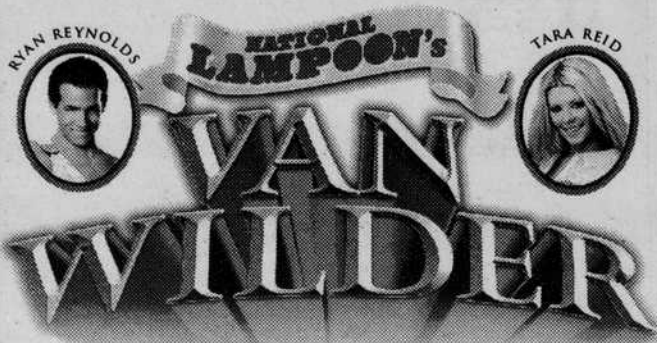


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Stanford earns Pac-10 title

■ The No. 2 Cardinal grab hold of at least a share of the Pac-10 women's championship with four regular season games left

By Adam Jude
 Oregon Daily Emerald

With a sweep of Oregon and Oregon State last weekend, the second-ranked Stanford women's basketball team earned at least a share of the Pacific-10 Conference championship — its 11th in the last 16 years.

"We're a really different team than we were in the last couple years — there's no comparison," Stanford head coach Tara VanDerveer said after defeating Oregon, 77-72, at McArthur Court on Thursday. "We have two absolutely fabulous players on our team (sophomore Nicole Powell and senior Lindsey Yamasaki) and a bunch of different people who are doing great things."

Last season, Stanford (24-1 overall, 14-0 Pac-10) was swept on the road by Oregon and Oregon State.

"That was one of the low points of Stanford basketball," said Yamasaki, an Oregon City native who scored 24 points against the Ducks on Thursday. "To see where we've come and see how we've evolved over the past few years is amazing."

With four games remaining, Stanford looks to go undefeated in conference play for the fourth time in school history. Since women's basketball became a Pac-10-sponsored sport in 1986, no other school has ever gone through the Pac-10 without a loss.

There is a new dimension to the conference championship this year with the inaugural Pac-10 Tournament, which Oregon will host at Mac Court beginning March 1.

"We can't celebrate because you've got to turn around and play the tournament," VanDerveer said. "I've always liked playing (at Mac Court). This is a great basketball arena, and I think our team has played really well here."

Powell, who was named the Pac-10 Player of the Week for the third time this season, recorded her eighth double-double of the year against the Beavers.

Stanford, the winner of 16 straight,



Adam Amato Emerald

Stanford sophomore guard Nicole Powell, seen here in a 77-72 victory over Oregon on Thursday, was named the Pac-10 Player of the Week for the third time this season.

could claim the Pac-10 title outright with a win this weekend.

Washing away the competition

The game of the week is Washington-Stanford, to be played in Palo Alto on Thursday.

Five straight wins have moved the Huskies (15-8, 10-4) into sole possession of second place in the conference. Junior guard Loree Payne posted 20 points in a 68-50 win over Arizona State (19-7, 10-5).

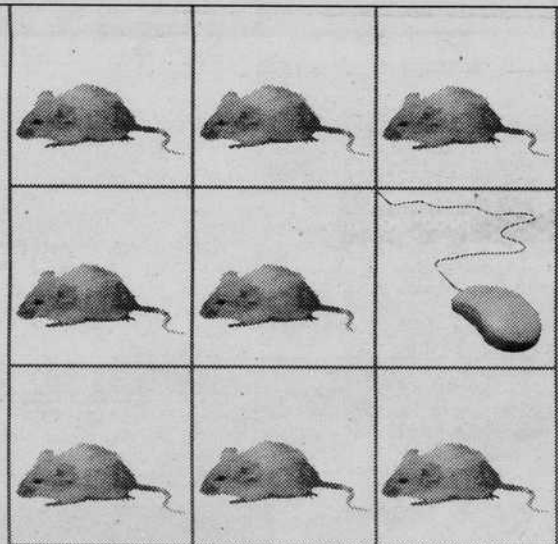
"We tried to wear them out, and it got us open looks," Washington head coach June Daugherty said. "It feels great to be in second place right now." Arizona State guard Amanda

Levens, the second-leading scorer in the conference, was held to just two points on 1-of-12 shooting against Washington.

"We just stunk," Arizona State head coach Charli Turner Thorne said. "It's a long trip, and we were tired. We could sit here and pretend we're not tired, but when you're short on all your shots you just see it out there."

The Huskies, an Elite Eight team last year, boast a 6-1 record at home this season. Oregon, by the way, ends its regular season with a trip to Seattle on Feb. 23.

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



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