whole goal."

Despite the work ahead, Lorenzo says he will make sure to treasure his latest win.

"Beating Trafton gave me a lot of confidence going into the season," he said. "In a decathlon, you never know [who will win] until the last race."

"It feels good ... real good."

Notes: Other Ducks competing Thursday were hammer throwers sophomore Adam Kriz (personal best throw of 192-4 in the hammer) and redshirt junior Rian Ingram (did not meet standard length). In the 400-meter hurdles freshman Jake Garlick (third, 52.40), junior Tim Overfield (53.20) and freshman Brandon Holliday (fifth, 55.83 in different section) all competed.