

# Club volleyball builds toward three-peat win

The two-time defending national-champion Ducks have lost a lot of players this year

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Hand work precedes success.  
Rewards come with success.

The process of rebuilding comes after success.

The Oregon women's club volleyball team is looking to skip the rebuilding process and get right to work on a strong showing at this year's national tournament.

The Ducks have a hard act to follow, coming off back-to-back National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association championships, defeating Purdue in 2001 and Miami-Ohio in 2002. They'll also have to make up for the loss of seniors Carli Halligan and Annie Pogue, who played for

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the varsity program from 1998 through 1999. Halligan was voted tournament MVP in 2002, while Pogue received MVP honors in 2001.

The Ducks return three players from last year's team. Senior Jessica Mae Van Ourkerk, junior Nina Bakos and sophomore Christina Chun bring experience to a relatively young squad that features five freshmen.

"The last couple years, we've had a really good team," said Van Ourkerk, who is entering her fourth year on the team. "(Nationals) were really intense." First-year head coach Donna

Goode said the Ducks have some work in front of them if they're going to compete for the title.

"We've got talent," Goode said. "(But) compared to last year's team, they have some room to go."

The Ducks play in tournaments when they arise, but don't have a regular league schedule of games. They saw action Sunday at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, where they placed 3rd in a 12-team tournament. The Ducks will receive a test in the Far Western tournament in Davis, Calif., Feb. 16 and 17, where they will face other NIRSA competition. This year's NIRSA national tournament will be held April 10 through 12 in Columbus, Ohio.

Van Ourkerk, a 5-foot-6-inch outside hitter, said the Ducks need to focus on building team chemistry, which comes from spending as much time together on the court as possible.

"We have talent, we have experience, we just don't have the chemistry yet," said Van Ourkerk, a graduate of South Eugene High School. "It's not something you can just fix."

Women's volleyball is one of the most competitive club sports available, and with that comes competitive tryouts. Goode said about 30 athletes showed up on the first day. Freshman Meghan Griswold described the experience as "nerve-wracking."

"I went in with no expectations," Griswold said. "I didn't expect to make the team. It was exciting just to get a call back after the first day."

Griswold, a 5-foot-10-inch right side, said she didn't know about the Ducks' past success until after she had tried out, but found it a pleasant surprise that expectations were high and things were taken seriously.

Freshman Kim McNally said past success was a big reason she tried

out and she hopes this team can turn things in the right direction.

"I was hoping that we would be just as good or better (than past teams)," said McNally, a 5-foot-11-inch middle blocker. "In our (Gresham) tournament, we showed a lot of improvement. Now we're working as a team instead of a lot of individuals."

After losing as much as the Ducks did in the way of personnel, many teams would lower expectations and say it's time to rebuild. The Ducks, on the other hand, are keeping goals high and looking to reload rather than rebuild.

"Once we get to nationals, people are going to be gunning for us," Goode said. "Even if we're not the same team, we're still Oregon club, and people want to beat the champs."

Jon Roetman is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

## Sports Briefs

### Panova wins Pac-10s

Oregon sophomore Daria Panova cruised to victory in the Pacific-10 Conference Indoor Championships on Sunday, capping a successful weekend for the women's tennis squad.

Panova, ranked 28th in the country, toppled No. 25 Lauren Barnikow of Stanford, 6-3, 6-1, Sunday in Seattle. Panova never lost a set and beat four ranked opponents on her path to the tournament win.

Although there was no team winner at the event, the other Ducks had success in Seattle as well. Junior Courtney Nagle upset the No. 3 player in the country, USC's Jewel Peterson.

—Peter Hockaday

### Track swings into action

Senior Niki (Reed) McEwen tied the Oregon pole vault record, and senior Santiago Lorenzo returned from a quad muscle injury as the Oregon track and field teams returned to action on Saturday.

Reed, who redshirted during last season's outdoor campaign, cleared a height of 14-1 1/4 at the USA Track and Field Pole Vault Summit in Reno, Nev. The mark ties current teammate Becky Holliday's record, achieved during the 2002 outdoor season. Reed's jump was good for first in the event, just ahead of Arkansas' April Steiner.

The mark was an NCAA automatic mark for Reed.

Junior Kirsten Riley equaled the NCAA provisional mark (12-9 1/2)

at the meet, while sophomore Hannah Moore finished at a height of 11-7 3/4. Holliday cleared 12-5 1/2 but failed to clear any other heights.

Lorenzo finished the afternoon at the Husky Preview in Seattle in fourth place in the 60 hurdles with a time of 8.42. He also took fifth in the pole vault (15-7).

Lorenzo's teammate, freshman Eric Mitchum, claimed first in the 60 hurdles (8.02) and freshman Teddy Davis' height of 7-0 1/4 in the high jump was also good for first. Senior James March ended the men's trifecta of wins with the top spot in the shot put (52-0).

Senior Jordan Sauvage was the only Duck woman to claim first at the Husky Preview, doing so with a mark of 55-10 1/2 in the weight throw.

—Hank Hager

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percent from the field in the second half.

"We got away from running things and execution," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "Because we wanted to score immediately."

Davis led the Ducks with 16 points on the strength of three 3-pointers in the second half. She was followed closely by freshman Carolyn Ganes, who had 12, and sophomore Kedzie Gunderson's 10.

After a sluggish first half, which saw both teams shoot 37.5 percent from the field and a 28-27 Oregon lead, the second stanza proved to be an up-tempo and intense frame for the Beavers.

After the Ducks stretched their lead to 39-35 early in the second half, Oregon State answered back, and at one point scored 11 straight.


Leilani Estavan gave the Beavers their

first lead of the half, 41-39, with a jumper at the 12:48 mark. Jessica Jones backed that up with a 3-pointer two minutes later, and from that point on, Oregon State forced the Ducks to become ineffective in all parts of their game.

"They really just got us to the point where we were flustered," Ganes said. "They were really meticulous on their offense. They waited for us to break down."

The Ducks played the game with an active roster of just eight players. Smith said that before the game, junior guard Kayla Steen was ruled physically unable to play due to a "chronically" sore back. She had an injection earlier in the week in an attempt to alleviate the problem, but it was not successful enough for her to play.

Contact the sports reporter at [hankhager@dailyemerald.com](mailto:hankhager@dailyemerald.com).




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