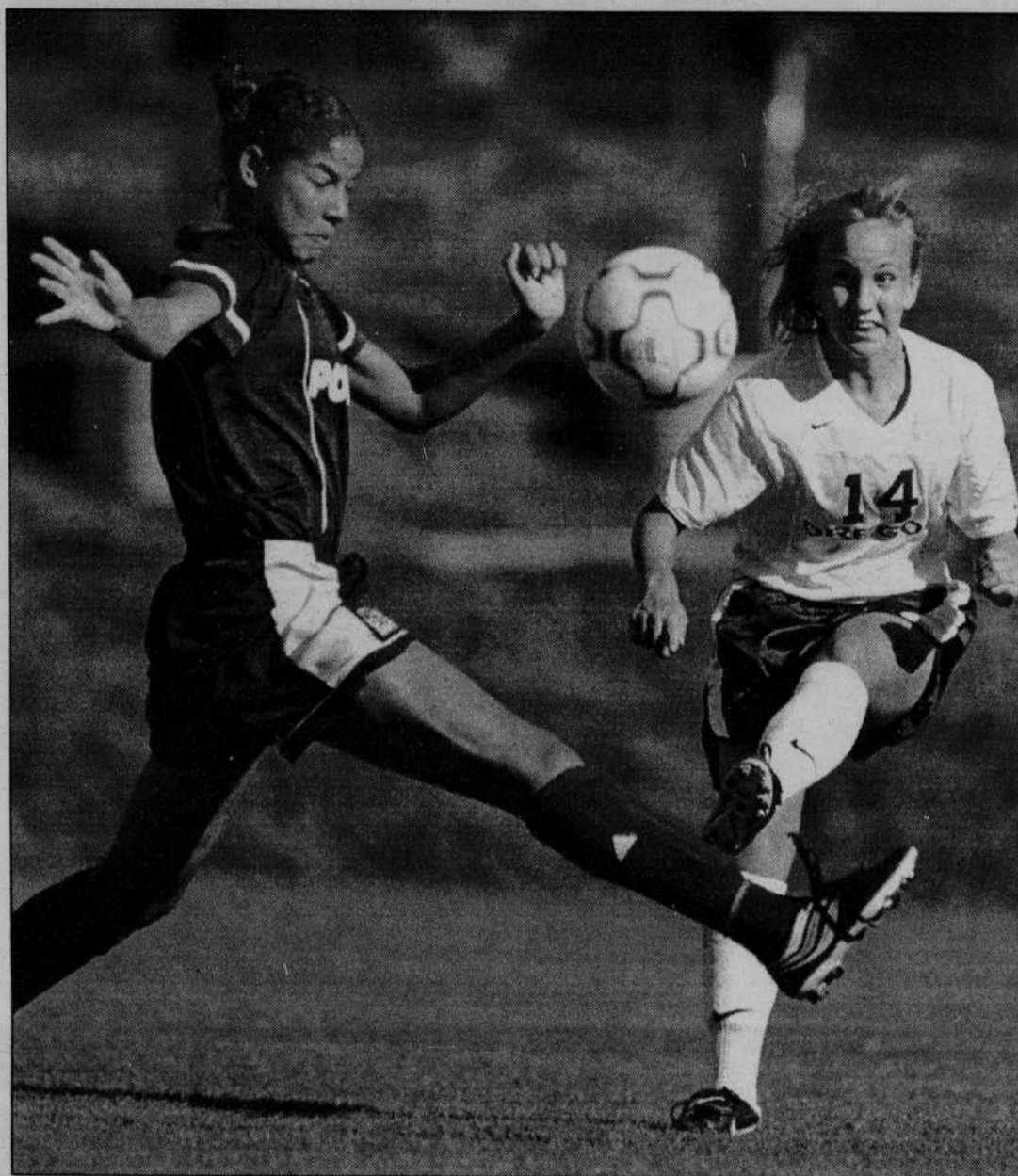


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Best Bet
NFL: Indianapolis at Kansas City.
5:30 p.m., ESPN



Thursday, October 25, 2001



Adam Amato Emerald

Senior Annie Murphy, seen here against Portland on Oct. 3, had two goals in Oregon's 3-2 victory over Arizona State on Saturday. She tore the medial collateral ligament of her left knee while scoring the game-winner in overtime.

FALLEN HERO

■ Oregon senior midfielder Annie Murphy paid the price for her game-winning goal against Arizona State Saturday

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Annie Murphy sat on the ground, 18 yards away from the goal mouth.

She knew something was wrong, yet everything was so right.

The scoreboard at Sun Devil Soccer Field read 3-2, Oregon. Murphy had just scored her second goal of the game to put away Arizona State in overtime Sunday and perhaps save the Ducks' chances to make the NCAA Tournament in 2001.

And yet, Murphy knew something was wrong.

As senior Beth Bowler, who had scored Oregon's second goal of the game, went bananas with the rest of the Ducks, she rushed over to Murphy.

"No one realized it until we ran up to hug her," Bowler said. "She was like, 'Don't touch me! I'm hurt!'"

Murphy, Oregon's humble, talented senior midfielder, tore the medial collateral ligament of her left knee when ASU goalkeeper Kristin Slater tackled her as she scored the game-winner. She does not know if she'll play again this season.

"I was in shock," Murphy said of her initial reaction to the injury. "It felt like

the bottom half of my leg wasn't connected to the top half."

But for one moment Sunday, the South Eugene High graduate was the ultimate hero of an Oregon team that has found many different heroes this season.

"I wouldn't take it back, because it meant a lot to beat them," Murphy said Wednesday. "I wish I was healthy. I would be more excited."

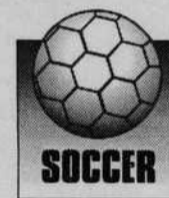
Murphy's two goals Sunday were her second and third this season, and only the third and fourth of her Oregon career. Despite her low career goal total, the midfielder has been a key to the Ducks' success this season, head coach Bill Steffen said.

"She's one of our best players on the ball," Steffen said. "She's a very dangerous player wide. She's not especially fast, like Julie (McLellan) or Crystal (David), but she gives us a different kind of weapon."

Murphy hasn't always been a Duck. After she graduated from South Eugene, Murphy attended the University of Utah for a year.

"I'm not even sure why I went there," Murphy said. "There were things I really liked about it, but I didn't like the campus. It was empty a lot

Turn to **Murphy**, page 14



Guard-heavy Ducks 'excited' for exhibitions to begin next week

■ As Oregon prepares for the first exhibition game Nov. 2, its players adapt to a new system and a new coach

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

Next Friday can't come soon enough for the Oregon women's basketball team.

After a week-and-a-half of practices under first-year head coach Bev Smith, the new-look Ducks are eager to get back on the court with their first exhibition game against the Basketball Travelers on Nov. 2.

"We're picking up the offense really well," said senior point guard Ednisha Curry, a transfer from Cal State Northridge who sat out last season. "We're just excited to get the season going and excited about where we're going to be. I think we're going to have a real special group of girls."

The 5-foot-6 Curry and the 5-foot-6 Shaquala Williams, the 2000 Pacific-10 Conference Player of the Year and a candidate for the Naismith Player of the Year Award this season (given to the country's top player), will anchor a backcourt that features three other returnees and three freshmen.

Williams redshirted last season after tearing the anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee, but after helping the U.S. collegiate team earn a gold medal at the World University Games in

China this summer, she is back to full strength.

"(Williams) is one of the most talented basketball players to ever step onto this floor," Smith said.

Senior Jamie Craighead, Oregon's shooting guard last year, will likely move to the No. 3 position with the Ducks going with a smaller, quicker lineup. Seniors Ndidi Unaka, a 6-foot forward, and Alyssa Fredrick, a 6-foot-3 post, will likely round out the starting lineup.

"We have a very small, quick team, but that's not going to be our problem, it will be our opponents' problem," said Smith, an All-American in her playing days at Oregon from 1978-82.

Although the Ducks have made eight straight NCAA Tournament appearances and have won or shared two of the last three Pac-10 Conference championships — and won at least 10 conference games every year since 1993-94 — Pac-10 coaches predicted Smith's Ducks will finish in a tie for fifth place this season.

Stanford, a co-conference champion with Washington and Arizona State last year, was projected to finish first.

"We're not really worried about that. We still think we'll be at the top," said Craighead, who set a school record with 81 three-pointers last season. "We always anticipate good things. Coach Smith has set into place a great philosophy here."

Sophomore forward Cathrine Kraayeveld is expected to see significant playing time this season, as will freshman Andrea Bills, a 6-foot-3 post, Amy Parrish, a 6-foot-2 forward, and guard

Turn to **Basketball**, page 16

A little heart goes a long way

Ability. Quickness. Speed. Agility. Strength.

Sportswriters around the country throw these words around when describing athletes like Joey Harrington as he slings his passes. They're sometimes easily used, but more often that not, they're misplaced.

Courage. Love of the game. Heart.

These terms, and many more, are less commonplace in today's athletic world than a win was for the Seattle Mariners in the American League Championship Series. But often times, these terms are the most important ones.

Sure, Oregon volleyball is winless in Pacific-10 Conference play, and yeah, they haven't won since Sept. 8. But Oregon fans looking for a squad who

plays with more heart and sincerity need look no further than the women who call McArthur Court home.

Lindsay Closs fills the arena with a scream every single time Oregon wins a point, and when they don't, she doesn't come close to hanging her head. Stephanie Martin wears a scowl on the court that many can't match, and she plays with the ability of a 6-foot-9 center in basketball. But it is her ability to give

everything she has that makes her special.

And even Monique Tobbagi plays with a stone-cold demeanor, but it turns soft and smiling when the Ducks step off the hardcourt.

And every player on that team, whether they play the entire match or sit on the bench, has character that would make anyone proud.

"We play this sport with as much energy and emotion as the football team," head coach Carl Ferreira said. "Every single person in that room wants to succeed, or they wouldn't be here. Everyone's talented enough."

Apparently, the Ducks are not talented enough to succeed in the Pac-10, but only because the conference is loaded. Despite their poor play to date, the Oregon women have not forgotten the little people.

They are not like some professional athletes who shun reporters after a game or refuse to sign autographs for adoring fans.

Granted, had they a winning record, this all might be a moot point. Athletes, when their teams are down, are less likely to discuss what happened and be in a jovial mood. But there are those, such as the Rashad Baumans and the Tony Gwynns, who are willing to speak about what's on their mind, no matter what has happened. These special athletes are accessible and have the ability to speak up for what they believe.

Turn to **Hager**, page 14



Hank Hager

Behind the Dish