

Tennis suffers unhappy break

The men and women fight a bevy of problems, from injury to poor play in their action over spring break

Tennis

Ryan Heath

Freelance Sports Reporter

Spring break wasn't all sandy beaches and drinks with little umbrellas for the Oregon tennis squads. The No. 56 men suffered two tough Pac-10 losses and the No. 27 women battled injuries and homesickness on the East Coast.

The men celebrated the end of finals with a 7-0 home victory against California-Riverside on March 25. The win snapped a four-match losing streak for the Ducks and gave them confidence going into their first official Pac-10 meetings against No. 7 California and No. 6 Stanford.

The Ducks kept that momentum going in the doubles portion of the match by taking two of three against Cal to win the doubles point.

"We played some good doubles out there," head coach Chris Russell said. "We were competitive. We just need to get a little bit better."

The Ducks were unable to win a singles match against the Golden Bears, who boast three players in the national rankings, and took the loss, 6-1.

Saturday, the Ducks lost the doubles point despite Thomas Bieri/Manuel Kost's dominant 8-2 victory of No. 27 KC Corkery/James Pade of Stanford.

Kost, ranked No. 92 in singles, continued his strong play with a straight-sets victory over No. 12 David Martin.

Kost's victory was the lone point for the Ducks as they lost by a score of 6-1 for the second day in a row and fell to 8-7 on the year.

The women fell on hard times during the break as well. The hobbled Ducks took their injury woes with them to Virginia, and the lack of depth led to three-straight losses.

The then-No. 22 Ducks took on No. 37 Virginia in Charlottesville last Monday but managed only one singles victory in a 6-1 loss that dropped them to No. 27 in the rankings.

Senior captain Monika Geiczys was the only Duck to register a win against the Cavaliers, as she handled Lori Stern in straight sets.

The next stop for the No. 27 Ducks was a heart-breaking 4-3 loss to Virginia Tech.

"It was a hard-fought match," head coach Nils Schyllander said. "Obviously, injuries are starting to catch up with us."

The Ducks struggled to clinch the match after winning the doubles point and only managed two victories in singles competition. Courtney Nagle, No. 40 in the nation, and Ester Bak were the only Oregon players to leave Blacksburg with victories.

Friday, the Ducks visited Richmond to take on No. 14 Virginia Commonwealth in their first matchup as underdogs since a 4-3 loss to then-No. 21 Washington.

The Ducks fell to the Rams, 6-1, which dropped them below .500 for the first time since they started the year 0-1.

The lone Duck point came from No. 15 Daria Panova's straight-sets victory over No. 67 Barbora Zahnova.

"We just need to try and have other people step up for us and get things rolling in the right direction again," Schyllander said.

The women resume play this weekend on the road against Pepperdine and Loyola Marymount, while the men head south to take on No. 40 Arizona and No. 49 Arizona State.

Ryan Heath is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

Sports brief

Ridnour commits possible NCAA violation

Luke Ridnour attended a Portland Trail Blazers game with a complimentary ticket, and the Oregon Athletic Department is currently investigating whether or not it constitutes an NCAA violation.

According to an article in The Oregonian, Ridnour received a complimentary ticket, courtesy of ESPN baseball analyst and family friend Harold Reynolds, to the Blazers-Washington Wizards game Tuesday.

"Luke did nothing wrong," Reynolds told The Oregonian. "There's no wrongdoing here. We were well aware of the rules before we walked in the door. It wasn't a hidden intent."

Reynolds said he asked Ridnour to pay \$120 for the ticket. But because Reynolds got the ticket for free from the Blazers organization, it wasn't meant to be re-sold and could constitute an NCAA violation even if Ridnour paid for it.

According to the article, the Oregon Athletic Department launched an investigation into the matter Thursday and notified the Pacific-10 Conference and the NCAA of the possible violation.

Ridnour is considering leaving for the NBA, and if he does declare for the draft, the issue of him accepting free tickets will be moot.

—Peter Hockaday

Today's crossword solution

B	E	R	A	T	E	A	S	S	A	B	E	L	
E	L	I	S	H	A	D	O	E	B	O	R	E	
D	I	N	N	E	R	H	O	U	R	A	S	I	A
G	E	E	N	A	T	R	A	N	C	E	S		
S	T	A	R		I	N	H	A	N	D			
N	H	L	L	I	L	A	C	Y	O	G	I	S	
A	R	E	A	R	E	T	H	A	N	A	S	A	
R	E	V	W	A	S	I	R	S	S	A	P		
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U	R	G	E	V	I	A	M	U	M	U			
S	E	A	T	Y	E	T	S	T	P	E	T	E	

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\$16 advance, \$18 at door 8:00 pm

■ Wednesday ■

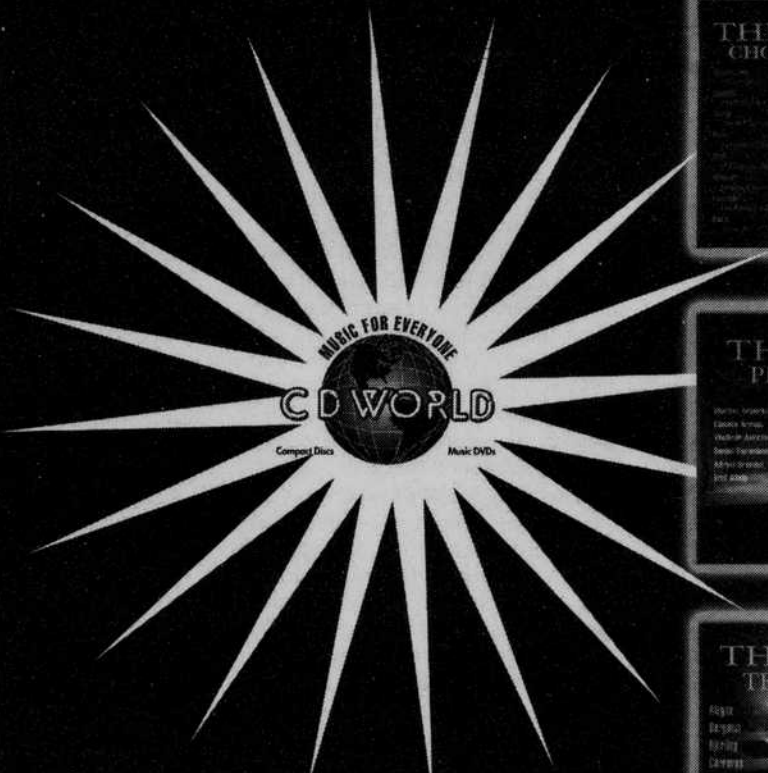
**Mike Watt & the Secondmen
with Dan Jones & the Squids**

Rock
\$8 advance, \$10 at door 8:00 pm

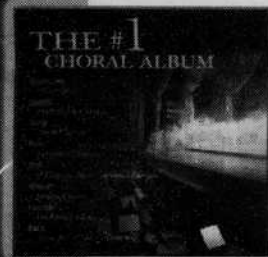
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