

## SPORTS

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Best Bet

**Women's Pac-10 championship:**  
**Arizona State vs. Stanford**  
7:30 p.m., Fox Sports Net



Monday, March 4, 2002

# Ducks earn first outright title since 1939

■ The Ducks break an 18-year drought at Pauley Pavilion with a 65-62 win over UCLA and jump to No. 9 in the coaches poll

**By Peter Hockaday**  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Déjà vu on the shot: A Freddie Jones jumper from the right side of the lane in the waning seconds to defeat another Southern California powerhouse, except this one was wearing the blue and gold of UCLA.

Déjà vu on the result: Pacific-10 Conference champions. Except this time, the Oregon men's basketball team ensured that title would belong only in Eugene.

Of course, the Oregon players

were sole champions before they took the floor at UCLA's Pauley Pavilion on Saturday night, because of California's loss at Arizona. But the 65-62 win over the Bruins only sweetened the conference championship cake, and also served to vault the Ducks into the top 10 — Oregon now sits at No. 9 — of the ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll.

For Oregon head coach Ernie Kent, the Pac-10 title is vindication for the underdog Ducks.

"We heard it all this year," an emotional Kent told KUGN after Saturday's game. "But this team never wavered, and that's why we were able to persevere."

The victory also vindicated years of Oregon futility at Pauley Pavilion, where the Ducks hadn't won since 1984.

The win, though it didn't matter to the final Pac-10 standings, may matter to the NCAA selection committee next weekend when it hands out NCAA Tournament bids. Oregon can make a strong case for a high West Coast seed after finishing the regular season with five straight wins and after beating both USC and UCLA on the road.

Even if the Ducks falter in next weekend's Pac-10 Tournament, Oregon is now likely staying close

to home — either Sacramento, Calif., or Albuquerque, N.M. — for the first rounds of the Big Dance.

"Anybody who said we had nothing to play for tonight is just crazy," Kent said. "Before the game there were no speeches about defense or offense. We said, 'Here's something for our parents. Let's stay in the West.'"

But before the NCAA Tournament, Oregon will head back to Los Angeles for next weekend's Pac-10 Tournament. The Ducks, who are the No. 1 seed, will square off with Northwest rival Washington in the tournament's first game Thursday at 1:15 p.m. The winner of that game will go on to face the winner of No. 4-seed USC and No. 5 Stan-

ford on Friday at 6:15 p.m. Both those games will be televised on Fox Sports Net.

"We've got a long way to go," Oregon point guard Luke Ridnour said. "We're looking forward to showing some more people what we're capable of."

Oregon's final regular-season win came in typically gut-wrenching style. The Ducks led most of the game, but UCLA kept the score close and even led late in the second half. After a timeout with 42.9 seconds left and Oregon leading 63-62, the Ducks ran a play for Jones.

The senior guard drove the left side of the lane, bobbled the ball,

Turn to **Men's**, page 9



Turn to **Men's**, page 9

## Oregon women fall to ASU in Pac-10 semis

■ The Ducks defeat Washington State and Washington in the early rounds; loss to ASU ends their regular season

**By Adam Jude**  
Oregon Daily Emerald

It was a weekend of adjustments at the inaugural women's basketball Pacific-10 Conference Tournament at McArthur Court.

Oregon made the adjustments on Friday and Saturday to earn a trip to the semifinals against Arizona State on Sunday.

Playing their third game in 36 hours, the Ducks trailed the Sun Devils by 12 at half-time, but Oregon made the necessary changes in the second half and at one point led by eight. Suddenly, a spot in Pac-10 Tournament championship game was within reach for the Ducks, who entered the weekend as the No. 7 seed.

Then Arizona State, struggling with Oregon's zone defense throughout the game, made the proper adjustments and pulled away for a 64-58 win, propelling the third-seeded Sun Devils into the championship game against top-seeded Stanford at 6:30 tonight.

Arizona State defeated the Ducks for the third time this season.

"There was no doubt that we were on the same court with them for a reason," Oregon first year head coach Bev Smith said. "In the first half, they took some of our strengths away offensively, but we hung in there. I thought we kept them guessing when we were going to come back."

The comeback came in the form of a 22-2 run, capped off by a Cathrine Kraayeveld three-pointer that put the Ducks ahead 43-35 with 10:46 left.

"It is frustrating that we lost because we played a great game," Kraayeveld said. "We couldn't get much going offensively in the first half, so I thought that we did a real good job of turning it around in the second half."

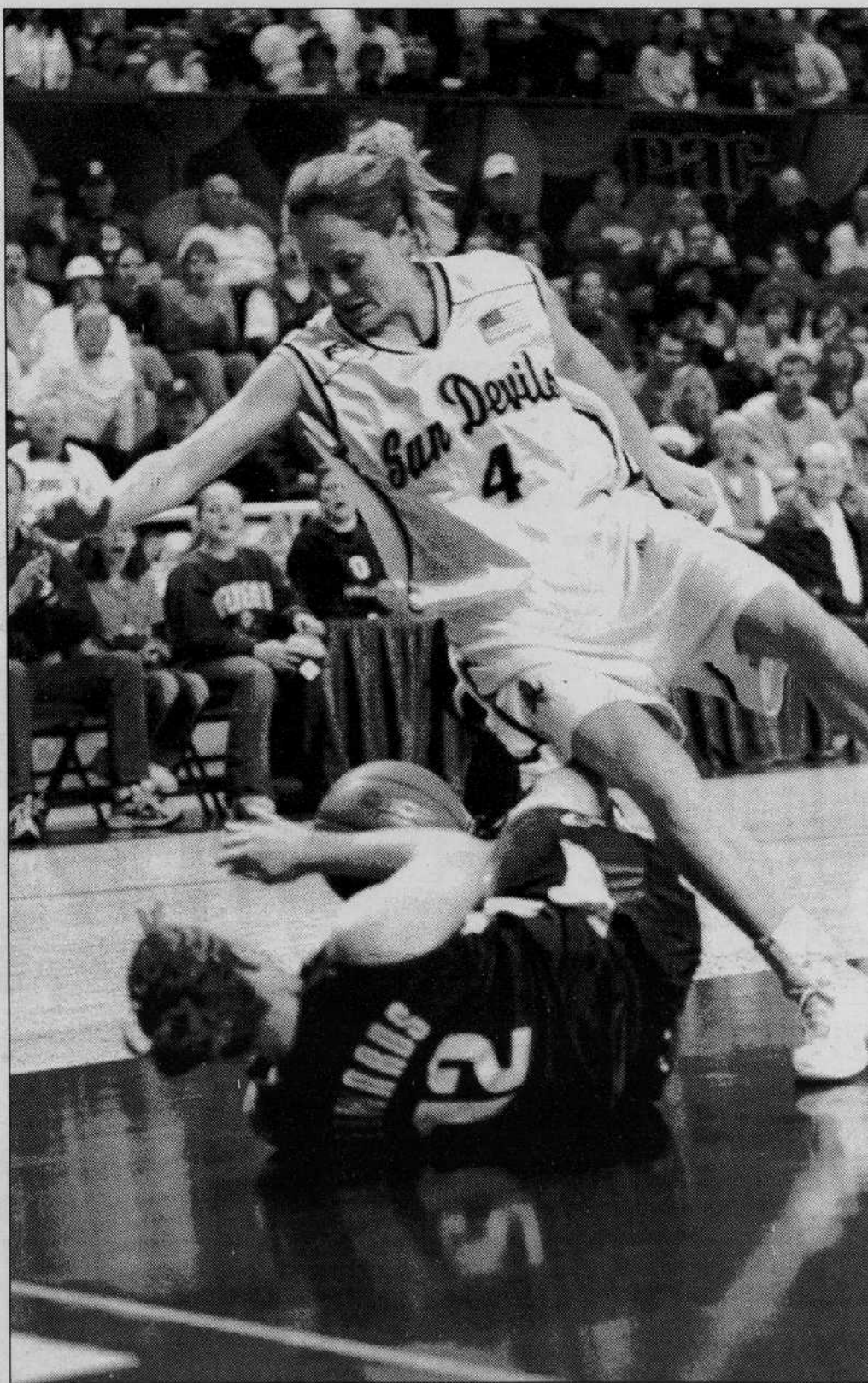
As much as the Pac-10 tried to neutralize McArthur Court — most of the green and yellow was covered with the Pac-10's gray and blue — Oregon fed off its crowd's energy to keep the game close in the second half.

But Arizona State was not fazed.

"The No. 1 thing is to not get down like so many teams have found themselves while playing here," Arizona State center Melody Johnson said. "The crowd shuts up real quick when there's a turnaround, and that's what we had to do."

And that's what the Devils did.

Turn to **Women's**, page 10



Thomas Patterson Emerald

Arizona State's Amanda Levens trips over Oregon's Alissa Edwards in ASU's 64-58 victory Sunday at McArthur Court. The Sun Devils face top-seeded Stanford in the Pac-10 championship game tonight at 7:30.

## Three Duck wrestlers win Pac-10 titles at OSU

■ Oregon wrestling finishes second at the Pac-10 Tournament with Williams, Overstake and Harris earning individual titles

**By Chris Cabot**  
Oregon Daily Emerald

All but two of Oregon's 10 starting wrestlers have extended their season for another two and a half weeks.

Seven Ducks finished in the top-four at the Pacific-10 Conference championship tournament and one earned a wild card selection to advance to the NCAA Tournament in Albany, N.Y., which begins March 21.

Shaun Williams, Tony Overstake and Eugene Harris all wrestled their way through the conference tournament bracket to come away with individual conference titles in their respective weight classes. As a team, Oregon finished second with 115.5 points, behind Boise State's 123.

"We wanted to win it, and we wrestled hard," head coach Chuck Kearney said. "We just didn't score any bonus points, and that's what it came down to. But the guys went after it, and now they know what it will take to win a championship."

Harris, seeded No. 1 in the 165-pound weight class, rolled by his first round opponent, Nathan Ploehn of Boise State 16-7, but had some difficulty with his semifinal match against Nick Frost of Arizona State. When Frost and Harris last met Feb. 3, Harris came away with a 3-1 victory. Saturday's match was even closer with Harris winning 3-2, which placed him in the final round match against Burt Pierson of UC Davis.

One of Harris' three losses this season came against Pierson in a 2-1 double overtime decision Nov. 10. Once again, the two battled each other in low scoring match, but the Oregon senior was able to better Pierson for a 3-2 decision.

Overstake was a No. 2 seed in the tournament at 157 pounds and his closest match was a 10-7 victory in the final

Turn to **Wrestling**, page 8