

RUNGE TO WHIP CROQUET TEAM INTO SHAPE

■ Former women's basketball head coach Jody Runge has been hired as a croquet team coach despite recent conflicts with the University

By Sugar Stevens

Oregon Daily Emerald

The University's Athletic Department announced today the formation of a new women's croquet team to be led by former women's basketball head coach Jody Runge.

The Athletic Department was able to add the sport after the success of former Oregon football demigod Joey Harrington (and those other guys who were not Joey on the Oregon football team) drew in unprecedented amounts of donations from very rich alumni.

The department released details of Runge's three-year, \$350 million contract at a hastily scheduled press conference Friday.

"We think Ms. Runge will be just the person to help us make this program successful, and ultimately, we expect women's croquet to be the sports program that allows the Athletic Department to stop having to suck money away from University academics," said Athletic Department Director Fabio Montegue.

Montegue said the department had been conducting a nationwide search for the new croquet coach for months and finally settled on Runge.

"Our thoughts naturally turned to her because I know her croquet background is very proactive. She was a state qualifier during her junior high school days," Montegue said. "She was a natural choice because of her inherent leadership abilities — as proven by the contentment of last year's basketball team."

Runge coached the women's basketball team for 11 years and led the team in the most wins in University history. She "resigned" after former players complained about her heavy-handed disciplinary tactics and very loud yelling.

Putting the past behind her, Runge has already secured several verbal commitments from possible coaching recruits to staff her team. Former Oregon softball coach Rick

Gamez, former Notre Dame head football coaches George O'Leary and Bob Davie, and former children's television icon Mr. Rogers have all given Oregon verbal commitments.

However, Mr. Rogers has reportedly given a verbal commitment to the University of Washington's croquet team as well.

"I HOPE MR. ROGERS DOES NOT DECIDE TO GO WITH THE HUSKIES," Runge yelled at the conference. "I NEED HIM TO HELP TEMPER OUR OFFENSIVE LINE AND GET THE GIRLS PUMPED UP! CROQUET KICKS BASKETBALL'S ASS!"

The invitation back to the University surprised many former players and fans, most of whom had written Runge off after her resignation.

"I'M REALLY GLAD TO BE BACK BECAUSE I JUST LOVE THE ELEGANT SPORT OF CROQUET AND BECAUSE THIS TEAM ... NEEDS ... DISCIPLINE!!!"

Jody Runge
Women's croquet head coach

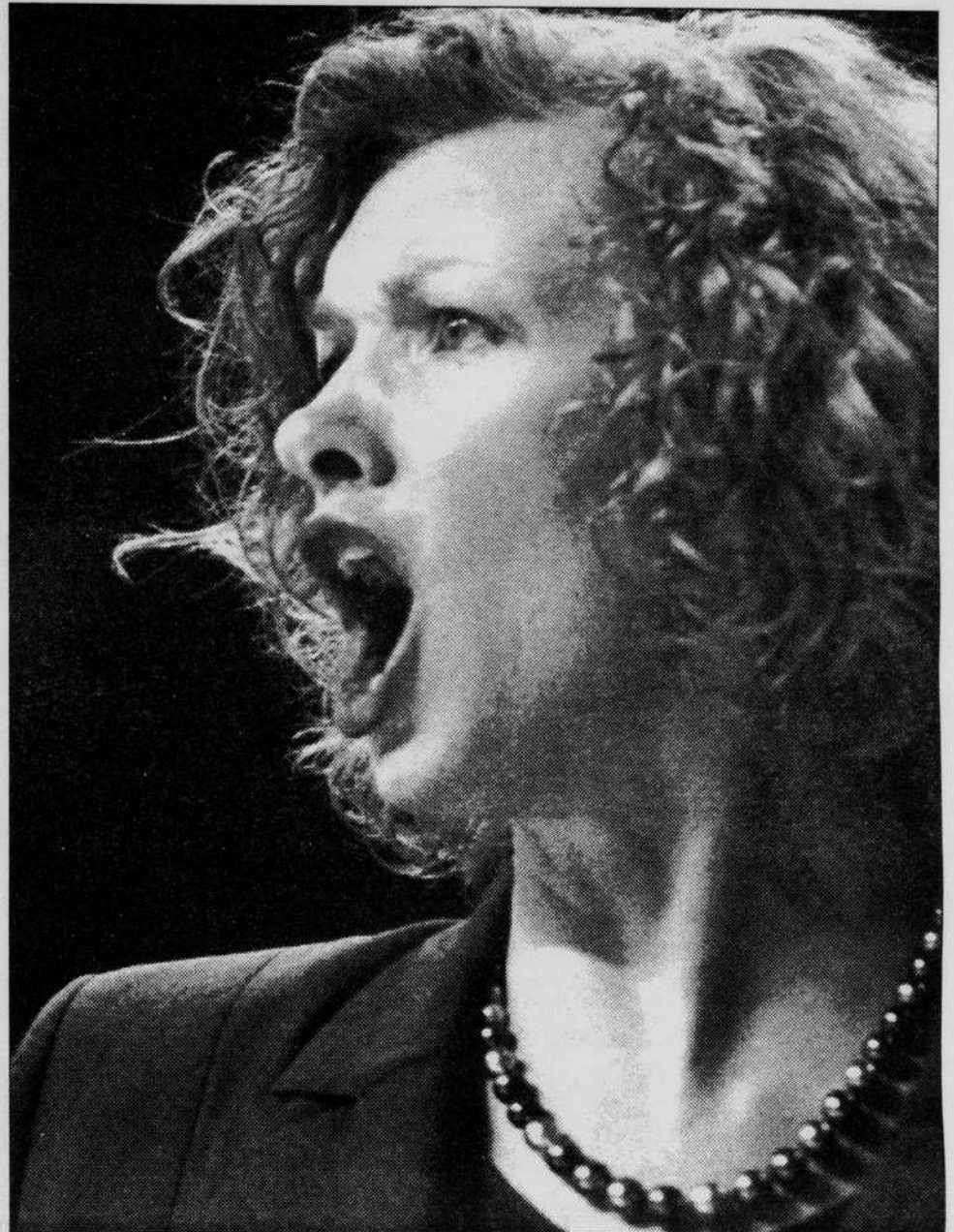
"I can't imagine her as the women's croquet coach," former Oregon basketball star Prima Donne said in a written statement. "Is that even a sport? She'll just freak everybody out with those stupid feathers."

Runge responded to the avalanche of criticism with positive shouts about her future at the University.

"WHAT'S WRONG WITH A WOMAN YELLING? I WAS REALLY MAD LAST YEAR — REALLY, REALLY MAD!" Runge yelled. "BUT I'VE CALMED DOWN A LOT, AND I'M READY TO GET OUT ON THE GRASS AND PLAY BALL!"

The Ducks' first Pacific-10 croquet match against the Arizona State Sun Devils is set for September at Papé Field.

The Emerald hopes you enjoyed this April Fools Day story.



Henry Flower Emerald

Jody Runge has verbally secured her position as head coach of the Oregon women's croquet team and says she is delighted she's allowed to coach again — especially croquet, which is one of her absolute favorite sports.

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