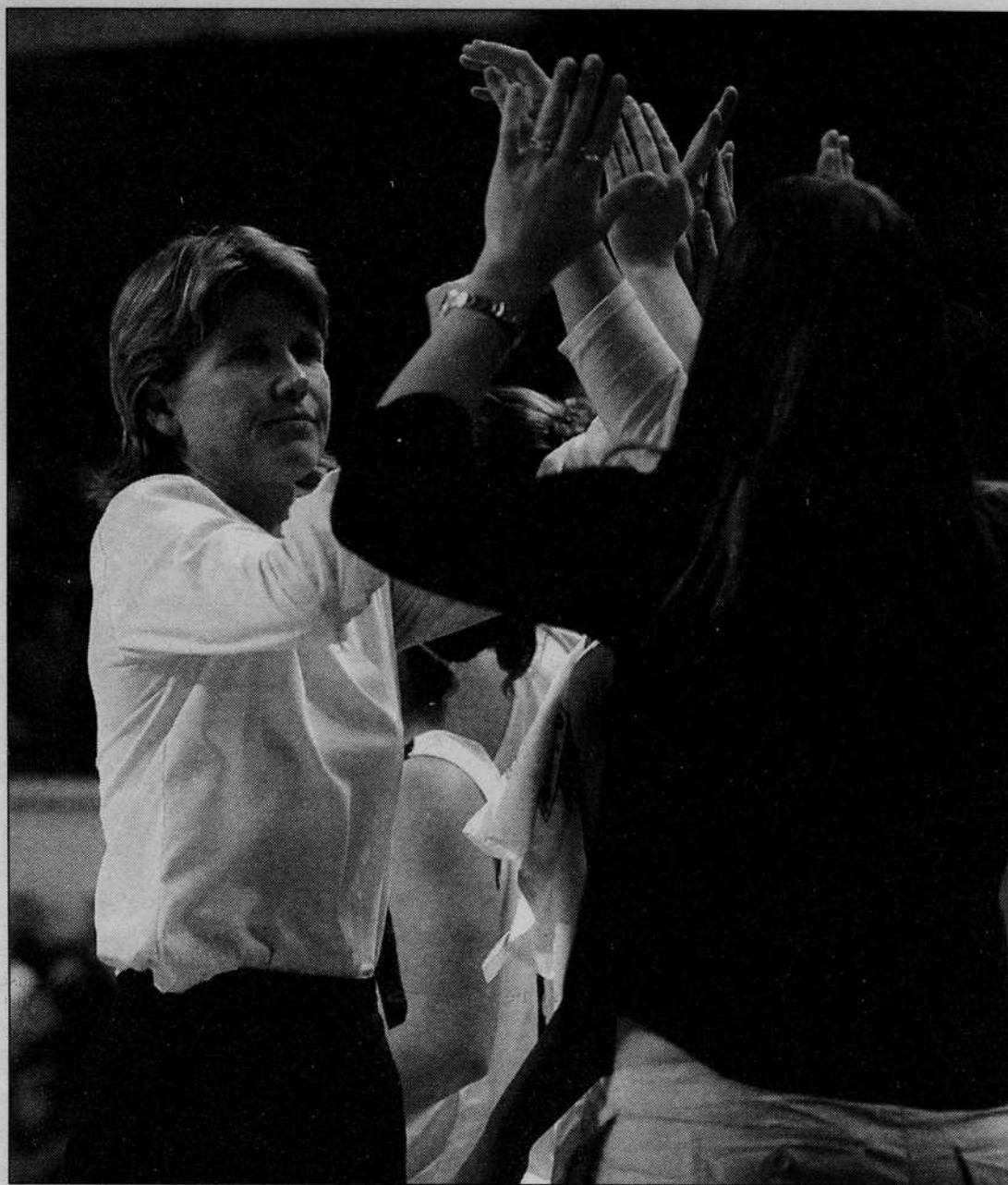


Thursday, February 20, 2003



Jeremy Forrest Emerald

Bev Smith led her team to a WNIT Championship last year, but injuries may keep the Ducks from this year's postseason.

The Bev-olution ROCKS ON

Bev Smith arrived at Oregon amid much fanfare, and it has been an interesting year and a half

Women's basketball

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

It has been almost a year and a half since Bev Smith's coaching debut with the Oregon women's basketball team, and it has been a coaching culture shock for the veteran the whole way.

From all her international expertise, Smith has encountered a much different experience in her time at Oregon.

"It's been everything and even a little bit more; there's been some really interesting things that have happened, and I've enjoyed it," Smith said. "It's been a challenge, and I enjoy challenges."

"With the team and the coaching staff we have, it's been something that has certainly been a significant thing in my life."

Smith faced her first challenge right away, accepting the position after the turmoil and controversy that surrounded former head coach Jody Runge.

The Ducks' first season with Smith proved she was for real. That season, Oregon won the Women's National Invitation Tournament Championship and netted 22 wins.

Smith became just the third first-

year Pac-10 coach to achieve the 20-win landmark — the first in more than nine years.

The next challenge was choosing a recruiting class that would lead Oregon back to the NCAA Tournament. Smith, a Canadian native, added two Canadians, who brought both size and dominance in the post.

"She's done a really good job of

not only making the transition for herself

by coaching, but helping the players make transitions, too," freshman Carolyn Ganes said.

The recruiting class of Ganes and Yadili Okwumabua has been setting solid examples of what Smith wants Oregon women's basketball to represent.

Despite the pre-season expectations and hype, this season has provided enough adversity to be worthy of a Golden Globe nomination for best drama.

Every team has ups and downs, but the rollercoaster ride for Oregon has not ceased. And for Smith, the journey has been draining.

"When you are dealing with adversity, there is a lot of emotion and a lot of energy that you give, and you don't realize that you are giving it,"

On tap

Who: Oregon women vs. Washington State

When: 7 p.m.

Where: McArthur Court

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Ducks pin PSU in final Pac-10 dual of 2002-03 season

Neil Phillips earns his first major decision and Bob Pool pins his opponent in his first match this season in the Ducks' win

Wrestling

Mindi Rice
Freelance Sports Reporter

PORTLAND — The Oregon wrestling squad dominated Portland State Wednesday night, earning the Ducks their first shutout victory this season in a 42-0 win.

"What we talked about was looking at this as a (Pacific-10 Conference) tournament first-round matchup," Oregon head coach Chuck Kearney said.

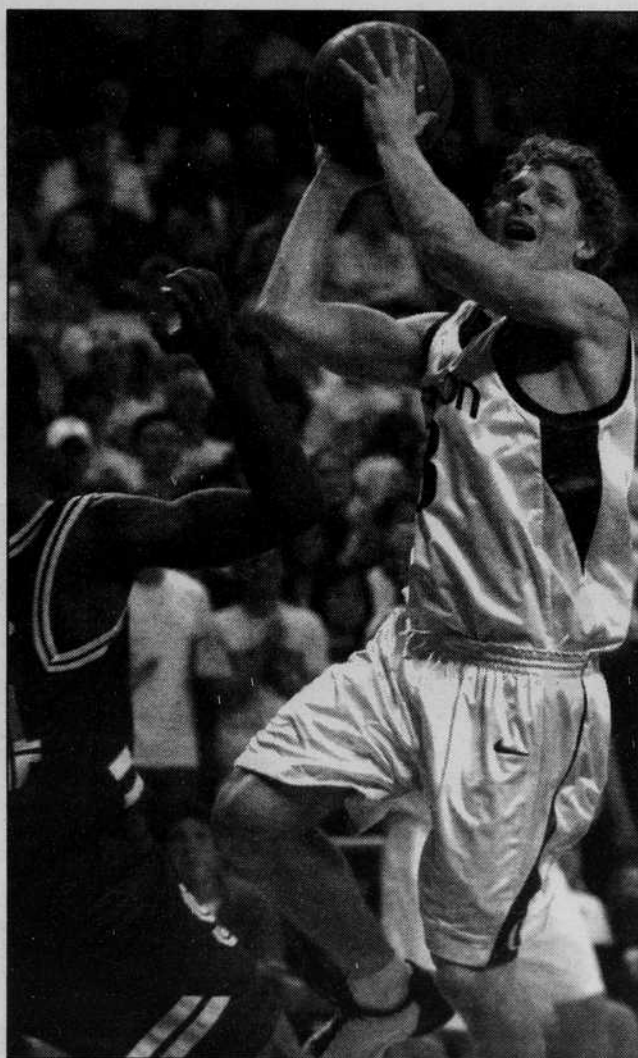
Senior Casey Hunt opened the dual at 141, dominating Viking Eddie Dahlen with two near falls. Dahlen earned his only points on escapes, with Hunt earning the four-point major decision, 17-5. It was Hunt's third major decision of the season and of his collegiate career.

At 149, redshirt freshman Bob Pool wrestled in his first match of the season, getting a pin for the victory 25 seconds into the match. Pool started quickly with a takedown before pinning his opponent.

Junior Branson Phillips and his opponent held each other scoreless through two periods. After starting the third period down, Phillips earned two points for a reversal and one point for riding time to win the 157 match, 3-0.

Redshirt sophomore Luke Larwin faced Portland State's top wrestler, Eric Arbogast, in the 165 match. Larwin and Arbogast fought a close match through all three periods,

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Adam Amato Emerald

Blaine, Wash., native Luke Ridnour faces his home-state schools.

Ridnour takes family section to Washington

The Evergreen State native always has a large cheering section when he goes back home with the Ducks, who take on WSU tonight

Men's basketball

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

Rooting against Luke Ridnour in Washington is like rooting against the Space Needle.

Washingtonians love their Blaine boy. Even when he beats the pants off Washington and Washington State. Even when the Ridnour fans outnumber the Cougar fans in Pullman.

"Probably not, but we'll have a good crew," Ridnour said when asked if that latter feat might happen.

Ridnour has a large family contingent in Spokane and a bigger fan base in his northern home town of Blaine. Both contingents will be there as Oregon faces the Cougars tonight in Pullman and squares off with the Huskies in Seattle on Saturday.

For Ridnour and the Ducks, both games are must-win. Oregon is 2-3 on the Pacific-10 Conference road, and this weekend presents an opportunity as golden as a goblet to prove to the NCAA Tournament committee that the Ducks can win on the road.

Washington State is 0-13 in Pac-10 play. Washington is 3-10.

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