

Steffen nabs talented class

Oregon signs five new players for the 2003-04 season to fill a void left by the five seniors

Soccer

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's soccer team is adding some new spices for the 2003-04 season with the addition of two transfers and three incoming freshmen.

Oregon announced its new additions Thursday, and all have signed letters of intent.

"The group of newcomers are all fine athletes with good skills and pace," Oregon head coach Bill Steffen said in a release. "They're probably more specialized than previous classes, which is great, because they can complement the players that are coming back."

The Ducks will welcome redshirt juniors Erin Engelhardt and Sabrina DeMonte, who will transfer in from their respective schools.

Engelhardt previously attended Virginia, where she started 18 of

the 43 games she played for the Cavaliers. The New Jersey native scored three goals and has six assists in her sophomore season, as a midfielder, to help lead the Cavs to the NCAA Tournament.

DeMonte is currently enrolled at Oregon as a freshman, after attending Harbor Junior College last fall. The Torrance, Calif., native played on club teams that won the Surf Cup, League Cup and Premier League.

"We're excited to have them both here," Steffen said. "Erin owns a really strong background. She has tremendous athleticism with solid learning experiences."

"Sabrina comes from a very strong club background. She has a great go-for-it attitude, and since she hasn't played organized soccer for very long, she has tremendous upside potential."

There are also some baby Ducks arriving. Oregon will welcome freshman Dana Richardson. Richardson, a 5-foot-5-inch midfielder from Vancouver, B.C., is one of Canada's star juniors as she has played on Canadian National Teams since the age of 15.

Oregon also acquired a new protector of the net, in goalkeeper Emily Marrer from Cactus High in Glendale, Ariz. Marrer had a 77-5-3 career record with 54 shutouts, one shy of the state record.

The Ducks' final freshman is forward Kaily Winther, a local coming from Churchill High School. As a four-year letter-winner, Winther earned first-team all-league honors in her junior and senior seasons along with league MVP in her senior season.

"Kaily brings tremendous pace and has a knack for always being involved," Steffen said. "Dana comes from a strong playing background with the Canadian National U-19 Team."

"Emily is a very strong and determined player with good quickness, desire and a great work rate—great ingredients for a successful goalkeeper."

Oregon's recruits will try and fill the void of the seniors lost. Starting goalkeeper Sarah Peters, starting defenders Lindsey Peterson and Robi Thayer and starting forwards Amanda Orand and Sarah Denner all finished their Oregon careers in the fall.

Contact the sports reporter at jessethomas@dailyemerald.com.

Wrestling

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As one of three seniors at the beginning of the season, Overstake is one of the leaders for the Oregon squad.

"If he sees something that needs to be done, he does it," Kearney said. "Tony sincerely cares about the people in the program."

"This has taught me a lot about leadership," Overstake said. "The team is an awesome group of guys who go hard every day."

Born in Medford, Overstake says his father got him started in wrestling when he was young.

Overstake attended nearby Crater High School in Central Point, which has become an Oregon wrestling powerhouse under head coach Greg Haga. Since 1993, when Crater won its first state title, Haga has led his team to five state 4A championships, including one during Overstake's senior year.

"It was a good night," Overstake said. He helped Crater take the state title in 1998 by earning the championship at 125 that day. He went 41-3 during his senior season as a Comet.

Overstake improved steadily over his high school years — finishing fifth in state as a sophomore and third as a junior before taking the title as a senior. He won the district title all three years and chose to attend Oregon upon graduation.

"I knew I wanted to go Division I," Overstake said, "Oregon was the best D-I (school)."

Overstake joined former Crater teammate Doug Lee, who was one year ahead of him in school, to start the pattern from Central Point to Eugene.

These days, Overstake leads Crater graduates turning Duck. Sophomore Shane Webster and red-shirt freshman Bob Pool have continued the Comets trend.

As Overstake has grappled during the past four years, he has changed as a force on the team and against opponents. But one thing has not changed — his determination.

"When I first got here it was kind of a struggle," Overstake said. "It's a sport that teaches you how to work hard."

He spent his first year as a red-shirt, scrimmaging with the squad and increasing his size. After competing at 125 in high school, Overstake wrestled at 149 in his first appearance during his freshman year.

"When he first got here, you knew



Jeremy Forrest Emerald

Overstake (top) won an Oregon state championship with Crater High his senior year.

Tony Overstake file

Born: Tony Overstake on Jan. 20, 1980 in Medford.

High school: Won 125 state 4A championship senior year at Crater High School in Central Point. Earned three district titles.

Oregon: Earned trip to NCAA Championships past two years. Won Pac-10 title at 157 as a redshirt junior. Leads team with eight major decisions this year, while going 18-8 during the season



Overstake

he could be successful because he wanted to be," Kearney said.

In the Southern Oregon Open on Nov. 20, 1999, Overstake finished second at 149. Teammate Derek Smith beat Overstake 4-2 for the 149 title.

The redshirt freshman became Oregon's starter at 149 during the next month, going 22-11 during the season before finishing fifth in the Pac-10 tournament.

Overstake earned 32 team points during the season, with six of his 22 wins coming by major decision, three by pinning his opponent and two by technical fall.

During his second year of competition, Overstake earned his first trip to the NCAA Championships with a fourth-place Pac-10 finish. He won the Southern Oregon Open, and finished the season 18-16. A late-season knee injury caught up with him at the national tournament, where he went 0-2.

Overstake jumped to 157 for his junior year, and the extra eight pounds didn't slow him down. He made a return trip to the NCAA Championships after winning the Pac-10 Championship at 157. Overstake went 1-2 at the national tournament, finishing the season with a 27-9

record — second-best on the team.

After shoulder surgery over the summer, Overstake made the decision to move back to 149. He attributed the move to three things: his surgery, helping the team and the opportunity to compete better at the conference and national tournaments.

This season, Overstake is 18-8. He has been ranked on and off in the top 20 by InterMat, The Wrestling Mall, Amateur Wrestling News and W.I.N. Magazine.

"He's had a good year," Kearney said. "His training and preparation have been geared to Pac-10's and nationals."

"I love the sport," Overstake said, mentioning the possibility of coaching after graduation. "I'm not ready to be done with it."

Overstake has two tournaments left in his collegiate career — the Pac-10 Championships and the NCAA Championships that begin March 20.

"He's leaving the program better than when he got here," Kearney said. "That's a goal."

Mindi Rice is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

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