

SPORTS

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NCAA men's basketball:
Virginia at North Carolina
4 p.m., ESPN

Wednesday, February 12, 2003

Rivalry signifies new beginning, reflection

Oregon's two seniors have one final Civil War to play

Women's notes

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

For freshman Carolyn Ganes, Saturday's Civil War game is the start of a new beginning. But for senior Kourtney Shreve, the rivalry will be the beginning of an end.

With Ganes playing in her first Civil War at McArthur Court and Shreve competing in her 100th game for Oregon in her senior season, there is mixed emotion on the team heading into the 70th meeting of the two squads.

"We are going to have huge energy going into this game," Ganes said. "We lost to them already once, so we kind of feel that we owe them one and prove to them that we can beat them."

It is quite the experience for the seniors, as the Civil War matchups have become the epitome of college basketball, and Shreve said knowing it's your last one is not easy to realize.

"It's going to be real emotional," Shreve said. "They got us the first game and being at home is going to be exciting for

both teams."

Head coach Bev Smith relates to her players on the experience, as she took the time to reflect back on her rivalry-playing days when she suited up at Oregon from 1978-82.

"It was always going to be a hard-fought game," Smith said. "They were all really hard-fought, and the outcome was never determined until the last minute. You just put your helmet on and went out and played and hoped you were on top after 40 minutes."

And despite the Ducks' early-season loss in Corvallis, the rivalry has yielded many last-minute thrillers that came down to the final seconds. Oregon has won 13 of the past 15 in the series.

With Shreve and fellow senior Alissa Edwards playing in their final War, it has been both a time of reflection on the memories of past years and a time of excitement and looking forward.

Both spoke of each Civil War having its own significance, yet neither could forget last year's buzzer-beater by senior Ednisha Curry in Corvallis as one of the best memories.

"That's the one that stands out, but for me they all mean a lot and I have memories from each game," Shreve said.

Defending The Pit

Coming off a last-second thriller in California against the Bears, the Ducks return to the confines of McArthur Court to start a three-game homestand.

It will be Oregon's final three regular-season games at McArthur Court and, for some, the last times they will compete in the Pit.

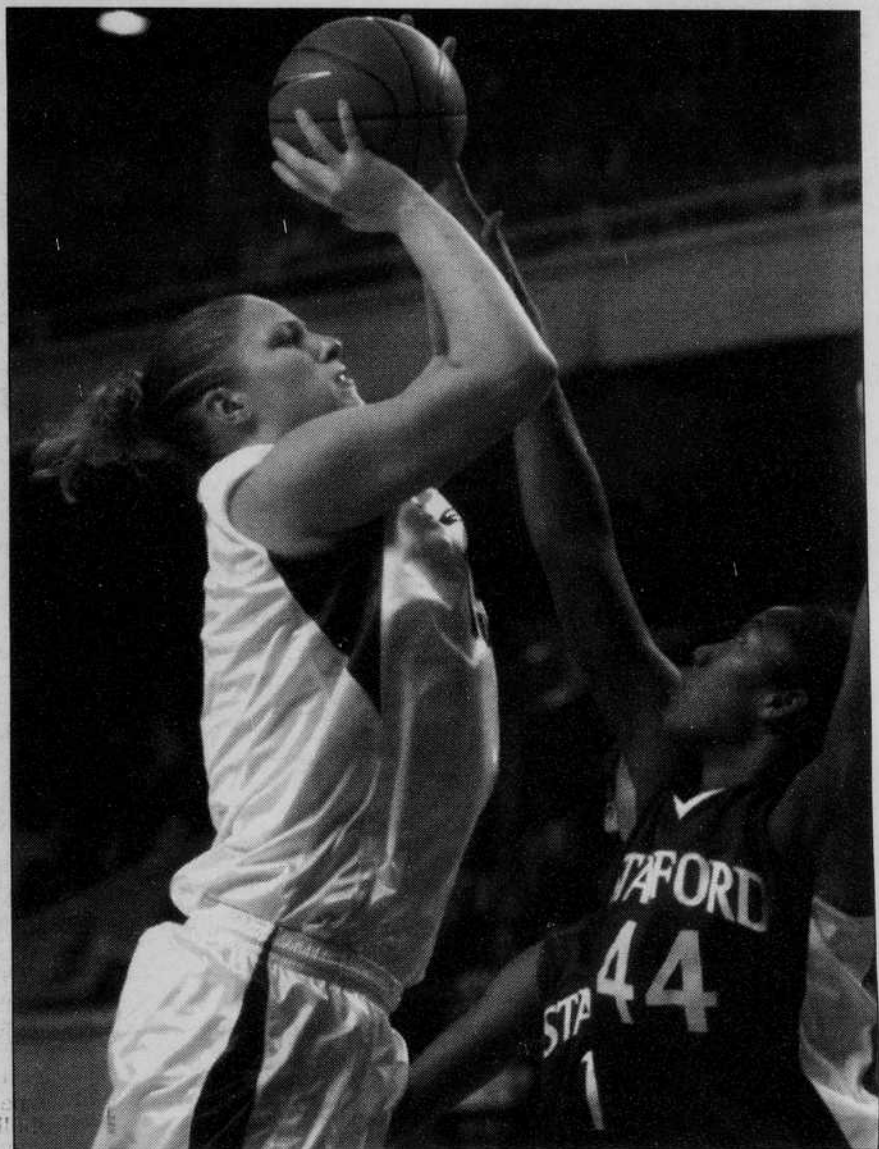
"It's going to be really emotional, because these will be the last three games here that I will ever play, but it's really crucial that we play hard and get the job done," Shreve said.

The Oregon players also recognize the importance of these games at home, and hope to have a strong finish heading into the Pac-10 Tournament.

"Our destiny is in our hands, in a sense that we could really do ourselves a favor by being successful at home," Smith said. "Our focus has always been one game at a time, one possession at a time, and one half at a time."

The Ducks have been much more successful at home with an overall record of 5-4 as opposed to their road record of 3-7.

If things play themselves out in their favor, Oregon could



Adam Amato Emerald

Carolyn Ganes (with ball) will play her first-ever home Civil War on Saturday at McArthur Court.

Turn to **Basketball**, page 6

Why hire OSU's Erickson? Only the Niners seem to know

Rumor has it, the San Francisco 49ers had a list of six collegiate coaches on the radar for the team's head coaching position, one that was filled Tuesday by Oregon State's Dennis Erickson.

The list reportedly included Oregon's Mike Bellotti, Oklahoma's Bob Stoops and Rick Neuheisel, of Washington. The other two names, according to Sports Illustrated's Peter King, at least included Ohio State mentor Jim Tressel. Other reports have suggested Iowa's Kirk Ferentz turned down the job earlier this week, adding his name to the list.

So why is it that Erickson was the

"lucky" one to get the job?

First off, seemingly every guy on the list turned down the job, especially Neuheisel and Stoops, who both made it public they were not interested. Bellotti did the same last week in a press conference regarding Oregon's recruiting habits. Tressel never made any re-

Hank Hager
Behind the dish

marks about the position, and Ferentz probably was not much of an option anyway.

So that left Erickson, the coach with the least prominent position, the one with the lowest ranked recruiting class, and the guy who won two national championships with the Miami Hurricanes back in 1989 and '91.

That's a long time ago. And Erickson hasn't shown any kind of success since, except for the 2000 season where he led Oregon State to a Fiesta Bowl victory.

So why Erickson? Why the man who once led Seattle to a 31-33

record in four seasons at the helm of the Seahawks?

(This is where you notice a little trend).

It's an opportunity for Erickson to show what he can do in the big time and get back to the bright lights of the NFL. 3Com Park, the 49ers' home, isn't exactly at the top of the list of NFL stadiums, but it beats coaching at Reser Stadium any day of the week and twice on Sunday.

Then you have Erickson's recruiting class that ranked 50th in the nation — according to SI.com — and at the bottom of the Pacific-10 Conference. That doesn't bode

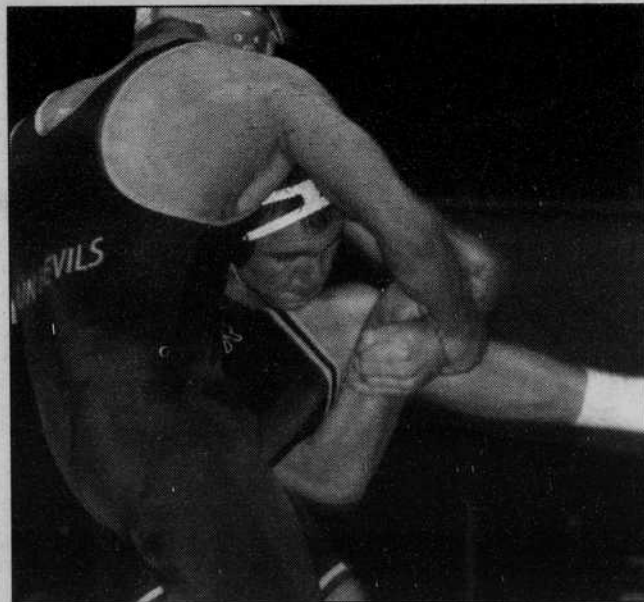
well for the Beavers, a team that has talent, but not as much as USC or California.

That leads into Erickson's prominence at Oregon State. The Beavers, despite adding seats to Reser and improving facilities in Corvallis, will probably never catch up to USC, Arizona, or most of the Pac-10, for that matter, in recruiting.

So those factors add up, and while it still isn't known why Erickson is leaving — there have been no official announcements — each probably played a role in his decision. Knowing that you're in a program that is

Turn to **Hager**, page 6

Sophomore sensation Webster stars on Ducks' mat



Adam Amato Emerald

Shane Webster leads Oregon with a 24-4 record this season, starting at 174 for the second year

Wrestling

Mindi Rice

Freelance Sports Reporter

Oregon doesn't get many recruits ranked No. 1 in the nation.

Sophomore Shane Webster was ranked as the No. 1 recruit nationally at his weight class by Intermat two seasons ago.

After a successful freshman year where he went 17-11, Webster's work during the offseason has shown in his 24-4 record and No. 11 ranking from Intermat this season.

"Last year, as a true freshman, Shane had a very good season," head coach Chuck Kearney said. "He's worked hard. He's gotten bigger and stronger. He's technically more sound."

Webster finished his high school career at Crater High School in Central Point with a 160-6 record, three state titles and was named a USA Scholastic All-American.

During his freshman year, Webster earned third place in the Pacific-10 Conference Championships and a trip to the NCAA Championships. Webster went 1-2 at the national tournament to end his season.

This year, Webster's four losses have come at the hands of ranked opponents — one in a tournament and three in dual meets. The 5-foot-9-inch sophomore has five victories over ranked opponents to counteract those losses.

In tournament play at the beginning of the season, Webster won the Mat-Town USA Invitational individual title at 174.

"I think this is going to be a breakthrough year for Shane," Kearney said before the season began.

It looks like he may have been right.

Individual Ducks

Webster, at No. 11, is the only Oregon wrestler ranked in the top 20 by Intermat. Webster is also ranked No. 11 by Amateur Wrestling News and W.I.N. Magazine, and No. 12 by the Wrestling Mall.

Senior Tony Overstake, redshirt junior Jason Harless and sophomore Martin Mitchell are all listed in the "wrestlers to watch" sections for their weight class by Intermat.

Overstake, at 149, is ranked No. 17 by Amateur Wrestling News and No. 18 by W.I.N. Magazine. He is also ranked No. 20 by the Wrestling Mall.

Harless is ranked No. 19 by the Amateur Wrestling News and No. 20 by the Wrestling Mall.

For the first time this season, Oregon is not ranked in the top 25 or listed in the "other teams" section of the Intermat poll.

Mindi Rice is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

Shane Webster (behind) is bigger and stronger this year, his coach says.