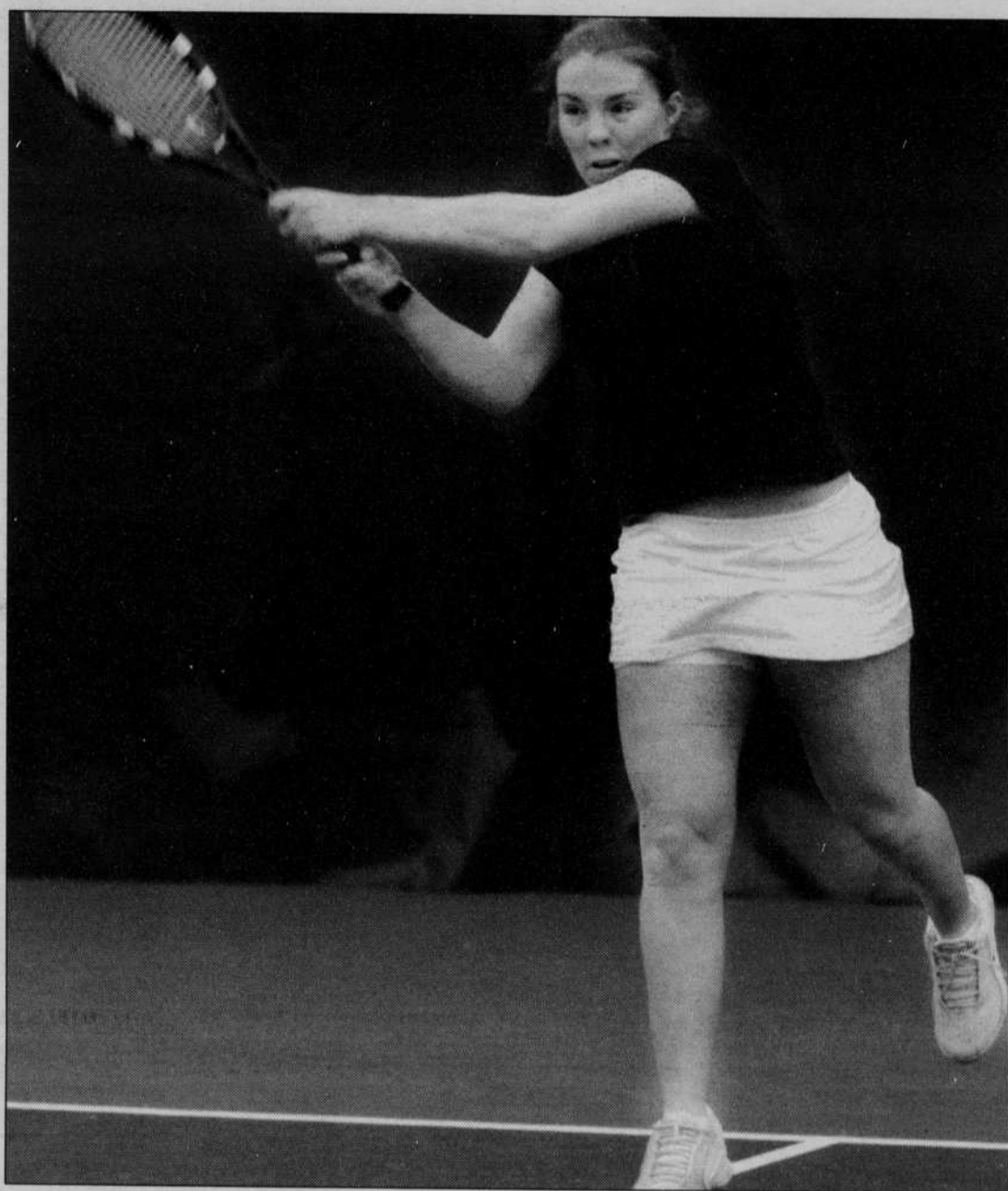


Wednesday, February 11, 2004



Off the court, Courtney Nagle is a prankster for the Oregon women's tennis team, but on it, she's one of the most valuable players on the club. She ranks in a number of top-10 lists for the Ducks.

Erik Bishoff
Photographer

Comedic impact

Senior Courtney Nagle is not only the women's tennis team captain, but she is also the "team clown"

By Alex Tam
Freelance Reporter

Every sports team needs a comic to lighten up the atmosphere.

Senior Courtney Nagle relishes her role as the "team clown."

One of her most memorable pranks was on her teammate and roommate Davina Mendiburu. Nagle decided an early morning wake-up call to her fellow senior would be extremely funny. Around 3:30 a.m., the deafening sounds of bells from an alarm clock blared through Mendiburu's room and woke her up in disgust.

DUCK TENNIS

Nagle soon after realized her roommate had an early 8 a.m. test less than five hours later. Naturally, Mendiburu was angry and irritated with her "friend," but Nagle is proud of her feat as it cemented her title as the "team clown."

"That's what you get from being a prankster sometimes," Nagle said. "You get good results."

Her career at Oregon has been nothing like a joke.

Nagle, a Denver native, walked onto the Oregon women's tennis team back in 2000 and had an immediate impact on the program. She compiled a team-high 18 wins in her first year and since then holds a 54-42 singles record over her four-year career. Her early success as a Duck later earned her a scholarship.

Tennis, however, was not the only sport

she embraced growing up. Basketball, softball and track interested her but tennis soon became the sport she loved playing as a child.

Nagle first picked up a tennis racket at age six and started to play seriously at the age of nine. She recalls writing in her journal back in second grade that she enjoyed playing tennis every day and looked forward to it each day thereafter.

"I loved it from the beginning," Nagle said, "and I loved the other sports, but tennis is something I embraced."

Nagle starred at Monte Vista High School in Danville, Calif., where she won two straight league championships. Though she was not heavily recruited out of high school, Nagle decided to bring her talents to Oregon for a chance to play

Turn to **COMEDIC**, page 9A

Bowling takes on a sporty image

It's not often, even during times of protest in Eugene, that one sees four strikes in one night.

Fortunately for my best friend and unfortunately for myself, our Monday night at Eugene's Southtowne Lanes saw more than that.

In our first game, my friend bowled four consecutive strikes and six total, for a royal whomping of 171 to 76.

I was rusty. I swear.

The second game picked up a little for me. I tamed my inclination to spin the ball at the end of the throw — stemming from years as a softball pitcher — and managed to finish in the 90s. My



Mindi Rice

The girl and the game

friend pulled a muscle and was also held to the 90s.

Ah, the joys and inconsistencies of bowling.

It is often argued that bowling isn't a sport. I wouldn't necessarily disagree with that, but I don't agree wholeheartedly. Bowling does resemble a sport at times.

For instance, they show it on ESPN. Granted, ESPN is not the end-all, be-all of the sports world, but a time slot on one of ESPN's growing number of channels must mean something.

Bowling has the intricacies of baseball with the speed of basketball. We were in and out in an hour after playing two games.

These few points, though somewhat

Turn to **RICE**, page 9A

Brooks close but not ready for a return

Oregon has gone 5-3 since Aaron Brooks went down with a broken right wrist on Jan. 4 in L.A.

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

It would have been sweet for Aaron Brooks to be able to play Thursday against Washington, but it just isn't going to happen.

The Seattle native and Oregon freshman is healing well after sustaining a broken right wrist, but hasn't yet gotten to the point yet where he is game-ready. The guard has been participating in some rehabilitation and is itching to get back on the court in a real game.

That could very well happen against Arizona on Feb. 19 at McArthur Court.

"That's my target date," Brooks said before Oregon's practice on Tuesday. "It just depends on how it comes along in the couple days we have."

Since Brooks went down with the injury during the Ducks' 81-74 loss to UCLA on Jan. 4, Oregon has gone 5-3. At times, the Ducks have played fairly well against their opponents, evidenced most recently by a seven-point win over Oregon State on Saturday.

At other times, they've been dominated, such as during a 24-point loss to Arizona in Tucson.

"It's been real tough watching them play," Brooks said. "It's easier when we're winning."

Could Brooks have meant a reduction in that 24-point margin? Would Oregon have lost to Oregon State on Jan. 10 and to Stanford three weeks later, especially after a 19-point lead in the second half?

There's no way to answer those questions.

But Brooks' presence on the court, especially if he returns with six games left on the regular season schedule, could mean the difference between an NCAA Tournament appearance and one in the NIT.

"I might have more legs than the rest of the players," Brooks said. "I don't know. I guess you could look at it that way."

When Brooks was healthy, he was averaging 6.7 points and 2.9 assists per game. Those numbers are not terribly indicative of a player who can take over a game, but rather of one who is getting accustomed to the pace of collegiate basketball.

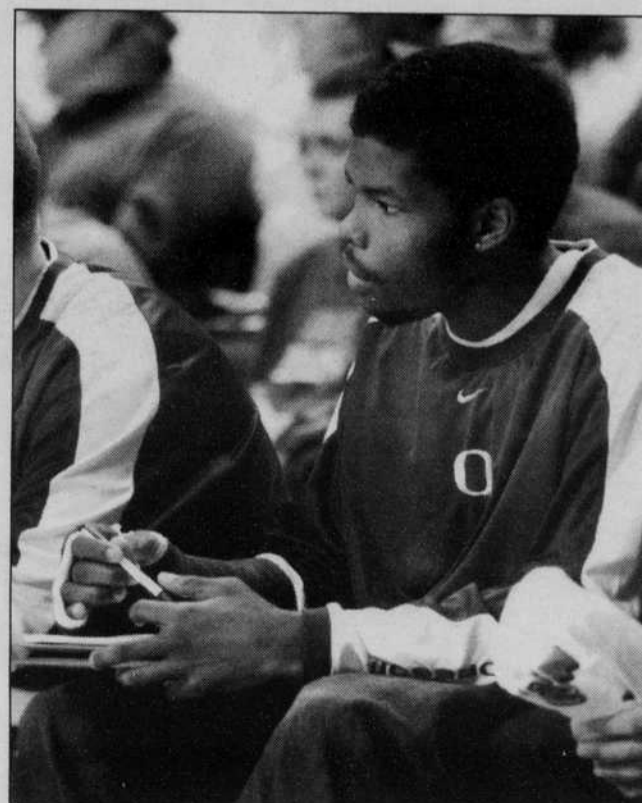
Brooks was getting a good feel for the game from the court. Now that he's seen the offense from the bench, does he have an even better understanding of how to run it?

"It helps you to see it run everyday in practice," he said. "But there's nothing like learning it while you're in the game. I (had) a pretty good grasp of the system when I was there. I'm really not out of touch with it."

Not a down year in their eyes

So the Pacific-10 Conference is the ninth-strongest league in the nation this year, according to the RPI (Ratings Percentage Index).

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Erik Bishoff Photographer

Oregon guard Aaron Brooks may return against Arizona on Feb. 19.