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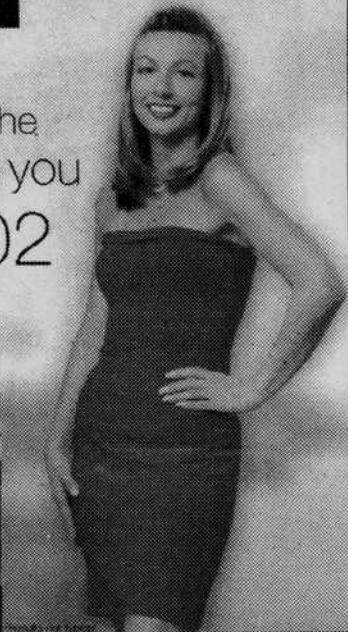


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Sports briefs

Golfers finish tied for 11th
Oregon junior John Ellis finished with rounds of 69-70 on the final day of the Ping Arizona Intercollegiate, played Tuesday at The Raven at Sabino Springs, a 6,776-yard, par-71 facility. Ellis, who led the Ducks, shot 215 to tie for 22nd place.

The Ducks shot 870 (plus-18) and shared 11th place with UC-Irvine. Individually, sophomore Mike Sica tied a career-low with a final round of 69. Sica, who also shot a 69 at the 2001 Pacific-10 Conference Championships, finished the tournament tied for 29th with rounds of 72-75-69-216.

Fresno State posted totals of 10-under par over the last two rounds to capture the tournament. The Bulldogs, who shot the low round of the tournament with a 270 (minus-14) in the sec-

ond round, shot a final-round 288 (plus-4) to win the 20-team event by one stroke over Oklahoma State (849).

Oklahoma State's Hunter Mahan shot a final round of 68 (minus-3) to win the event by two strokes over Nick Watney of Fresno State.

Volleyball hires new assistants

The Oregon volleyball team has added two new assistants to its coaching staff, Oregon head coach Carl Ferreira announced Tuesday. Former Boise State assistant Keith Rubio and former Texas San Antonio assistant Rhonda Rust will join Ferreira in his third season. Together, Rubio and Rust bring nine years of collegiate coaching experience and a wealth of club coaching experience to the Oregon volleyball program.

"Rhonda and Keith will ele-

vate the experience level of our staff immensely," Ferreira said. "They are going to make an impact based on the knowledge and understanding of collegiate volleyball that they bring to the program."

Rubio spent the past four seasons serving as Boise State's recruiting coordinator and was also involved in all aspects of coaching on the court. Ferreira says Rubio's duties at Oregon will also include being the primary recruiter as well as being involved in all aspects of on the court coaching.

Rust joins the Oregon contingent after spending the last three seasons as the top assistant at Texas-San Antonio. Rust took over as interim head coach in October 2001 and had been maintaining head coaching duties prior to being hired at Oregon.

— from staff and wire reports

Women's

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head coach Bev Smith said, "but whatever happens in the Pac-10 Tournament can help us, and there's nothing we can really do about it right now. We've got five games left, so that's where we go from here."

The Ducks know the need to put on a strong performance in the last part of the season to make the field of 64.

"We have been there eight straight times and it's kind of a big thing for us," sophomore Cathrine Kraayeveld said. "If we didn't make it this year it will be like, 'Wow, we didn't make it.' And I think maybe

that should be a focus for us. We have a streak going here, and I think we need to keep it going."

Because of the overall equality of the Pac-10 this season, the inaugural conference tournament, scheduled for March 1-4 at Mac Court, will become hotly contested. Stanford is the immediate favorite to win it all, but on any given night, there can be an upset.

One or two wins and an impressive performance in the tournament may help the Ducks when it comes to selection time, but that is no guarantee.

"I think we have to win" the Pac-10 Tournament to get in the NCAA Tournament, senior Jamie Craig-head said. "I don't think our conference is strong enough to get us in. Maybe if we win the next five games and we end up in second or third, then I think we can be in. But if people do what they're supposed to do, then I don't know if five wins will get us in."

got to work hard and work smart and convert that work into some points."

Of concern to Smith, though, was the team's inability to score off of the offensive board.

To make matters worse, Oregon went to the free throw line just 13 times against Arizona, something Smith attributed to a lack of aggressiveness after the rebound.

"At times, we're just working hard, but if you're not ready to convert those by being aggressive, then something is missing," she said.


Senior Ndidi Unaka and freshman Andrea Bills have been on fire recently. The two have provided solid play underneath, and combined with incumbents Kraayeveld and Fredrick, are beginning to be part of Oregon's strength.

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All A-board
Coming into the season, the Ducks were more concerned with their inability to consistently rebound, citing that their lack of size and experience would hinder them at the post.

But in their last 10 games, Oregon has come alive underneath. And starting with their game against Oregon State on Jan. 19, the Ducks have gone five games without being out rebounded. In three of those contests, Oregon has held the advantage by at least six boards.

And against Arizona on Saturday, the Ducks held a 25-19 advantage on the offensive side of the ball.

"I think it's just an understanding of the focus we have to have when rebounding," Smith said. "We've

A New Duck?
There has been a new face at practice the last couple weeks, and it is one not all that uncommon to Oregon fans.

Freshman Nicole Garbin, a star for the women's soccer team, has been seen working out with Smith's squad in recent weeks.

It is extremely unlikely the soccer star will be on the bench for the Ducks the rest of the season, and she may be a force for Oregon in the future.

While at Baldwin High School in Wailuku, Hawaii, the 5-foot-8 striker in soccer earned the Maui League's basketball Player of the Year award her senior season. In addition, she is ranked as the school's all-time leading scorer.

Garbin finished second in goals for women's soccer this season with five.

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