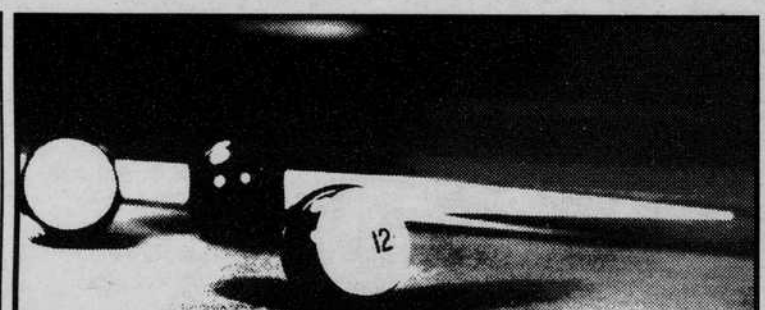




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Sports briefs

Women's soccer honored for academics
 Coming off its best season since becoming a University sport in 1996, the women's soccer team has shown it can also hit the books. The Ducks were one of two Pacific-10 Conference teams to achieve a minimum 3.0 GPA during the

2000-01 academic year. Washington also earned the honor. The two schools will be recognized Thursday by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America at the 2002 NSCAA Convention in Philadelphia. "I'm very happy to see the overall performance of the team has been balanced with a good understanding of academics and athletics," sev-

enth-year Oregon coach Bill Steffen said. "Good grades don't happen by accident, and the kids have worked hard to achieve this for the third time since I've coached at Oregon." Oregon finished last season with an 8-8-2 record — its best winning percentage under Steffen. It also landed four players on the Pac-10 All-Academic team.
 — From staff and wire reports

Basketball

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 Pac-10 (9-7 overall) — including an 83-73 win over Oregon in Los Angeles — as they begin a long stretch at home. Five of USC's next seven games are at home, and with a balanced attack in Ebony Hoffman (14.2 points, 8.7 rebounds) and Aisha Hollans (18.3, 7.1), the Trojans are tough to bet against.

In the 'zona
 After averaging less than 58 points a game during a three-game losing streak, Arizona (7-8, 3-4) torched Washington State and Washington last weekend, with 107 and 83 points, respectively. The 107 points against the Cougars is the most Arizona has scored in four years and the most points scored in the Pac-10 this season. Sophomore guard Candice Allen scored a career-high 25 points in the 83-69 win over Washington on Saturday.

E-mail sports editor Adam Jude at adamjude@dailyemerald.com.

Hockey

continued from page 5
 hockey squad will take on Finland in its opening game. Six months ago, most people in America wouldn't have paid much attention to the ice at Salt Lake. Yeah, fanatics like myself would have been glued to their television sets anyway, but the actions of September have magnified what the men of the United States do in February.

Simply put, the country needs them to do what American hockey did at Lake Placid, N.Y., 22 years ago. Back then, the economy was in shambles, American hostages were still in captivity in Iran and national pride was at an all-time low. Some have credited the upset with making everything right again in America. This probably isn't the case, but it sure made Americans believe they could pull through the tough times. In a sense, 2002 parallels 1980 closer than any year in United States' history. American pride is up, but national security is still an issue in many people's minds. The country is stronger than ever, but at the same time, it's still as frail as it ever could be.

"It was a great accomplishment for them, and we know how important it was to us," U.S. forward Doug Weight said in an article published by USA-hockey.com. "We still have that little kid in us. We're professionals now, and they were amateurs... but we're still the same kids, and we want to win as much for them as they wanted to win for us."

These men know what an Olympic gold could do for America. Win, and it will help erase the memories of Sept. 11. Lose, and the world will still be the same. However, if they make themselves a laughing stock, as they did in 1998, it could spell the end for American hockey.

For those of you who forgot, in Nagano, Japan, the American team decided to trash their hotel rooms after they accumulated their third loss in four games, leaving the sport and its players with a black eye. The men who starred for the team that year, which is a large chunk of this year's squad, can save face by playing well at Salt Lake.

But, more important, they can help pull America through its tough time.

So, if you can't make time to sit down and watch the Americans take on Finland on Feb. 15 or the Russians the next night, make sure you tape it. Who knows, there could be another miracle on ice.

E-mail reporter Hank Hager at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.

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