

UO softball wins 4 of 5 in Las Vegas

■ Ducks upset No. 13 Alabama and improve season record to 7-3

By Chris Cabot
Oregon Daily Emerald

After a weekend in Las Vegas at the UNLV Classic, the Oregon softball team's record stands at 7-3.

The Ducks, who lost only one of five games over the weekend, defeated Central Michigan, Alabama, Kansas and Kent State.

On Friday, Oregon faced Cal Poly with freshman Lindsey Kontra in the pitching circle. With the score tied 3-3, the Mustangs scored five straight runs to hand

Kontra her first loss of the season in an 8-3 decision.

That same afternoon, the Ducks faced Central Michigan and picked

up a 9-8 win. Senior Connie McMurren came in to earn a save by recording the final two outs of the game with the bases loaded. Sophomore Anissa Meashintubby had pitched the entire game to that point, striking out five and walking three.

Andrea Vidlund hit her second and third home runs of the season against Central Michigan. Junior Alyssa Laux was 3-for-5 in the game.

No. 13 Alabama fell to Oregon on Saturday in an 8-3 upset, due in large part to the complete game pitching by Kontra, whose record

now stands at 3-1. She allowed just one earned run in the game.

The Oregon bats were on fire swatting 11 hits (after 13 against Central Michigan). Lakeesha Eversley and Kristi Hall each hit home runs for the Ducks.

"We are hitting the ball extremely well right now, and the hits are coming at the right time," Oregon head coach Brent Rincon said. "Lindsay Kontra continued to put pressure on a very good Alabama team and really took them out of their game."

Kansas was the next team to fall to Oregon in a 9-7 game that included another Eversley home run and two more hits from Laux. Lynsey Haij was 2-for-4 in the game with a triple and three RBI. McMurren pitched the entire game for Oregon to record her first win of the season.

In the final game of the weekend, Meashintubby was handed the ball again and pitched Oregon's first shutout of the season, a 4-0 win over Kent State. Meashintubby (3-0) allowed only four hits while striking out four. Eversley swatted two doubles and Haij hit a double that drove in the first Oregon run.

"To finish the tournament 4-1 is really a testament to how far we've come," Rincon said. "We competed hard all weekend and are really looking forward to continuing that next weekend."

Oregon travels to Arkansas for three games next weekend.

E-mail sports reporter Chris Cabot at chriscabot@dailyemerald.com.

Sports briefs

Byers finishes tied for ninth

Oregon's Aaron Byers shot a final-round 76 and finished tied for ninth Friday at the Taylor Made Waikoloa, played at the 7,074-yard, par 72 Waikoloa Kings' Course.

Byers's three-day total of 1-over 217 was tied for ninth with seven other golfers and marked the Albany senior's third top-10 finish in five events this season.

The Ducks shot a 308 Friday and moved up one spot to 20th in the final standings at 904. No. 1 Georgia Tech won the tournament at 4-under 860, with Oklahoma eight strokes back at 868. Individual medalist Troy Matteson led the Yellow Jacket charge with a final-round 73 that put him at 6-under 210 for the tournament.

Junior John Ellis had a final-round 76 for Oregon and finished tied for 64th at 226. The Ducks return to the mainland for the Cleveland Southwest Invitational, March 4-5 in West Lake Village, Calif.

— from staff and wire reports

No. 1 Duke falls to Maryland

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (KRT) — A spray of roses, some painted black, others dark blue, sat in one corner of the Maryland locker room Sunday afternoon with a sarcastic sympathy note attached.

"Turtles, the whole world feels your sorrow over your loss ... but only in fairy tales can a turtle beat a rabbit," the note, apparently sent by an anonymous Duke fan, read.

"I guess we're going to have to send them back," Maryland guard Juan Dixon said after the third ranked Terps manhandled top-ranked Duke, 87-73, in thunderous Cole Field House.

The Terps can do whatever they

want with the flowers. They did before the Blue Devils.

"The team that deserved to win, won," Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski said after his Blue Devils became the seventh top-ranked team to lose in the 47-year old arena, which will be replaced next season.

The ramifications of Maryland's eighth straight victory could be far-reaching.

The victory gives Maryland (21-3, 11-1) a one-game lead in the ACC regular-season race with two weeks remaining. If the Terps win their four remaining league games, they will end Duke's (22-2, 11-2) streak of five consecutive regular-season championships.

No wonder Dixon, who finished with 17 points, said, "This is a special win."

From the outset, Maryland had Duke discombobulated and the Blue Devils never recovered.

The Terps effectively pushed the ball inside and repeatedly went to 6-10 sophomore Chris Wilcox, who won his duel with 6-9 Mike Dunleavy, scoring a career-high 23 points while getting Dunleavy into foul trouble.

— Ron Green Jr.
Knight Ridder Newspapers

Blazers

PORTLAND (KRT) — There was a lot of attention paid to the gathering of Phil Jackson, Kobe Bryant and Michael Jordan on Tuesday. It can be fun, too, whenever Jackson and Bryant cross paths with Scottie Pippen.

Pippen, who played for Jackson in Chicago, has bowed out of the playoffs against Bryant and the Lakers all three of his post-Chicago seasons. Consider Sunday a small measure of standing regained, which is why Pippen could gleefully

run over for post-game greetings before the teams left the floor.

After Portland's 111-105 victory, Pippen hustled over to shake hands with Lakers assistant Jim Clemons and then Jackson — going for the hug when Jackson went for the handshake.

Pippen, who has missed 16 games for the Trail Blazers this season with a knee injury, has been more aggressive offensively lately — scoring in double figures five consecutive games before Sunday. Against the Lakers, his final stats weren't great — five points, seven assists, four turnovers, two blocks — as he battled foul trouble. But he still made what Jackson and Bryant considered the play of the game.

Portland was up, 96-91, with less than five minutes left — and Bryant was rested and just beginning what would be a fourth quarter scoring run. But with Pippen on him, Lakers forward Rick Fox made a bad pass toward Bryant that was easily stolen by Bonzi Wells, who scored at the other end.

Seconds later, Fox picked up his dribble in the backcourt, and Pippen swarmed him. The officials ruled an eight-second backcourt violation before Fox called timeout.

Portland's Shawn Kemp hit a jumper for a 100-91 lead with 4:01 to play, and the Blazers held on from there.

While Pippen was the one keeping the Blazers under control in the game's latter stages, his teammates kept scoring. Bonzi Wells (27 points), Rasheed Wallace (25), Ruben Patterson (22), Dale Davis (12) and Kemp (10) led the way, and the 111 points were the most posted against the Lakers in their past 17 games.

— Kevin Ding
Knight Ridder Newspapers



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