

Webster leads wrestlers at national meet

Three Oregon wrestlers compete in the NCAA Championships and Webster finishes as an All-American

Wrestling

Mindi Rice
Sports Reporter

The wrestling squad returned one All-American to Eugene after the NCAA Championships ended March 22.

Oregon sent three wrestlers — senior Casey Hunt, redshirt junior Jason Harless and sophomore Shane Webster — to the national tournament. Harless and Hunt both made quick exits, each picking up an 0-2 record, while Webster started strong and ended with a sixth-place finish.

No. 12-seeded Webster opened the tournament with a 3-2 decision over Cornell's Tyler Baier. In the second round, Webster faced Tyler Nixt of Iowa, taking a 7-4 decision with two takedowns in the third period.

"Shane won a big match tonight, probably the biggest match of his life," head coach Chuck Kearney said after Webster's match against Nixt. "It was one of those hard-fought matches where points were stingy, and then

the dam just broke for Shane."

Webster also won his third match with a strong third period. Tied at one with Purdue's Ryan Lange, Webster caught Lange for a takedown. Lange escaped in the last 15 seconds of the match to make the final score 3-2 in favor of Webster. Webster guaranteed himself the All-American honor with the win.

In the semifinals, Webster lost his first match of the tournament to Carl Fronhofer of Pittsburgh. Fronhofer pulled out a 3-2 decision, holding off a late takedown attempt by Webster.

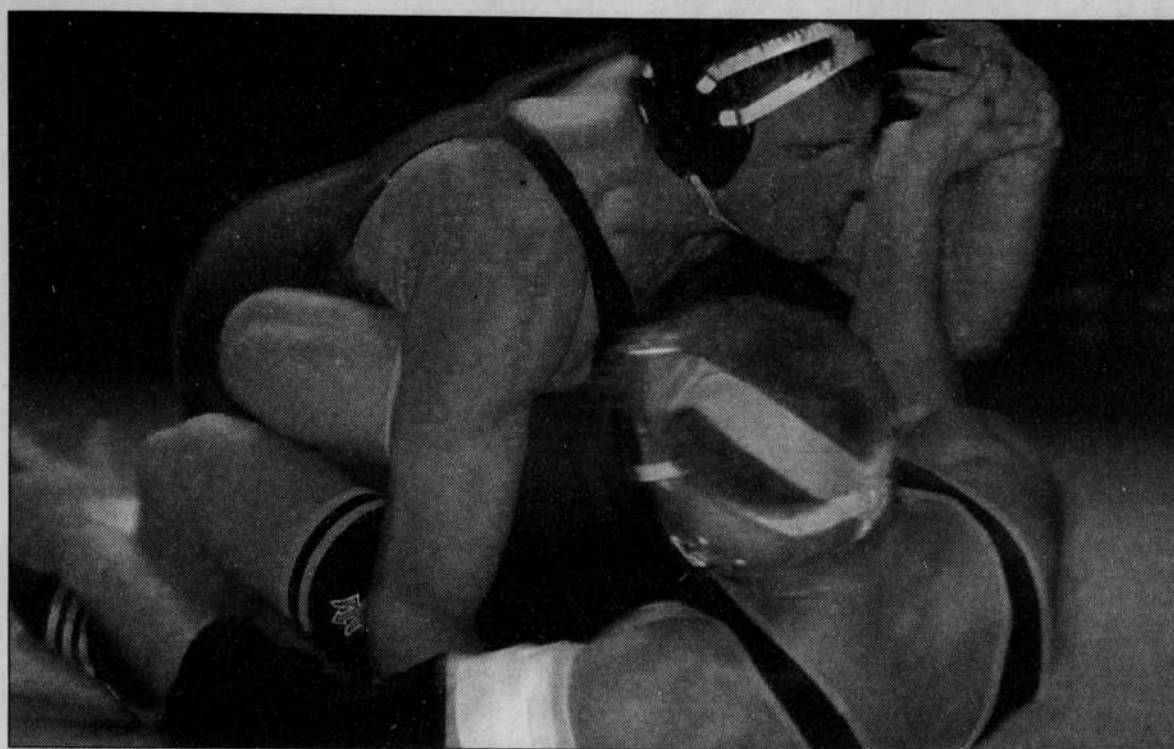
"The match just as easily could have fallen the other direction," Kearney said after Webster's loss. "Shane went out and wrestled hard."

In a match to determine if Webster would wrestle for third or fifth place, he faced Oklahoma State's Chris Pendleton. Webster was caught out of position and was pinned by Pendleton 17 seconds into the match.

Facing off with Webster for fifth place, Lehigh's Brad Dillon controlled the match, winning 11-6.

Webster, in his second national tournament in two seasons, improved over his showing in last year's NCAA Championships, where he went 1-2. Webster came into the NCAA Tournament after a second-

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Adam Amato Emerald

Shane Webster (top) improved on his 2002 NCAA finish by ending sixth in his weight class at this year's NCAA Championships.

Softball runs into ranked foes, loses three in Arizona

The Ducks drop three games in the desert this weekend after a trip to Colorado is canceled during the break

Softball

Mindi Rice
Sports Reporter

No. 19 Oregon got back into the swing of things as the softball team closed spring break in sunny Arizona.

The Ducks (17-9 overall, 1-3 Pacific-10 Conference) played their first game in almost two weeks, a 2-0 loss to No. 13 Arizona State (24-9, 1-0) on Friday evening.

Oregon was held to four hits in the shutout, while the Sun Devils scored their two runs on four hits.

In the fifth inning, Arizona State put runners on second and third with two hits and a sacrifice fly. An Oregon error allowed the runners to score.

Freshman pitcher Amy Harris took the loss, while striking out five and giving up the two runs unearned.

"I'm disappointed because I feel this is a game we should have won," head coach Kathy Arendsen said after the game. "We are continuing to pitch well, and we had chances to win. I'm pleased that we continued to battle late in the game after we were down, getting hits and opportunities, but we just came up a little short today."

Sun Devil Desiree Serrano earned the win to improve to 15-5 on the season.

The Ducks then headed to No. 2 Arizona (34-3, 3-0) for two games on Saturday and Sunday.

Against the Wildcats on Saturday, Oregon scored its only run of the weekend in a 4-1 loss.

In the fourth inning, senior Amber Hutchison hit her second home run of the season to break up the no-hitter.

Oregon didn't get any more hits during the game, giving Wildcats pitcher Alicia Hollowell a one-hitter.

Arizona scored a run in the first inning and another in the third inning to take the early 2-0 lead. After

Hutchison's home run, the Wildcats answered with two insurance runs in the fifth inning.

Harris pitched 5 2/3 innings, striking out six batters and giving up only two earned runs.

"Arizona is a very sound ballclub, and I thought we hung in there," Arendsen said after Saturday's game.

Sunday, the Ducks were shut out for the second time in three games in an 8-0 loss.

The Wildcats had 13 hits in the game, which was ended in the sixth inning when Arizona went up by eight runs.

Junior pitcher Anissa Meashintuby and sophomore pitcher Lindsey Kontra combined to earn five of the eight runs and only two strikeouts in the game.

Arizona scored once in both the first and fifth innings, and twice each in the third, fourth and sixth innings.

Oregon's 1-3 conference start is the Ducks' best in two years, since the Ducks finished the conference season 1-20 in 2001. Overall, however, Oregon's 17-9 record matches its record after 26 games last season.

Going into Friday's game, the Ducks had not played in almost two weeks, since a 10-2 win at Oregon State on March 15. Two days before playing the Beavers, Oregon's doubleheader against Portland State was postponed due to weather. The games were rescheduled for April 9 and will be the Ducks' home opener for the season.

Oregon had another trip canceled due to weather. The Ducks were scheduled to face Colorado State on March 23 and 24, but the trip was called off as Colorado was covered in snow. The games will not be rescheduled.

The Ducks' next opponent is Portland State on Tuesday afternoon. The Ducks' first doubleheader of the season begins at 4 p.m. in Portland. The Ducks then travel to California to face Stanford on Friday and California on Saturday and Sunday.

Contact the sports reporter at mindirice@dailymerald.com.

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