

FREE ARCHITECTURAL LECTURE

WHO:
 Ron Witte
 Assistant professor of Architecture
 Harvard Graduate School of Design
 Principal @ WW firm Cambridge, MA

WHEN:
 Friday, February 15, 2002
 5:15 pm

WHERE:
 University of Oregon, Eugene
 Lawrence Hall Room 177

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More than a game — perfection

STANFORD, Calif. — A ball, launched by Justin Davis into the rafters after Stanford's defeat of Oregon ... Casey Jacobsen streaking down the court like a banshee, not caring that the smile on his face gave him the look of a third-grader playing recess kickball ...

These are images from the end of a basketball game; an epic, with pictures that were never seen on television here or in Eugene. Images from a basketball game that, no matter the result, will always be remembered by those who saw it.

This was the essence of amateur sport, Justin Davis throwing this ball into the air. This is why you watch hours of blowouts, weeks of games that fizzle like fireworks in a shower. All those roundball remnants for this, for Casey Jacobsen streaking down the court, even if he does wear the red and white of Stanford.

Because this was a spine-tingling thriller any way you dice it. This was 29 lead changes. This was Tony Giovacchini, who didn't make a basket all game long, making a leaning three-pointer with two defenders and four ticks on the clock to send an already-epic game into a legendary overtime.

But then it was Luke Jackson, taking an inbounds pass, seeming to drive the length of a football field instead of a basketball court, and launching a pretty jump shot that took a chunk out of the rim, icing the trip to overtime.

It was the Ducks, with men fouling out by the handful, staying tough in the extra period and hitting key shots when they had no business even taking them. A Luke Ridnour floater from the right side of the hoop. A Ridnour two-pointer that would have been three if not for a few inches of paint underneath his left foot.

This was Stanford, like a great army, riding out the free-throw stalemate until the very end.

This was Ridnour, falling to the court in obvious agony with seconds slipping away. Robert Johnson launching a desperate attempt. Stanford's Justin Davis taking the same ball with the buzzer and crowd sounding around him, launching it, sealing the classic game.

This was one of those games where you just sat back and watched the beauty unfold. Some people like Picasso. Others enjoy college basketball.

To sit on the floor Thursday night was to truly enjoy the sensory overload of an artistic masterpiece. The bouncing of the Maples Pavilion court, like a California quake had

just struck with full Richter magnitude. The sounds of the Stanford student section clapping in rhythm like so much gunfire.

The two generals — Oregon's Ernie Kent and Stanford's Mike Montgomery — barking like Patton and McArthur.

"Dammit Tony, move your feet," Montgomery screams at Giovacchini after the point guard makes a costly foul late in regulation.

"Push, Luke, push," Kent tells Ridnour, who then sends the ball in to Robert Johnson, which flattens the defense, so Johnson can send it back out to Jackson, who makes an open three-pointer.

To see the expressions of the players is to know the true meaning of competition. Ridnour's sly little smile after Freddie Jones's biggest dunk of the season over two Cardinal defenders. Jacobsen's fist pump and loud "Yes!" after a key trey late in the game.

In the end, the Ducks lost. They still hold on to first place in the Pacific-10 Conference and surely proved their ability to play well on the road, even if they couldn't win.

So that's why it's so easy to remember this game for its excitement rather than its result.

It couldn't have ended better than Justin Davis hurling the ball skyward, as if asking heaven to remember this perfect game.



Peter Hockaday
 Two minutes for crosschecking

E-mail sports reporter Peter Hockaday at peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com

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Sports briefs

Oregon wrestlers host three teams in two days

The Oregon wrestling team returns home this weekend to face three opponents in two days.

After taking on Cal State-Bakersfield at 2 p.m. and No. 21 Fresno State at 7:30 p.m. today, the Ducks will host Cal Poly at 1 p.m. Saturday.

The Ducks (5-6 overall, 2-3 in the Pacific-10 Conference) are coming off two losses last weekend to Boise State and Arizona State.

The Bakersfield Roadrunners are coming off a 25-16 loss to Cal Poly, dropping their record to 2-5 overall and 0-3 in the Pac-10. They are led by their 141-pound wrestler, No. 18 Thomas Jarez, who is 24-11 and the lone ranked wrestler for Bakersfield.

Fresno State, the only non-conference team the Ducks will face this weekend, is 11-6 and has won four straight dual meets. The Bulldogs are coming off a first-place finish at the All-California Tournament.

Leading Fresno State, No. 1 Stephen Abas, who is a two-time national champion, rolled through the tournament with two technical

falls and a pin. Abas will present a difficult matchup for Oregon's No. 12 Shaun Williams in the 125-pound weight class.

No. 3 Billy Blunt (heavyweight) and No. 12 Derrick Hayes (133 pounds) have also had good seasons for Fresno State.

On Saturday, the Ducks will have to tackle Cal Poly's top stars, No. 4 Cedric Hayman (141 pounds), No. 13 Steve Strange (174 pounds) and No. 18 David Schenk (197 pounds). The Mustangs are 9-7 overall and 4-3 in the Pac-10.

— Chris Cabot

Women's tennis looking for respect

It's revenge time for the Oregon women's tennis team. The No. 65 Ducks will go on the road to play Loyola Marymount, San Diego and San Diego State, all of whom narrowly beat Oregon last season.

"All three matches were tight last season," senior Janice Nyland said. "We now have another chance to beat them."

The weekend begins today against No. 66 Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles. Last season the Li-

ons beat Oregon 4-3, winning four of the six singles matches.

Oregon is 4-0 this season, but will be facing ranked opponents for the first time.

"It's going to be our first big test," head coach Jack Griffin said. "All three teams are very talented."

One goal the Ducks have this season is to earn the respect they think they deserve as a Pacific-10 Conference team.

"We have an opportunity to prove what we can do," Nyland said. "Right now it's all about respect, and we have a chance now to earn it."

Men's tennis hosts St. Mary's

After playing St. Mary's today, the Oregon men's tennis team will play on the road for the first time this season. St. Mary's is 0-3 this season, including shutouts by No. 7 Pepperdine and No. 11 California.

"It's important that we don't lose our focus this weekend," head coach Chris Russell said.

The Ducks will then play at Portland on Saturday. The Pilots are 4-2 this season.

— Peter Martini for the Emerald

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Recruiting

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the country, opted for the Ducks over Washington and Oregon State. Chris Solomona, one of the top junior college defensive linemen, also signed with the Ducks after committing to Washington out of high school two years ago.

"I'm not whining," Neuheisel said. "I just want to know the rules. I'm anxious to play."

Two years ago, Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti was one of several Pacific-10 Conference coaches to file a complaint against Washington's recruiting methods.

Announcing Washington's signings at a press conference Wednesday, Neuheisel fumed about Oregon's aggressive strategy in recruiting players who had reportedly already committed to the Huskies.

"A couple of schools didn't start recruiting until they saw our list,"

Neuheisel said, referring to Oregon and UCLA.

Breaking verbal commitments is not a rarity for recruits, though. In fact, Washington signed two recruits Wednesday who had made pacts elsewhere.

"Certainly some notable people have flip-flopped a lot or committed to several different schools," Bellotti said Wednesday. "It's the nature of the beast. It's 17-year-old young men who have to step back sometimes or talk with people they trust more. They're are somewhat impressionable at that time, and every place they've been looks like the best place at that point."

Not all of the Pac-10 coaches agreed with Neuheisel.

"The one thing I am surprised about is more kids didn't change their minds after the early commitments," Washington State head coach Mike Price said. "Recruiting is always competitive, but from the

schools in our conference, I can't remember a negative recruiting instance. We don't cheat, we don't lie and we don't bad-mouth each other in the Pac-10."

Neuheisel was also "especially peeved," according to one report, about a video that was played during the Civil War game on Dec. 1. The video showed a frame of Neuheisel followed by a clip of a person vomiting.

"They showed it six times during the Oregon-Oregon State game, with a variety of recruits there," Neuheisel said. "Guys told me, 'They were bashing you!'"

Oregon Athletic Director Bill Moos told The Seattle Times that the video was a "tremendous concern" and that he apologized to Washington Athletic Director Barbara Hedges.

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