

VOLLEYBALL

continued from page 13

and fourth in points per game (5.85). Nnamani was a second team AVCA All-American during her sophomore season.

Middle blocker Jennifer Harvey is also a force to be reckoned with. The senior leads the conference in blocks per game (1.51) and is seventh in hitting percentage (.348). Freshman outside hitter Kristin Richards is second on the team in kills (292) and kills per game (3.14).

The trio torched Oregon for a combined 54 points, including 44 kills, during the season's earlier meeting on Sept. 19 at McArthur Court.

"They have real, premier individual players," Oregon head coach Carl Ferreira said of Stanford. "Those kind of players make other people around them better."

Oregon received great individual efforts from sophomore middle blocker Kelly Russell and freshman outside hitter Sarah Mason during the Ducks' last meeting with Stanford. Russell finished with a team high of 17 kills and contributed five

digs. Mason added 13 kills and hit at a .370 clip.

Oregon has of late come to rely on the freshman duo of Mason and middle blocker Kristen Bitter for a good chunk of its point scoring. Mason leads the team in kills (267) and kills per game (3.14) and has emerged as the Ducks' go-to attacker. Bitter has already proved she belongs with the Pac-10's top net players, standing eighth in the conference with 1.13 blocks per game.

Freshman setter Heather Madison will get her first-ever start against a top-10 team after starting in place of injured sophomore Jodi Bell last week in home losses to Arizona and Arizona State.

Madison, who finished with an Oregon season high of 53 assists against the Sun Devils, said losses in her first two collegiate starts won't cause a drop in confidence.

"What's done is done," Madison said. "We have to move on. It doesn't really affect us right now."

Season finale

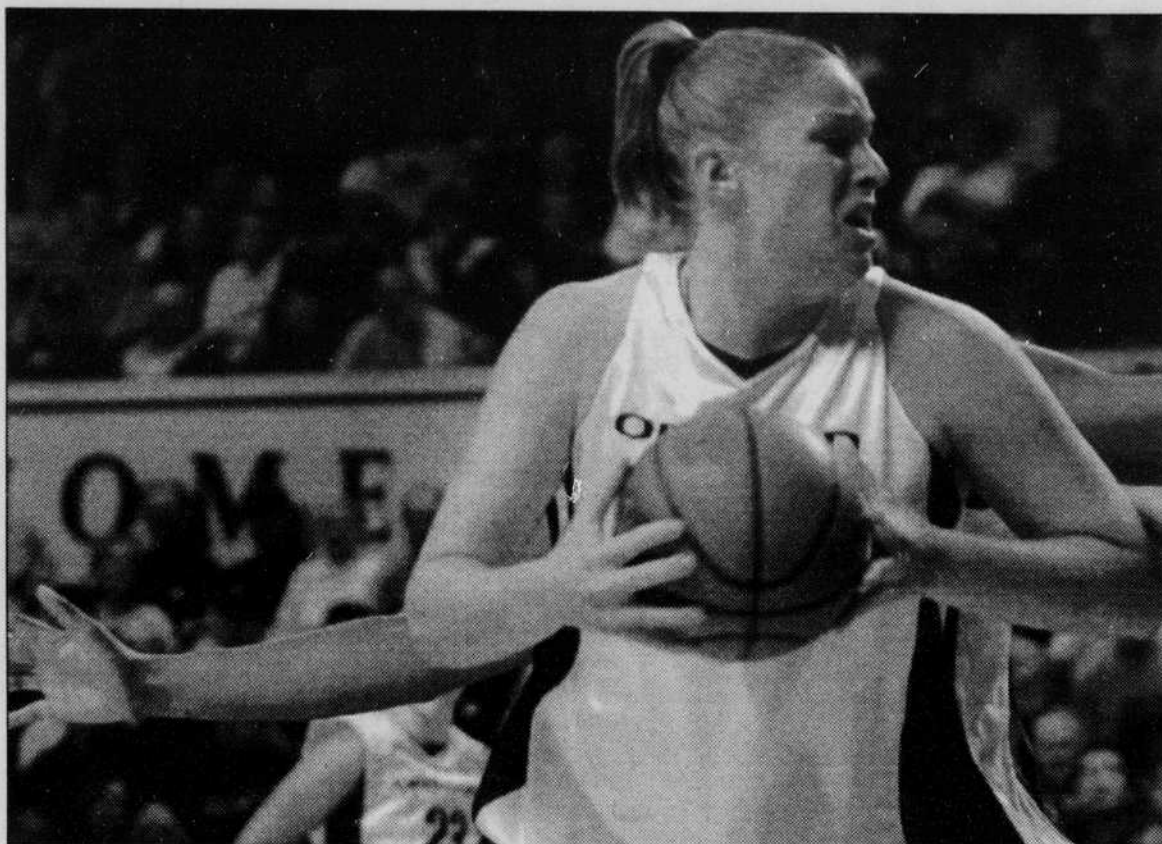
Oregon will battle No. 9 California in the season's final match on Friday after the match against Stanford tonight. The Golden Bears (19-6, 10-6) are fourth in the Pac-10 and have an 8-3 overall record at Haas Pavilion.

California is led by outside hitter Mia Jerkov. The junior has been named Pac-10 Player of the Week four times this season and leads the Pac-10 with 5.59 kills per game.

Ferreira said if the Ducks are to succeed in their final two matches, they must contain Nnamani and Jerkov.

"I'm not necessarily sure you can stop them, but you have to try and slow them down," Ferreira said. "Then you try to focus your attention on other people."

Contact the sports reporter at jonroetman@dailyemerald.com.



Adam Amato Photo Editor

Sophomore forward Carolyn Ganes is one of several Oregon post players that will make life difficult for opponents this season.

WOMEN

continued from page 13

"The No. 24 ranking is quite an honor, but at the same time it's just a number," Smith said. "We don't like to look at numbers. We just like to look at ourselves and demand that much more of ourselves."

Smith added that LSU is a great example of a ranking not being very important.

"Certainly, looking at LSU, we had a lot of respect for (them) but No. 9 was just a number for them," Smith said. "You're only as good as your last game."

Inside force

Oregon post players had a large role in the Ducks' two exhibition and two nonconference victories. The trio of forward Cathrine Kraayeveld, junior center Andrea Bills and Ganes have dominated the paint and left opponents searching for answers.

Kraayeveld was named the most valuable player of the Women's Sports Foundation Classic, finishing with 51 points and 20 rebounds in two games. Bills was named to the all-tournament team during the weekend, combining for 29 points, on 13 of 18 shooting and 18 rebounds. Ganes had a strong performance in an 87-29 win over Western Oregon in the Ducks' final exhibition game. Ganes was simply too strong for the Wolves to handle, finishing with 22 points on 11 of 14 shooting.

Mizusawa madness

Junior point guard Corrie Mizusawa has brought excitement and consistency to the Oregon offense

with her no-look passes and her knowledge of the game. She is averaging nine assists per game during nonconference play, including 13 against Valparaiso — one shy of tying a school record. Mizusawa dished out 15 assists against Strakonice — from the Czech Republic — but statistics from exhibition games don't count.

Next up

After a week off, Oregon will travel to Spokane, Wash. Tuesday to face Gonzaga. It will be the Ducks' first road game of the season and will be a good test to see if Oregon can stay focused. The Ducks will begin Pac-10 play on Dec. 27 at California.

"Especially coming off (the LSU) win, it will be good for us to go on the road and see if we can play like we did Sunday," Kraayeveld said. "I think we just have to stay focused and play hard, and I think we'll be all right."

Contact the sports reporter at jonroetman@dailyemerald.com.

HARRIERS

continued from page 14

Ian Dobson finished the race first, followed by a second-place finish from teammate Grant Robison.

Robison attended McMinville High School and Dobson hails from Klamath Falls. Women's head coach Marnie Mason and harrier Sara Schaaf

attended Klamath Union.

Jacob Gomez and Lauren Jespersen are also natives of Klamath Falls and are harriers for the No. 1 Stanford men and No. 2 Stanford women, respectively. Joaquin Chapa is from Portland and runs for the Cardinal.

Scott Archer is a freelance sports reporter for the Emerald.

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