

# Resilient Ducks hopeful despite disappointments

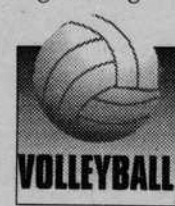
■ 2001 was rather successful for the Oregon volleyball team, even without any Pac-10 wins

By Hank Hager  
Oregon Daily Emerald

If nothing else, the 2001 season was one of growing pains and heartache for the Oregon volleyball team.

After starting off the year with an 8-1 record in non-conference play, the squad knew its true colors would have to show against its Pa-

cific-10 Conference foes. Those colors did show, but they just weren't bright enough.



For the first time in the program's 32-year existence, the Ducks failed to win a conference match, finishing the year 0-18 in the

Pac-10 and 9-21 overall. After a 10-win campaign in his first season as Oregon's head coach, Carl Ferreira

took a step back this year.

"First off, it's disappointing," Ferreira said. "You start with certain goals you feel are attainable. Any time you don't achieve those goals you've set for yourself, it's disappointing."

The Ducks did achieve some of their goals this season, even though they can't be measured by wins and points.

Coming into the year, the team featured many new faces. Juniors Stephanie Martin and Lindsay Closs came to the Ducks after two

years in other programs — Martin at a Southern Idaho junior college and Closs at Fresno State. Martin captured All-Pac-10 honorable mention honors after recording 321 kills, second-best on the squad. Closs, meanwhile, had 285 kills and was second to Martin's 126 blocks, with 119.

Freshmen Katie O'Neil and Lauren Westendorf came to Oregon in their first year of collegiate play, struggling early on in the conference season but eventually earning high marks. Westendorf may be the future of Oregon volleyball — another Monique Tobbagi-like hitter — after coming on strong late in the season to earn 39 kills, but more important, 77 digs.

"Our record does not reflect how hard we fought this season, how well we played at times, or how hard we worked in practice every day," Westendorf said. "We were a very close and relentless team."

In Tobbagi, the Ducks say goodbye to their heart and soul for the last four seasons. Although she did not start off the season as well as she would have liked, Tobbagi's resurgence toward the end of the year was reflected in the team's play. A near win against California in early November was due, in large part, to Tobbagi's control of the match, and the next night, in an even better match against Stanford, she played with a desire not seen in many others in the conference.

Tobbagi leaves Oregon as only the fifth player since 1986 to record 1,000 kills.

In addition, the Ducks lose setter

Julie Gerlach, who finished the season with 437 assists. Gerlach's 2,738 career assists places her third all-time in Oregon history.

"It's sad to end their career," Ferreira said about the team's two seniors. "They've been athletes for a long time and they've put in a lot of hours for success."

If there was one key word that could be used for this year's squad, it would be "resiliency." After being dominated early on in conference play, Oregon came back in the second half with determination. The Ducks played California, Stanford and USC with confidence late in the year, and almost pulled out three victories against ranked teams. A lesser team may have hung their heads, but there was no disappointment shown on the Oregon faces.

"We didn't accomplish some of the things we wanted to, but I don't think it defines the character these kids have," Ferreira said. "I think they've showed character all year to be as resilient as they have. This team was probably twice as good as last year's."

If success was measured by wins, then this year was a positive one for the Oregon women. But the Ducks will have a difficult task to improve their record next season.

"The Pac-10 is an amazing conference and I feel so lucky to have competed in it," Westendorf said. "I really look forward to next season and using what I learned this year to help me next year."

Emerald sports reporter Hank Hager can be reached at [hankhager@dailymerald.com](mailto:hankhager@dailymerald.com).

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### Horoscope by Linda C. Black

**TODAY'S BIRTHDAY** (Nov. 28). Past promises have been a burden. Make them into your reason to get stronger this year. This won't be easy. You'll have to work at it. Whip yourself into shape. If all that stuff had been fun, or easy to figure out, you would have done it by now. You're not only following through, you're also building a strong foundation to support the vision you'll manifest next.

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 7 - There's the dream, and then there's the reality. You've already got the former, and now it's time to work on the latter. This may not seem like much fun, but it's rather exciting. The more you learn, the more possible it all starts to become. Make the commitment. You'll be astonished at how things will start falling into place.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) - Today is a 7 - You're getting stronger, more confident, more difficult to push around, more determined to get what you want, more certain of what that is. You won't get it all, but you'll do fine. Hang tough.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21) - Today is a 7 - Settle down and do the planning. True, there's a lot to be done. That's why you must set priorities. If you don't, you'll get squashed. You can't be everything for everybody.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22) - Today is a 7 - There's not much time to meet with friends, but you can fit it in. Lunch at a favorite place, with a few favorite people, will tune you right up. Then, back into the fray. You can't do everything, but you can sure accomplish a lot.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) - Today is a 7 - Look sharp and stand at attention. If your conscience is clear, you'll have nothing to hide. It's a good idea to have the facts at your fingertips. Better memorize the most important ones.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Today is a 7 - You'd better start out by spending some time on scheduling. Otherwise, you'll never get anything done. And don't concentrate entirely on work. There are a couple of important personal matters you also need to fit in.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct 22) - Today is a 7 - This is a good day to save money, which means it's a good day to go shopping. You'll be less interested in splurging on every pretty thing you see unless it's on sale, of course.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) - Today is a 6 - You're attractive, and the other person is attracted, but that's not enough. There's something keeping you apart, and it may be a very good reason. Show good judgment, integrity and restraint. If this person really is your soul mate, waiting will just make getting together (when the time is right) sweeter.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) - Today is a 7 - There's a lot more work now and a few more problems. You're running into new difficulties because you've expanded into new territory. It's forcing you to learn.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Today is a 7 - Better check your schedule. Are you scheduled to be in two places at once? It might be time to shuffle things in your date book.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) - Today is a 6 - Some sort of breakdown or mess at home diverts your attention. You don't have time to deal with it now, but it's hard to ignore. You may have to try several things before you find one that works. Be patient.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20) - Today is a 7 - If you just took on new responsibilities, you may be a tad apprehensive. It may seem as if there's too much material to learn in too little time. Luckily, you'll

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