

SPORTS

Sports Editor:
Peter Hockaday
peterhockaday@dailymerald.com

Best bet
NBA Playoffs:
Dallas at San Antonio, Game 1
6:30 p.m., TNT

Monday, May 19, 2003

Cinderella softball season ends in loss

Oregon, facing elimination, goes on a four-game run that is ended by Louisiana-Lafayette on Sunday in California

Softball

Mindi Rice
Sports Reporter

Despite a seventh-inning rally in the final game of the Fullerton, Calif., NCAA Regionals, Oregon's

season is over.

The Ducks pushed Louisiana-Lafayette into a one-game, winner-takes-all situation on Sunday — the only regional championship match to play two games — but the No. 4-seeded Ragin' Cajuns won the second game, 6-4, to advance to the Women's College World Series.

"We faced adversity and had chances, we had a long day, we left some people on base," head coach Kathy Arendsen. "The seventh inning is always tough. We stepped

up, we got some runs, we put people in scoring position and just couldn't come up with that last big hit."

Four Ducks were selected to the all-tournament team. Seniors Andrea Vidlund and Amber Hutchison were unanimous selections to the team. Senior Lynsey Haij and junior Anissa Meashintubby were also selected.

After a 10-8 win against No. 6 Penn State on Thursday, No. 3 Oregon stumbled in its first game on Friday. The Ducks were held to one run on an RBI single by Alyssa Laux

as No. 2 Oklahoma State bumped Oregon to one loss from regional elimination.

The Ducks bounced back immediately in the next game as they eliminated San Diego State. Oregon scored two runs in the third off a Vidlund home run. Hutchison scored on an error in the fifth and drove in senior Janell Bergstrom with a bunt in the sixth for the 4-1 win.

Again facing elimination on Saturday, Oregon scored two runs in the first against No. 1-seed Califor-

nia State-Fullerton. Hutchison scored on an error by the catcher, and Vidlund drove in Haij for the Ducks' second run. Vidlund, Meashintubby and freshman Amy Harris combined to give up only one run for the Oregon win. Cal State-Fullerton was eliminated with the loss.

The win against Cal State-Fullerton set the Ducks up for a rematch with Oklahoma State. The Cowgirls struck first with two runs in the top of the first inning, but Oregon Turn to **Softball**, page 12

Golf advances to national tourney

Junior Mike Sica's hole-in-one propels the Ducks into next week's NCAA finale

Men's golf

Scott Archer
Freelance Sports Reporter

As the old adage goes, sometimes it's better to be lucky than good. The Oregon men's golf team was a little of both this weekend at the NCAA West Regional, held at the 7,183-yard, par-72 Washington National Golf Course.

Oregon combined veteran play and a few touches of luck to edge out 17 other teams and lay claim to the ninth and final ticket to the NCAA Championships. The result may have been different if it weren't for junior Mike Sica's hole-in-one on 204-yard, par-3 eighth hole, as Oregon needed every stroke to advance. Sica finished the day with an even par, overcoming three bogeys and a double bogey to finish tied for 49th at 223.

The Ducks finished Saturday's third and final round with their third consecutive 7-over-par performance, ensuring the team a spot in the NCAA final, to be held May 28-31 in Stillwater, Okla. The berth ends a four-year hiatus for the Duck men, who last played in the championships in 1999.

"Sometimes, three-of-a-kind wins," Oregon head coach Steve Nosler said. "We could have made it a little easier on ourselves, but that's the way it goes. We're going and that's the important part."

Senior captain John Ellis continued his veteran, poised play, shooting his third-straight 73 on Saturday. That was good

"We may not have played great, but we fought hard every round and I couldn't be prouder of these guys."

Steve Nosler
Oregon head coach

enough for a 23rd place tie at 3-over-par, making it the highest finish in the three regionals of his career.

However, it was fellow senior captain Chris Carnahan who was impressive early. Carnahan birdied hole No. 2, No. 5 and No. 6 and rolled in seven straight pars before finishing the final hole with a birdie. Carnahan followed Friday's 72 with a 2-under 70 Saturday to finish tied for 36th overall.

The day wasn't without suspense, though, as Texas-El Paso, playing behind the Ducks, rallied late with two birdies on 17 to close the gap to one stroke before failing to birdie on 18 and force a playoff.

Each team in the field is given a throwaway score, and Oregon's Gregg LaVoie had his score discounted after struggling to finish the day with an 82. Redshirt freshman Kyle Johnson shot an 80 on the day. However, Johnson parred the last four holes to help the Ducks stay in the top 10.

"The guys are as excited as could be," said Nosler. "We counted at least two rounds from all five guys so everybody contributed to us getting to nationals. We may not have played great, but we fought hard every round and I couldn't be prouder of these guys."

Scott Archer is a freelance writer for the Emerald.



Eric Mitchum, seen here earlier this season at the Oregon Invitational, finished second in the 110 hurdles on Sunday at the Pac-10 Championships. His time in the prelim on Saturday, which he bettered on Sunday, put him second all-time at Oregon.
Danielle Hickey
Emerald

Track slips to third in Los Angeles

The Ducks lead for most of the weekend at Pac-10s, but USC and Stanford overtake them in the end

Men's track and field

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

There are many ways to measure close finishes in athletics, but only in track do they measure finishes in hundredths of a second.

The Oregon men's track and field team missed a second-place finish at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships by .25 seconds. That was the difference between Oregon and Stanford's times in the 4x400-meter relay, the final event of the Pac-10s and the final dagger in the Ducks' chances to repeat last season's runner-up finish.

USC hosted and won the Pac-10s with 139 points. Stanford finished second with 128 points, edging Oregon, which finished with 127.

"We kind of stay away from feeling disappointed," Oregon head coach Martin Smith said. "Obviously we would have liked to add another point or two — or 10 and put ourselves in position to win. But every athlete on this team did everything they could to do

the best they could, and the best they could was 127 points for third."

The Ducks led the meet for a day and a half before the Trojans and Cardinal caught and eventually passed Oregon on Sunday afternoon.

With 16 events done and five left, Oregon led USC by eight points. But Trojan sprinter Wes Felix won the 200, and USC jumped ahead. Later, Trojan star Julien Kapek won the triple jump, and Oregon's runners couldn't overcome Stanford's studs in the 5,000.

The teams entered the final event, the 4x400 relay, tied in knots. Oregon and Stanford were deadlocked, and both needed nine points to catch USC. Oregon won its heat of the relay with a season-best time of 3 minutes, 9.42 seconds. In the second heat, Stanford finished last but in 3:09.17 to snatch second place from the Ducks.

"It was very hard to see those teams come back slowly," Duck hurdler Eric Mitchum said. "We were doing so good, then they just started to come back."

Mitchum and the Ducks had plenty to be proud of despite the late-meet fall. Mitchum was one of three Oregon athletes who finished second in his event, while the Ducks had three individual champions and three athletes finish third.

Oregon's ability to score 127 points

with only three individual champions was a testament to the overall strength of the team.

Adam Jenkins was the first Duck to score big on the weekend. The junior javelin thrower won Saturday's javelin title with a toss of 217 feet, 9 inches. The throw was short of his season best of 221-4, but still earned Oregon 10 team points.

"I wanted to get the win, and after that I wanted to go for the distance, but I just didn't have it yesterday," Jenkins said Sunday. "I was just happy to score points for my team."

On Sunday, hammer thrower Adam Kriz added another title in a dramatic competition. On his final throw of the first round, Stanford's Nick Welihozkiy threw a massive distance of almost 220 feet, but Kriz threw 221-3 on the very next toss to take the lead. That was a personal best for Kriz and eventually netted him the win.

"He was right on my heels, and then over the rest of the competition we kept trying to hit big throws, and neither one of us could," Kriz said. "My third throw just kind of stood."

Mitchum led Oregon's charge on the track early Sunday. The freshman finished second in the 110 hurdles with a personal-best and barely wind-legal

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