

Sports Editor:
Peter Hockaday
peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com

SPORTS

Best bet
NBA: Seattle at Golden State
7:30 p.m., ESPN

Friday, November 1, 2002

Soccer to enter final weekends of play

The Ducks will be put to the test in Los Angeles as they enter their final weeks of play

Soccer

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's soccer team faces a tough weekend in the Conference of Champions as it heads to Los Angeles to meet UCLA and USC.

The Ducks hope to rewrite history against the No. 6 Bruins and the No. 16 Trojans, as Oregon has never beaten either team on the road. Oregon defeated UCLA at home, 2-1 in 1999 and has never beaten USC at Papé Field.

"We are excited to play against good teams," Oregon head coach Bill Steffen said. "We go into every match thinking we can beat these teams and we need to maintain that attitude."

Oregon has had to face several good teams this season. UCLA and USC are the 11th and 12th top-25 opponents for the Ducks in 2002. These will be the final two games on the road for Oregon before ending the season with rival Oregon State on Nov. 8 at home.

Oregon (2-11-2, 1-4-1 Pac-10) is coming off a weekend in which it split two games with the desert schools. The Ducks overcame a 2-0 halftime deficit against Arizona to notch their first conference win, 3-2.

The Ducks were not able to find that same magic against Arizona State on Sunday as Oregon got behind 2-0 at halftime but would score only one goal in the loss.

Oregon is due for a good performance against the Bruins, as it hasn't beaten UCLA in three years and didn't score on the Bruins in the past two years.

UCLA (12-3-0, 4-1-0 Pac-10) is currently second in the Pac-10 behind Stanford and is 3-3 overall against top-25 foes. UCLA and USC faced off last weekend and the Bruins edged their rival 2-0.

"We go into every match thinking we can beat these teams and we need to maintain that attitude."

Bill Steffen
Oregon head coach

The Bruins are led by freshman forward Iris Mora, who has a team-leading seven goals on only 24 shots, followed by freshmen forwards Katie Rivera and Sarah-Gayle Swanson, who have combined for 10 shots.

Goalkeeper Sarah Lombardo sports a 0.71 goals-against-average and has 26 saves and six shutouts in 15 games.

"They are a really good team but



Adam Amato Emerald

Duck midfielders Cristan Higa (2) and Carlie Ashcraft (24) face tough tests in Southern California this weekend.

we are, too," sophomore defender Christine Mintz said. "It's kind of at the point of proving it to ourselves in addition to proving it to them."

USC (8-5-3, 3-2-0) is coming off a loss to the Bruins last weekend and has only taken one other conference loss, to top-ranked Stanford.

Senior defender Ali Fennell paces the Trojans with seven goals, 15 points and 47 shots. In goal, sophomore Julie Peterson has a 0.83 GAA with 73 saves and seven shutouts.

Oregon expects a very fast-paced game against the Trojans and a more technical contest in the matchup

with the Bruins. The Ducks want to prove that they can play with anybody, and they have that opportunity with tough tests in Los Angeles this weekend.

Contact the sports reporter at jessethomas@dailyemerald.com.

Harriers hunger for Pac-10s

Oregon cross country squads take on the Pac-10 in Saturday's conference championship meet

Cross country

Mindi Rice
Freelance Sports Reporter

The Oregon cross country squads are flying south to Pasadena, Calif., this weekend.

Saturday, the Ducks will race in the Pacific-10 Conference Championship meet for an opportunity to qualify for the NCAA Championship meet.

The Oregon men are ranked fifth in the nation and are second only to Stanford in the Pac-10.

"We've had a great training cycle, everybody's fine physically and we hopefully can peak in proper form the rest of the season," men's head coach Martin Smith said.

This season the men raced in the Sept. 28 Roy Griak Invitational, where the Ducks finished as the top team. They have also sent "B" squads to two local races, but the top runners have not raced since Griak.

"It's definitely made us hungrier," senior Jason Hartmann said. "I think, as a group, we're training at a new level, and we're going into the race more prepared than in the past."

In the 2001 Pac-10 Championships, the Ducks finished third while Hartmann finished sixth individually.

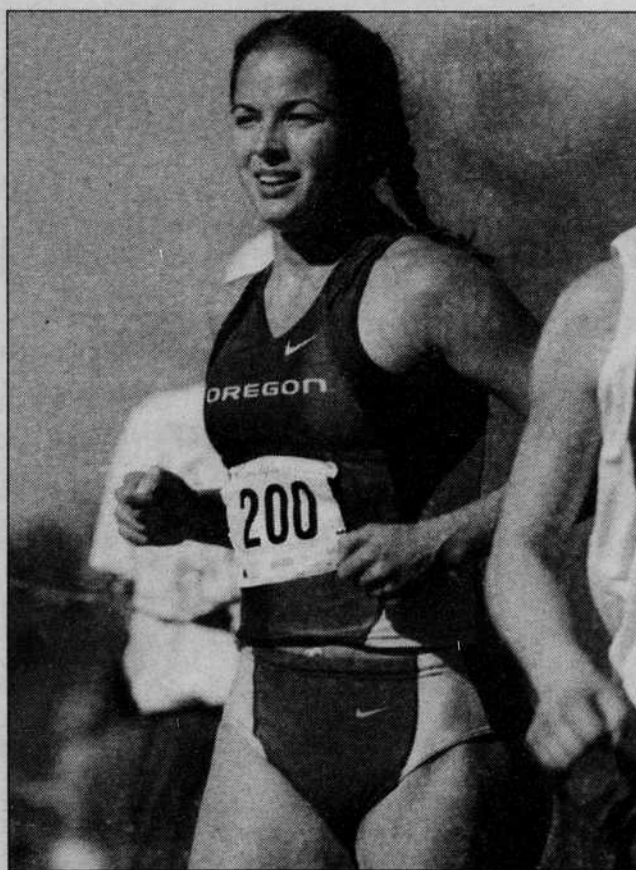
This year, Oregon is sending seven men to run in the championship. Hartmann will be the only senior in the pack. He is joined by juniors Brett Holts and Noel Paulson, redshirt junior John Lucas, redshirt sophomores Eric Logsdon and Ryan Andrus and redshirt freshman Will Viviani.

"We have a good 1-2 punch up front in Jason Hartmann and Ryan Andrus, who will target to be in the pack up front," Smith said. "Our success will also be predicated in how tight a pack we have from our No. 3 through 6 runners. If they can keep a tight gap, we should do well."

On the women's side, the Ducks look to make a case for an

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Jason Hartmann
senior



Geoff Thurner Oregon Media Services

Carrie Zografos and the Ducks are running toward the Pac-10s.

NCAA appearance.

"We want to be top five or better. Beating Washington, Arizona State or UCLA would really help us get into nationals," women's head coach Tom Heinonen said.

The Oregon women have run in three meets this season and also sent "B" teams to two local meets. The Ducks took third as a team at the Willamette Invitational, with redshirt senior Carrie Zografos and junior Magdalena Sandoval both out with injuries.

"We haven't had a race where everybody's been on at the

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Ducks to host tennis tourney

The Duck Classic is played round-robin style, and is the first tennis event of the early 2002-03 season

Tennis

Ryan Heath
Freelance Sports Reporter

The Oregon men's tennis team is tired of spending its weekends away from Eugene, but it wants to gain more experience with outside competition before the dual meet season begins.

Enter the Duck Classic.

This weekend the Ducks will host their first tennis event of the 2002-03 season and the same goals still apply.

"We just want to get as many matches in as possible," men's head coach Chris Russell said. "It's all about getting better."

The Duck Classic is different from the tournaments the men played in October. It is a round robin tournament that does not crown a champion. The team with the most victories is considered the winner.

Last year, the Ducks led the way with 17 wins (15 singles and two doubles). Second-place Boise State will be returning to Eugene along with Nebraska and Portland.

Jason Menke led the Ducks with four singles wins and a doubles win last season. He was closely followed by Chris King and Kyle Halberg with three and two wins, respectively. The Ducks will also be looking to showcase freshmen Thomas Bieri, Junaid Hossain, Arron Spencer and Andrew Walker.

"Our young guys are going to have to step up for us this year," Russell said. "It is good for them to get this experience now."

Boise State's Marcus Berntson will look to improve on his three singles and three doubles wins from a year ago. Berntson will be joined by Duck Classic veterans and teammates Mahmoud Rezik and Beck Roghar. Rezik finished last year with three singles wins and two doubles wins while Roghar managed one singles victory.

The lone Nebraska Cornhusker returning to Eugene with any Duck Classic experience is junior Jose Hernan.

The Duck Classic will be held at the Student Tennis Center all weekend.

Ryan Heath is a freelance writer for the Emerald.