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Saturday, March 1st; 9am-5pm
Sunday, March 2nd; 11am-4pm

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Tennis faces top teams

The women's tennis team takes on Stanford and Cal at home while the men play Washington and Purdue away

Tennis

Ryan Heath
 Freelance Sports Reporter

Oregon tennis has been playing the role of the favorite for long enough. It is time for the Ducks to be the underdogs.

The No. 37 women, coming off a 5-2 victory over then-No. 44 Washington St., will battle No. 4 Cal on Saturday and No. 3 Stanford on Sunday at home.

The No. 65 men will look to continue their six-match winning streak against No. 10 Washington on Friday and No. 55 Purdue on Sunday.

"Washington is the only the team we play twice a year," head coach Chris Russell said. "So they know a lot about us. It should be a hard-fought match."

The Ducks will take No. 79 Oded

Teig into Washington to face No. 8 Alex Vlaski, No. 14 Matt Hanlin and No. 116 Pete Scharler. Duck sophomore Manuel Kost slipped from the rankings this week because of an abdominal injury earlier in the season, but is currently 5-1 in the dual season.

The No. 15 doubles team of Teig and Sven Swinnen will take on No. 55 Vlasik and Ari Strasberg.

"This will be the most hostile environment we will play in," Russell said. "That's what college tennis is all about."

The 4-2 Boilermakers bring the No. 53 doubles team of Troy Havens and Scott Mayer to take on Teig and Swinnen, who are looking to improve on their record of 7-1.

"We've never seen Purdue before," Russell said. "But it looks like we match up well against them."

The women are looking to cap off what has already been a successful week. The teams landed three singles players and two doubles teams in the national rankings and notched victories over two of the most prestigious programs in the country.

"Cal and Stanford are two quality

teams," head coach Nils Schyllander said. "We are going into this match with the same attitude and look to continue playing well."

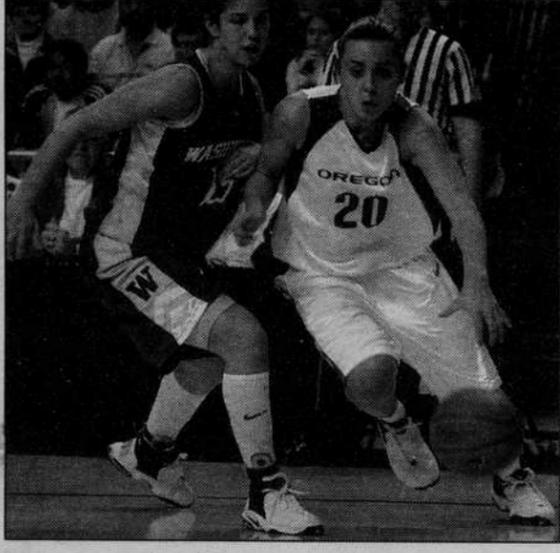
No. 16 Daria Panova, playing the No. 1 spot for the Ducks, will most likely take on No. 13 Raquel Kops-Jones of Cal and No. 5 Alice Barnes of Stanford on Sunday. Fellow ranked Ducks, No. 52 Courtney Nagle and No. 89 Monika Geiczys, will battle No. 10 Amber Liu and No. 26 Lauren Barnikow from Stanford as well as No. 45 Christina Fusano from Cal.

Along with their highly ranked singles players, the Ducks will call on the doubles teams of No. 38 Nagle/Panova and No. 44 Geiczys/Julie Merle to face No. 1 Barnikow/Erin Burdette of Stanford and Cal's duo of Kops-Jones/Fusano, ranked No. 11 nationally.

"We try to take things one weekend at a time," Schyllander said. "And we are very confident this weekend."

The women play at noon Saturday and 11 a.m. Sunday at the Student Tennis Center.

Ryan Heath is a freelance writer for the Emerald.



Amy Taylor and the Ducks now must defeat UCLA Saturday in Los Angeles.
 Jeremy Forrest
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Women's

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If that happens and USC ends the season tied with the Ducks, Oregon would win the tiebreaker because it won both games between the teams this season.

There is a black cat in the equation. Arizona State, which defeated California, 61-47, Thursday, must lose to Stanford on Saturday. The Sun Devils would win the tiebreaker over Oregon if they are able to defeat the Cardinal.

But Stanford won the first contest, 80-63.

Got all that?
 But after Oregon's impressive victory, the Pac-10 equation is the furthest thing from their minds. A much-improved shooting exhibition was.

The Ducks shot 57 percent from the field and were 6-of-11 from beyond the arc.

That's far different from the 19 percent Oregon shot in the first half against Washington last week.

"We really shook (the Washington game) off," Smith said. "We were just aggressive all game (Thursday), and that was important to us, to not back down."

Every Duck but freshman Yadili Okwumabua scored in the win, with sophomore Brandi Davis pitching in 11 points and Andrea Bills adding 10 — all in the first half.

The teams tied in rebounds at 32 apiece, but USC grabbed more offensively, 15 to Oregon's seven. That alone may have explained why the Trojans were able to make a game of it after trailing by 10 at halftime.

Oregon led by as many as 14 early on in the second half, but with just more than 12 minutes left in the

game, the Trojans chipped that figure away to seven.

Ebony Hoffman, who finished the night with 27 points, hit a three-pointer at the 5:19 mark of the half to pull USC within nine, 66-57.

Hoffman then, in an unusual sequence where Kraayeveld, Bills and Kedzie Gunderson were called for three-straight fouls, hit four-straight free throws to knock Oregon's lead down to five, 67-62.

But sophomore Amy Taylor, who has come on late in the season, knocked down a three with 1:18 left to ice the game for the Ducks.

"People just came in and did what they could in their minutes," Smith said. "Amy Taylor, what can you say about her?"

With USC in foul mode, the Ducks made just four of their eight free throws with less than a minute left, but as Smith put it, the Ducks "hit the ones we needed to."

The win gives the battered and sick Ducks an opportunity to capitalize Saturday. But it will be with a team that is facing sickness and injury.

Senior Alissa Edwards and freshman Carolyn Ganes both entered the game with colds — the latter playing in just 12 minutes. Davis also looked to be injured early in the first half with trainers later looking at the guard's ankle. However, she came back to nail a second three-pointer, her 52nd of the season, tying her with Shaquala Williams for fifth-most in an Oregon single season.

The Ducks visit UCLA on Saturday with tipoff set for 2 p.m. The game will be broadcast on Fox Sports Net.

Contact the sports reporter at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.

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