

Stanford rolls on as Arizona, SC challenge

Is Stanford unstoppable? Six games remain for Pac-10 teams to prove otherwise in the season's final weeks

Women's Pac-10

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

For the Stanford women's basketball team, winning is a custom, and winning big is not uncommon either.

The Cardinal faced the Oregon schools in Stanford over the weekend, where they easily breezed through with two victories. And as Stanford won both games by a combined total of 56 points, the question still remains: Can any team win at Maples Pavilion?

For an opposing Pacific-10 Conference team, walking into Maples is like walking into a death trap. Oregon women's basketball head coach Bev Smith described it as a "house of horrors."

Even though the arena seats just 7,391 — smallest in Pac-10 — Stanford has won 23-straight games, dating back to Dec. 28, 2001. The Cardinal home-winning streak is second in the nation behind Connecticut, as the Huskies have 57-straight home victories.

Stanford (19-2, 11-1 Pac-10) moved to 12-0 at home this weekend and the Beaver game marked the 400th home game for the Cardinal, who have won more than 80 percent of those.

Stanford has lost just 10 games at home over the last five seasons.

"We saw our team execute the offense as well as we have all season

or better," Stanford head coach Tara VanDerveer said of the recent victory over Oregon. "We have players who, when they focus on things, can get it done. We have a lot of different options."

Despite the super-human appearance, the Cardinal can and has been stopped before. Of Stanford's two overall losses, one came at the hands of conference rival USC.

It was an on-the-road loss in Los Angeles, but the Trojans have been the only conference team to achieve such a feat.

The Cardinal are ranked sixth nationally, and with the upsets on the weekend, Stanford comfortably sits atop the Pac-10 by a 2 1/2-game margin. No. 20 Washington, second in the Pac-10, lost to Arizona and Arizona State over the weekend.

Stanford will face the Washington schools this week, as the Cardinal battle Washington on Thursday and the Cougars on Saturday. The Cardinal should not have trouble, as they have defeated the two schools by an average of more than 21 points the last time around.

The real battle will be waged Feb. 20, as the Trojans come to Maples Pavilion to try and do the seemingly impossible.

Mendiola who?

Junior guard Giuliana Mendiola of the Washington Huskies is the name. And double-doubles are the game.

Mendiola was recently named the Pac-10 Women's Basketball Player of the Week for Jan. 27-Feb. 2. On Saturday, Mendiola set a new precedent for Husky basketball as she

scored a school record and career-high 43 points en route to a blowout win over UCLA.

During her team's destruction of the Los Angeles schools, Mendiola averaged a near triple-double with 32.5 points, 11.0 rebounds, 7.5 assists and 2 steals.

Recently, though, her team has suffered in back-to-back losses against the Arizona schools. During the outings, Mendiola put up a combined 42 points on the board.

In the recent loss to Arizona State, the California native also had 10 rebounds and five assists on her way to another double-double.

Mendiola and her team have quite the task at hand as the Huskies go to battle with top-ranked Stanford on Thursday.

Race heats up

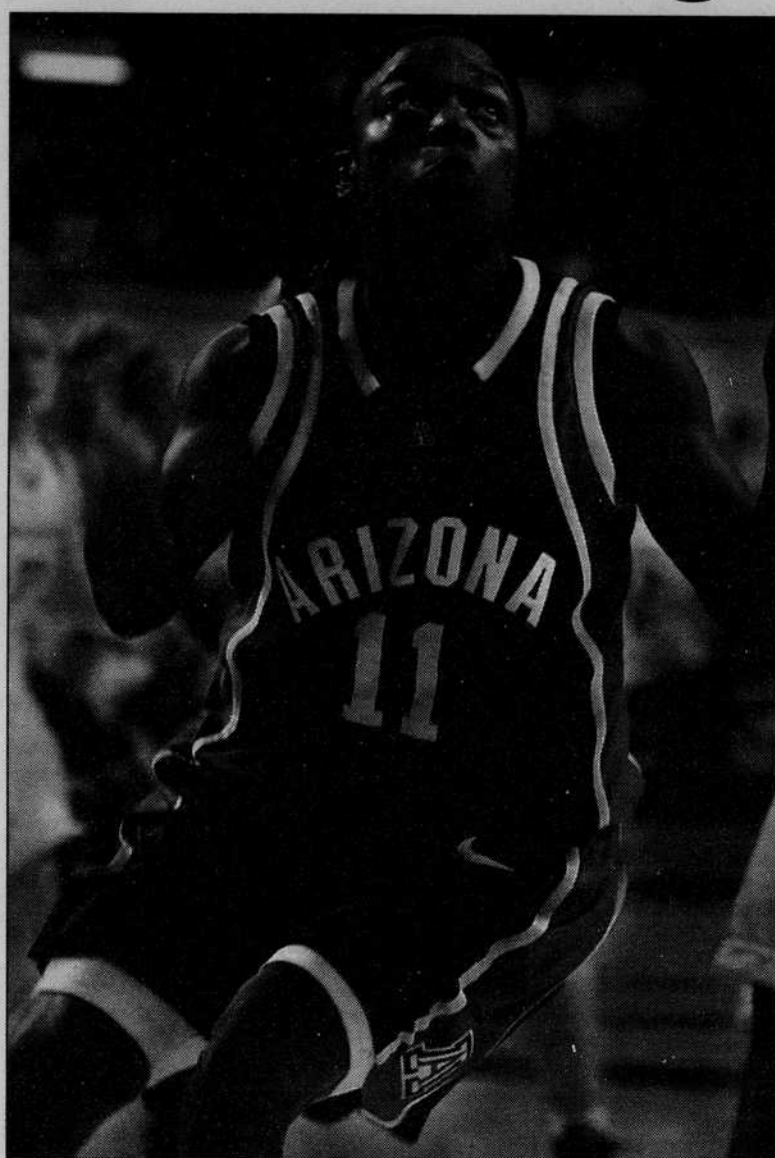
With just five or six games left for the Pac-10 schools the race to the top of the conference is getting a little tighter en route to the trip to San Jose for the Pac-10 Tournament.

As expected, Stanford still sits on top and Washington State brings up the rear, but the other eight schools remain in close contention.

Washington and Arizona are tied for second as both try to catch the Cardinal and Arizona State and Oregon State are in a tie for sixth with just under .500 records.

The Pac-10 Tournament begins March 7th, which gives the Conference of Champions just 24 more days to try and work itself into position.

Contact the sports reporter at jessethomas@dailyemerald.com.



Jeremy Forrest Emerald

Dee-Dee Wheeler and the Arizona Wildcats are tied with Washington for second in the conference. Both teams sit 2 1/2 games behind Stanford with six games left.

Pingpong

continued from page 9A

years past, something head coach Lee Werthamer, 48, attributed to a drop in foreign student enrollment. Along with China and Hong Kong, the club has had students from Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Japan.

Werthamer, who has coached the club for 10 years and has taught table tennis at the University for eight, spends most of his time coaching players how to hit and how to recognize and deal with spin.

"It's all about spin," Werthamer said. "It's all in the wrist."

"You're basically like a robot. You know where the ball will be before it gets there."

Tong Johnson
club pingpong player

Werthamer, who owns an auto repair shop in Eugene, is a talented player in his own right. A junior regional champion in 1970, Werthamer and other junior champs played the Chinese national team in an exhibition in New York. Despite their talents, the juniors were no match for the

dominant Chinese.

"They were champions, we were bozos; we got our asses kicked," Werthamer said.

Hand-eye coordination is essential to being a good pingpong player. Hitting a small, white ball back and forth at high speeds takes practice.

"You're basically like a robot," Johnson said. "You know where the ball will be before it gets there."

The club team is preparing for the Association of College Unions International Tournament Feb. 22 in Seattle. It is a regional qualifying tournament for the 2003 national tournament.

Pong has been to two national

tournaments in the last four years. In 1999 she traveled to Houston, and in 2002 she traveled to Baltimore.

"The guys were really, really good," Pong said. "Half of the girls were good."

As for now, Pong and the rest of the team can only practice and look for a way to beat Johnson until it's time for Seattle.

"I don't think I'm that good," Johnson said. "At least when I'm at home, I'm not that good."

So much for table tennis being an American garage sport.

Jon Roetman is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

Hockaday

continued from page 9A

battle again.

It gets to 14-13 and he blows the next shot by me to win the game and the match. I'm devastated. Floored. In 21 games of pingpong, I've won two. I leave in shame.

But as I head back home, Rocky still playing on the car stereo but more softly now, I think back to high school.

And I'm Forrest once more.

Contact the sports editor at peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com. His views don't necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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Horoscope by Linda C. Black

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (FEB. 11) You like to be in a solid relationship... stable but never boring. Looks like that's how your social life will be this year. Don't let self-doubt keep you from getting out and mingling. Let an inquisitive admirer push you to make a beautiful dream materialize. To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19) Today is an 8. Pay close attention, because new information is coming fast. The way things appeared wasn't the way they really were.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20) Today is a 5. Even if you're quaking in your boots, you should be able to find the right words. Your heart is in the right place, and that shows in your communications, too. Ask and you shall receive.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 21) Today is an 8. As the door closes, another opens. One person's mess is another's opportunity. Keep looking for the latter. It's in there.

CANCER (JUNE 22-JULY 22) Today is a 6. You might want to review important papers just to make sure they're right. Put your worries to rest by erasing all doubt.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22) Today is an 8. Jealousies complicate negotiations, but each point deserves attention. That's one of your toughest jobs: making sure others feel heard.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22) Today is a 5. You have a secret source of strength, no mat-

ter how strange things might get. A simple word or a smile lets you know that everything will be OK.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22) Today is a 10. If you can't find what you want in the place where you thought it would be, a flurry of activity could ensue. Don't knock yourself out. Be cool, and call around. It all works out.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21) Today is a 5. There should be time to go shopping, since other demands have eased. Don't buy an appliance or computer on impulse. A little homework can save you a lot.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21) Today is an 8. As you learn more, new opportunities appear. Old assumptions fade. Soon, you'll figure out how to do what you once thought impossible. This is the fun part.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19) Today is a 5. The experience you're gaining, or using, is great to have. Unfortunately, there's only one way to get it, as you should know by now.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18) Today is a 9. So many friends, so little time! How will you fit them all in? Scheduling is one useful trick. You could have a party!

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20) Today is a 6. Keep pushing in the direction that you want things to go. Conditions that are malleable now will solidify like cement later on.

095 PERSONALS

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