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Best bet
College football:
West Virginia at Miami
4:30 p.m., ESPN

Thursday, October 2, 2003



Jesse Thomas
Go the distance

Oregon soccer will rally; wait and see

As soon as the Oregon women's soccer team propelled itself into what appeared to be promising athletic prominence with the best start in school history, it fell off the radar.

What began as a 5-0 undefeated record soon became 5-4 with a squad on the verge of falling below .500. What were significant wins over teams like Boise State, San Francisco and Sacramento State quickly became overshadowed by the storm clouds that have been pouring on the Oregon offense.

The Ducks would like to erase the memories that remain from the games in Dallas and Los Angeles. To make a long story short, Oregon lost those four games in a combined score of 19-0.

To add gas to the fire, the Ducks return home to Papé Field this week — where they remain undefeated — to face defending national champion Portland, which beat them 3-0 last season.

So what does it all really mean? How can a team go from so good to not so good over the course of one week? Well, they could ask the football team. And how can one view the record, the team and the schedule in the larger scheme of things?

For starters, the problem with sports fans today is that patience is a virtue they don't have. Fans don't believe in building a program because they think the team should be national caliber now.

The women's soccer team has been in existence for less than a decade, and the evolution of the program came in 1996. Oregon is now seven seasons in the making, with no postseason appearances and an 8-8 finish in 2001 as its best season performance.

Redshirt junior Erin Engelhardt summed it up best: "There's potential, and that's one of the most exciting things," she said.

There is potential, and it is a disgrace to the program that the majority of the student body fails to see that. The focus is kept on the present. And as of now, the negatives rather than the positives are being highlighted.

Once you look beyond all the shutouts and the two total wins of last season, you might see a group of young women with an intense desire to win as they play in the toughest conference in soccer. Then add to that one of the toughest schedules in the country.

Sure, the schedule could be easier. And sure, the athletics department could fire head coach Bill Steffen because of difficulties leading his program over the past seven years. And sure, the recruiting could be better as well.

But those things won't change. Why? Oregon will not cheat its way to the top by taking the easy road. And maybe because someone else out there sees potential in a team that has received more criticism than former

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Oregon State, Ducks ready for 88th battle

The Ducks travel to Corvallis to take on the Beavers in search of their first Pac-10 win

By Jon Roetman
Sports Reporter

The Oregon volleyball team has mixed viewpoints as it heads to Corvallis tonight to take on Oregon State.

For the nine freshmen on the Oregon roster, the Beavers simply present another opponent and another chance for the Ducks to pick up their first Pacific-10 Conference win of the season.

"I know there's kind of a rivalry there," said freshman Sarah Mason, a native of Hilo, Hawaii. "But I'm not really worried about it."

For the five returning athletes on the Duck roster, tonight's 88th installment of the Civil War is about pride and the chance to win on the Beavers' home court for the second year in a row.

"We're so pumped," sophomore Jaclyn Jones said. "I can't wait to get there and beat them. That was our one win last year, so I'm going to be there with good memories."

Oregon head coach Carl Ferreira said regardless of how each athlete views the Civil War, tonight's match presents an excellent chance for a win. The Ducks (3-10 overall, 0-4 Pac-10) have stayed competitive against some of the nation's elite and will enter Corvallis as a confident team.

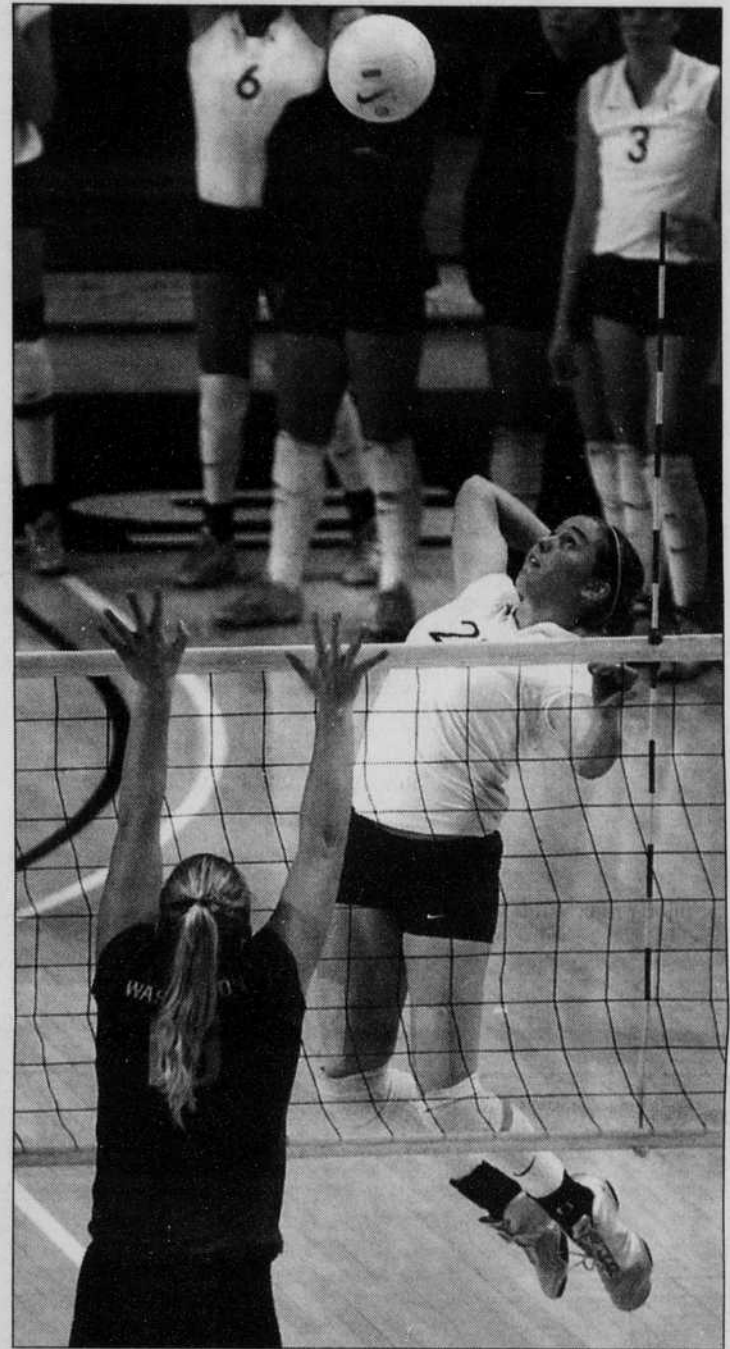
"We've started Pac-10 play with the No. 1, 4, 8 and (12th) ranked teams in the country," Ferreira said. "Now we play our in-state rival and there's a lot of significance to playing an in-state rivalry match."

Ferreira also had former Oregon quarterback Chris Miller address the team on Wednesday about the importance of the Civil War.

"I think it's awesome," said Ferreira about having the former NFL quarterback share his thoughts. "If you can (listen to) experienced alumni that have been there and done that and understand the process, that's always great."

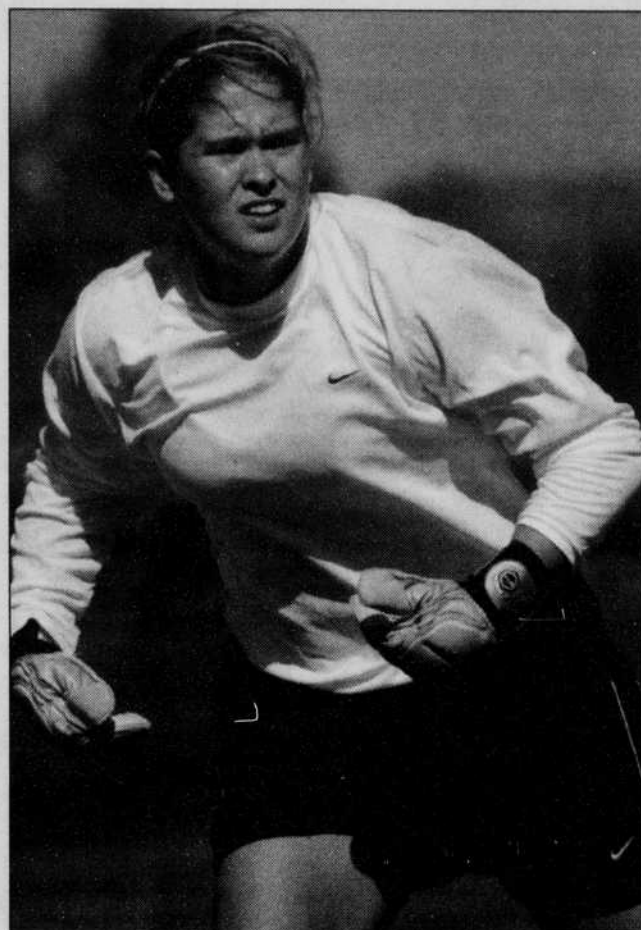
Like the Ducks, Oregon State is looking for its first Pac-10 win. The Beavers (10-6, 0-4) come into tonight's game after beating Portland 3-0 on Tuesday. The Pilots handled the Ducks, 3-1, Sept. 23 in Portland.

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Emerald

Junior Lauren Westendorf had 13 kills in last year's win over Oregon State.



Adam Amato Photo Editor

Goalkeeper Emily Marrer is one of four true freshmen on the squad. As a prep player, she posted 54 shutouts.

UO newcomers bring experience to table

Oregon welcomes six new players to the soccer team this year, which now has a total of 17 underclassmen

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

The Ducks soccer squad is new this year. New and young, for that matter.

Of the 14 different starters in 2003, only one is a senior. Oregon has welcomed six newcomers this year, two transfers and four true freshmen. Red-shirt junior Erin Engelhardt and red-shirt freshman Sabrina DeMonte both bring experience as transfers.

Engelhardt brings her talents to Eugene after a two-year stint at Virginia, where in her sophomore year she helped lead the Cavaliers to the NCAA tournament after tallying three goals and six assists.

The Hasbrouck, N.J., native is looking to bring her NCAA experience to Oregon and help lead the Ducks into their first post-season appearance.

"It's a real goal for this team," she said.

"I'm just trying to bring that type of competitiveness I experienced playing at Virginia."

That competitiveness as a Cavalier only lasted for two years because Engelhardt took a year off for a break. But now, Oregon seems to be the right fit.

"I enjoyed my time (at Virginia)," Engelhardt said. "I felt like I needed a change. Oregon just seemed right. I'm having a great time. It's really a great bunch of girls."

DeMonte, who transferred to Oregon in winter 2003 after spending her previous time at Harbor Junior College, is playing soccer for the first time at the college level.

With prep experience that includes being team captain, athlete of the year and leading scorer with 15 goals and 11 assists in 2002, DeMonte could have a strong impact at a young age.

Oregon's four true freshmen include are goalkeeper Emily Marrer of Glendale, Ariz.; midfielder Dana Richardson of Vancouver, B.C.; midfielder Rachel Grushkin of Eureka, Calif., and Eugene native Kaily Winther.

Galas is a Duck at heart

Assistant coach John Galas can't seem to get enough of Oregon.

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