

# No. 24 Arizona takes lead in Pac-10 with home sweep

Stanford was upset from the top of the Pac-10 with losses to both Arizona and Arizona State over the weekend

By Mindi Rice  
Senior Sports Reporter

For the first time in the 2003-04 women's basketball season, Stanford is not atop the Pacific-10 Conference standings.

The No. 11 Cardinal (17-5 overall, 10-3 Pac-10) were swept in Arizona for the first time in 17 years. It started with an 88-83 loss to the No. 24 Wildcats and ended with a 73-53 loss at the hands of Arizona State.

"(Stanford senior) Nicole Powell had a look on her face that said 'Oh no, what's happening?'" Arizona State forward Emily Westerberg told the Stanford Daily. "That's when we knew. They had a look in their eyes — they were scared."

The Sun Devils worked the numbers in their favor Saturday. The Cardinal committed 11 turnovers, shot less than 16.2 percent from the field and was out-rebounded 28-25 in the second half.

It was quite a different picture in the first half. For 20 minutes, Stanford played like Thursday's loss never happened. With a 28-18 lead going into the break, the Cardinal seemed to have returned to form.

"Our second half was an absolute

meltdown," Stanford head coach Tara VanDerveer told the Stanford Daily. "There didn't seem to be anything that we did right."

The meltdown and the sweep by the Arizona programs was what VanDerveer called a "crossroads" in the Cardinal's season. Saturday's loss also changed her somewhat optimistic tune from Thursday.

"All you are racing for is seeding in the Pac-10 Tournament," VanDerveer had said after Thursday's loss. "Our tournament has created a rubber match for the season. We (Arizona-Stanford) will play again."

The Pac-10 final standings lay the groundwork for the Pac-10 Conference in San Jose, Calif., the first weekend in March. All 10 conference programs are included in the tournament, with the top six teams not playing until the second day.

With a half-game lead over Stanford in the conference, the Wildcats host the Oregon schools and make two more road trips — to Southern California and UCLA and Washington and Washington State — to close out their conference season.

"We are a good home court team," Arizona guard Dee-Dee Wheeler said Thursday. "We wanted the win at home to keep the top spot in the Pac-10."

## Powell adds more records

With 15 rebounds in Saturday's loss, Powell became the sixth player in

conference history to score 1,800 points and grab 1,000 rebounds in her Pac-10 career.

"We expected Nicole Powell to be a great player," Arizona's Shawntinice Polk said Thursday. "She didn't have the best first half, but she really showed her stuff the second half."

Powell had 10 rebounds Thursday. She is now No. 12 all-time in the Pac-10 with 1,837 points. She is also No. 5 on the all-time rebounds list with 1,011.

## The ranked fall

Stanford, the sole Pac-10 team ranked in either Top 25 poll last week, dropped from No. 7 to No. 11 in both the ESPN/USA Today and AP polls released Monday.

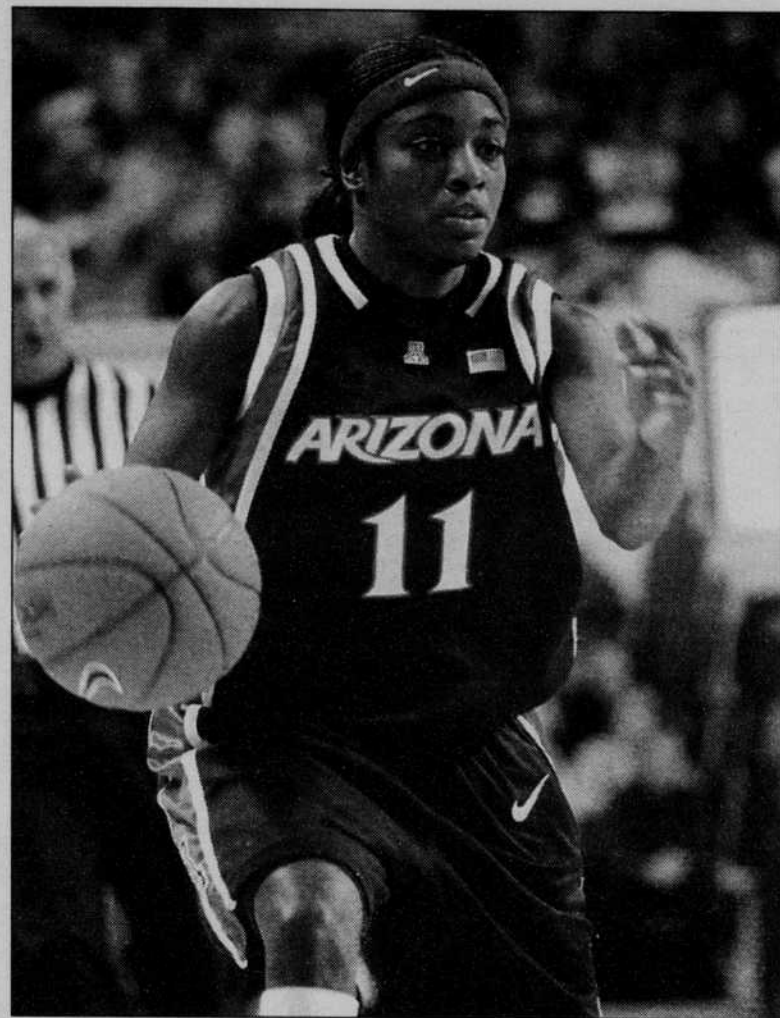
Arizona moved up to No. 24 in the AP poll and received votes but missed the top 25 in the ESPN/USA Today poll. Arizona State received votes in both polls. USC received votes in the ESPN/USA Today poll.

## Player of the Week

Polk, a sophomore for the Wildcats, earned her second Pac-10 Player of the Week award Monday for her play during Arizona's home sweep of California and Stanford.

Polk averaged 18 points, 16.5 rebounds and 4.5 blocks during the two games for her ninth and 10th double-doubles of the season.

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Danielle Hickey Photo Editor

Dee-Dee Wheeler and No. 24 Arizona have a half-game lead over No. 11 Stanford.

## RICE

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plausible, are not a case for bowling as a sport. The best case for bowling as a sport is simply the abundance of healthy competition.

The point that makes the worst case? If you aren't willing to put in the extra money, you have to rent shoes.

Spray can-cleaned shoes aside, bowling is just another one of those quasi-sports, and whether you're willing to call it a sport depends on your own view.

Bowling is one of the many quasi-sports that isn't really a sport, especially if you subscribe to George Carlin's school of thought.

I agree with Carlin's opinion that baseball, basketball and football are the only real sports. While there are other sports, those are the three motherships.

Hockey is a weird combination of basketball and boxing on ice. Tennis is just frustrating to watch. Golf? If you try to tell me that hitting a ball, watching it fly and then chasing it down the lawn is a sport, well ... I guess I just don't understand the draw.

Bowling is one of those cult-type sports. You either love it or you hate it. If you love it, and you have the time and the money, you probably belong to a league, or two. If you hate it, you probably grew up in a small town

where the only thing open past 6 p.m. was the bowling alley.

The simple act of bowling is refreshing, though. Running clears some people's heads; for others, it's driving. Bowling is also one of those great cleansing activities. Even if you go just to have fun with a friend or five, focusing on trying to throw a ball down a lane and hit pins at the end of it definitely makes you concentrate.

It's not as serious as golf or as non-stop as basketball, but bowling has its positives that outweigh the negatives. Even if the local alley is the only thing open as late as IHOP.

The league aspect of bowling is frightening — some people take it way too seriously — but at least it makes for some good throwback shirts at the local Goodwill. On the other hand, bowling is a nice workout for those inactive folks who hate to run and lift weights.

Bowling is only a sport in the sense that there is a ball, you're being active and there's a purpose: to knock down the pins.

Although that machine at the end of the alley always wants to set them up again.

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## COMEDIC

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in the Pacific-10 Conference and also receive a good education.

"I wanted to play Pac-10 tennis," said Nagle, an exercise and movement science major.

Nagle got her chance to play in the Pac-10 and contributed to one of Oregon's biggest wins in the history of the program against national powerhouse Arizona last year. Her match decided the tiebreaker and the outcome of the dual contest, and Nagle eventually came back to win and help Oregon to its first road win in Tucson.

The list of accomplishments continues to grow for Nagle as each doubles and singles win inches her up the Oregon women's tennis records. She already is in the top 10 in career singles victories and career doubles victories. Nagle is also fifth in most Division I season victories, third in doubles season victories and second in career Division I victories at Oregon.

Nagle said she has seen herself grow, not only as a player, but as a person. Being around eight women all year long for the past four years has helped develop her into who she is right now.

"I've come a long way," Nagle said. "I am a lot more mature of a

player. I've learned a lot more about my game and my style of play. I've also become a lot more outgoing."

Oregon head coach Nils Schyllander said her maturity helped her earn her status as captain this year on a team on the rise.

"She is definitely the leader," Schyllander said. "A lot of her teammates look up to her and she has had a positive effect on a lot of the other players. Her shoes will be very hard to fill. She is a great athlete and she is the glue that is keeping this team together."

Away from the tennis courts, Nagle enjoys bowling and prides herself on scoring 140 in one game, which included a turkey. However, she has trouble finding any bowling partners.

"I like to go bowling but nobody ever wants to go bowling (with me)," Nagle said.

The Oregon senior also enjoys watching comedians and comedies on television.

"Chris Rock is really funny and most of those guys on Comedy Central," she said.

Nevertheless, Nagle leaves behind her comedic drive when she steps out onto the tennis court, where it is all business.

Alex Tam is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

## CLOSE

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Don't tell the Ducks that. "For those people who talk about the Pac-10 Conference being down, it sure is funny that I sweat it out every single weekend," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said. "We're in a dogfight in every single game. Unfortunately, those people have a false perception because this conference is just knotted up right now where anybody can beat anybody with the exception of Stanford, which seems to be playing on another level as a team."

The basic RPI formula is based 25 percent on winning percentage, 50 percent on opposing team's average winning percentage and 25 percent on opponent's average winning percentage.

Sound like a lot? Well, it is, but it has determined that the Atlantic Coast Conference is the best in the nation. The Pac-10 is sandwiched by the Atlantic 10 Conference (eighth) and the Western Athletic Conference.

"I don't think the Pac-10 is down," Oregon forward Mitch Platt said. "I think those other conferences are just way up. They've got some great teams on the East Coast. I think everyone is playing it tough in the Pac-10 and just because people are beating people, it doesn't make us any less."

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