

SPORTS

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Best bet
NHL Playoffs:
Minnesota at Anaheim, Game 3
6 p.m., ESPN

Wednesday, May 14, 2003

UO's savior? Look no further than 'K.O. Kathy'

Oregon isn't the first program Kathy Arendsen has turned on its head, but it might be her most dramatic revival.

Arendsen, Oregon's first-year head softball coach, turned a team that finished the 2002 season with a 2-19 Pacific-10 Conference record into a Pac-10 third-place finisher that earned a No. 3 seed in the 2003 NCAA Regionals and won 10 conference games.

That's one more Pac-10 win than the team's five seniors earned during their first three years on the squad.

Arendsen has led four different softball programs, starting with Western Connecticut in 1983, then Eastern Illinois in 1990 and 1991.

Her only losing season as a head coach was Yale's 12-26 campaign in 1992. Arendsen spent three more years at Yale before six years rebuilding Mississippi State's program.

Arendsen's first team to make the NCAA Regionals was the 2000 Mississippi State squad. The 2001 and 2002 Bulldogs also took Arendsen to the regional tournament.

Arendsen calls this Duck squad a "team of destiny," but it's possible she may be a coach of destiny for Oregon's struggling program.

"When we play together and confidently, we can beat anybody," Arendsen has said after multiple wins this season.

As a pitcher for 15 years, Arendsen beat anybody who came up to bat — even baseball Hall of Famer Reggie Jackson — as she struck out 4,038 batters in her career. She struck out Jackson three times in an exhibition on ABC's Wide World of Sports.

And some wonder why they called her "K.O. Kathy."

Arendsen took a side trip to Michigan on Monday, leaving on an early morning flight, as she was inducted into the Michigan Hall of Fame along with former Detroit Lion Barry Sanders and five others.

She returned Tuesday on a second early morning flight to meet her team and fly to Fullerton, Calif., for the regionals.

Arendsen originally planned to fly east Sunday, but changed her plans when the team clinched a .500 record and a likely trip to regionals.

Instead, she and the team hosted a public selection-show gathering where friends and family congregated for the regional announcements.

Arendsen talked all season about fan support and how important it was for Howe Field to be the softball equivalent of McArthur Court or Autzen Stadium.

In the final homestand of the season, two games were broadcast live on KSCR while the band also made a softball debut.

For a program perennially at the bottom of the Pac-10 pit, Oregon's last homestand — and ninth and 10th Pac-10 wins of the season — was a big time event.

Arendsen wouldn't have had it any other way.

"This is going to set the stage for teams to come," Arendsen said after Saturday's final game.

Arendsen is very team focused in her



Mindi Rice
The girl
and the game

Beaver ball

The Oregon State baseball program has had problems this season but is still going strong

Baseball in Oregon

Hank Hager
Sports Reporter

CORVALLIS — The baseball gods were smiling on the Oregon State Beavers.

After watching the rain come in buckets during the weekend, the Arizona State and Oregon State baseball teams got lucky Monday. The sun shone bright and beautiful at Goss Stadium at Coleman Field.

It has been that kind of a season for head coach Pat Casey and the Beavers. A season of high expectations but a year that has brought, among other things, enough rain to last for a decade, in baseball years.

Oregon State is 21-24 overall, but the Beavers are 5-13 in Pac-10 play, tied for last in the nine-team conference before Monday's game.

Ignoring the records, the Beavers are on solid ground.

Oregon State is one of the few four-year baseball programs in the state of Oregon and is the showcase of the Beaver state.

"You take pride in that," Casey said. "I think we should feel like that, and we should represent our state. Anybody that plays big college baseball should. It's a situation where we feel that we are the only Pac-10 team in the state, and we should be the marquee program."

The marquee program has seen its share of problems this season, highlighted by poor weather in Corvallis. With heavy rain drenching the area into early May, crowds have been sparse.

The biggest crowd of the season was 1,077 when USC visited on April 27. In years past, that number would have ballooned to at least 1,700 a few times a season in the 2,000-seat ballpark. Monday, 1,206 entered the turnstiles at Goss, only the second time this season more than 1,000 have watched a game in Corvallis.

Yet, support for the program has not waned.

"Our institution does a great job for us," Casey said. "I've got nothing but good things to say about that. It's like anything else; the more you win, the more they show up."

"We've got a great ballpark and great fans."

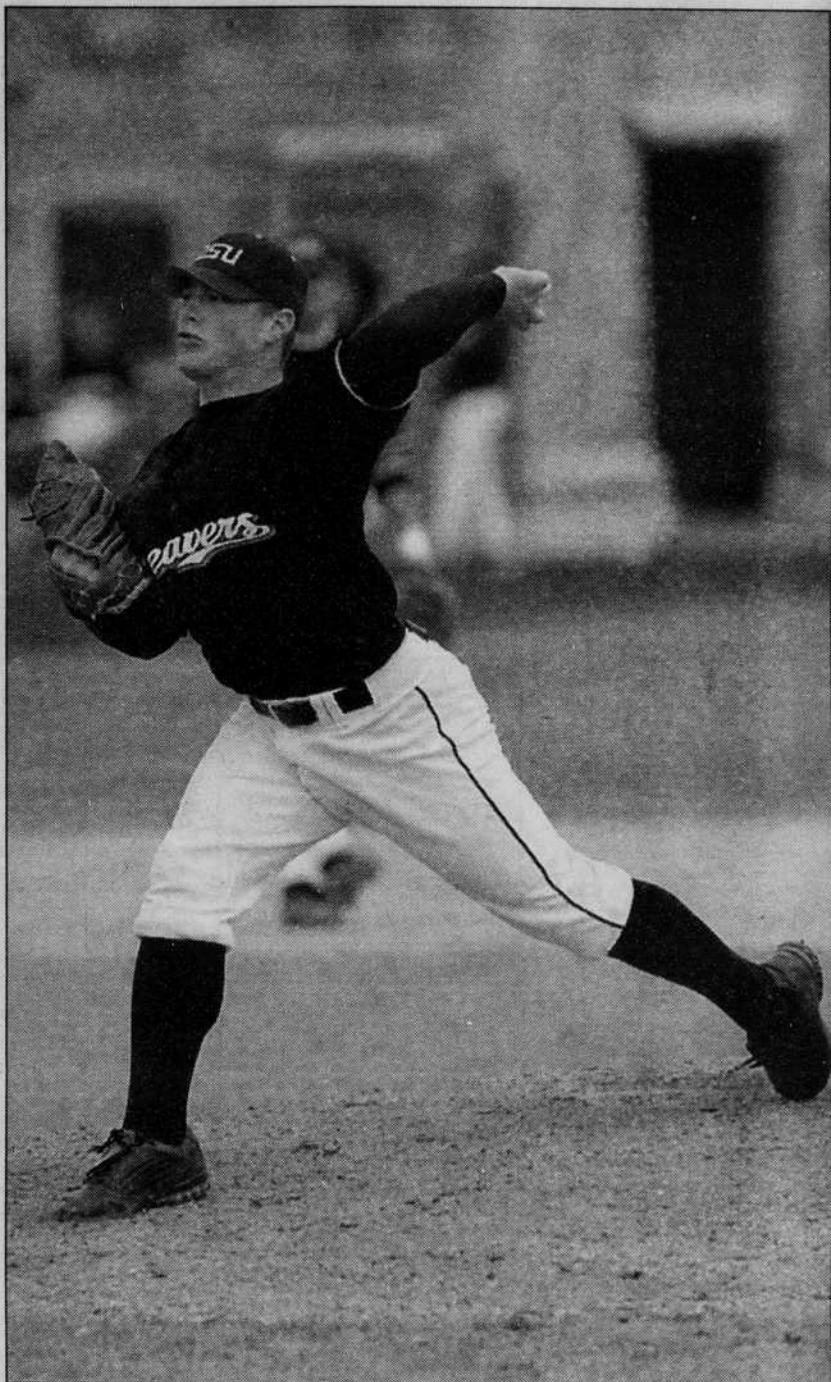
"It's a good program," former Beaver player Pat Stevens said.

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Part 1 of 2

Today: Baseball
at Oregon State

Thursday:
Baseball at Oregon,
past and future



Barry Schwartz Oregon State athletic department

Jake Postlewait, one of three Corvallis natives on the Beaver squad, is 3-0 this season.

Pac-10 looks tough as L.A. finale looms

The Ducks sit fourth in the conference race, right where they did last year, as the Championships near

Men's track and field

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

It's that time of year again.

Nope, it's not time to break out the shorts. Not time to eat ice cream. Not time for daisies to pop up across campus.

It's time for Revenge of the Track Nerds.

The next few weeks mark the postseason for NCAA track and field. One of the oldest practices in college track is what's called "scoring," which essentially involves taking everybody's best marks from the season and asking "If the meet happened exactly according to the season's best marks, who would win?" With the Pacific-10 Conference Championships coming up this weekend, it's time to score the Pac-10 meet.

It's an inexact science, to be sure, because athletes never perform to either their absolute best or absolute worst. Last season, we here at the Emerald

scored the meet and came up with a top four of UCLA, Stanford, Arizona State and Oregon, in that order. The actual meet ended up going Stanford-Oregon-USC-Arizona State.

But the idea remains valid. By taking everybody's scores so far this season, we can get an idea of which teams will contend and which teams will pretend this weekend.

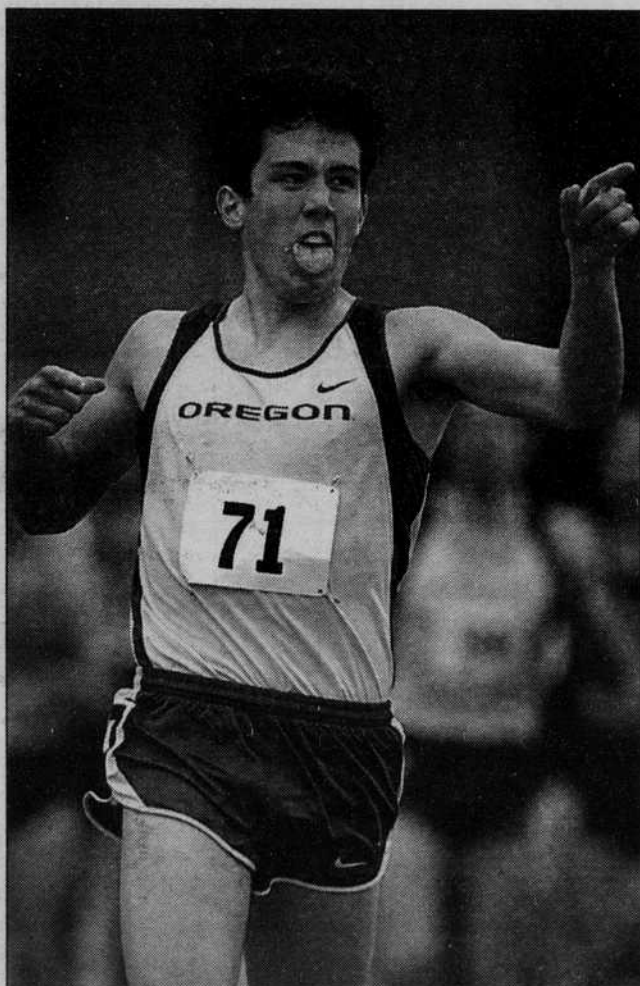
With the meet all scored out, Stanford looks like it will dominate the distances again and could dominate the meet. The Cardinal score 164 points, while USC uses seven individual event leaders to finish second with 149 points. UCLA is third with 135 points, and Oregon is close behind with 124. The nearest team to the top four, Arizona State, scores only 72 points.

The Ducks are confident they'll break the form like they did last year.

"Jason Hartmann and them are going to break (Stanford) up," middle-distance runner Ryan Flaherty said. "All the distance runners, they can do it. In the 1,500, I know UW's going to break 'em up."

"The mentality of the team is to go down there and do the best we can and take this thing this year. This is the year it's going to happen."

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Adam Amato Emerald

Ryan Flaherty said "this is the year" the Ducks will win the Pac-10.

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