

SPORTS BRIEFS

Stanford beats Beavers to stay undefeated

STANFORD, Calif. — Stanford's march to history continued Thursday with the passion of a team fighting for an NCAA tournament bid, not one that has seemingly locked up the No. 1 seed in the West.

With a balanced attack, swarming defense and sizzling shooting from point guard Chris Hernandez, the top-ranked Cardinal pummeled Oregon State, 73-47, at Maples Pavilion to remain undefeated.

Stanford is three games from becoming the first Pacific-10 Conference team since UCLA in 1973 — the

famed "Walton Gang" — to complete a perfect regular season.

"After accomplishing our first goal, to win the Pac-10, we set another: to go undefeated for the regular season," forward Josh Childress said. "That's something that can be accomplished."

The lopsided affair allowed Coach Mike Montgomery to rest his starters for much of the second half. It also gave Stanford fans a look at promising freshman forward Fred Washington, who scored a season-high 11 points in 13 minutes.

But not all the news was good for the Cardinal (24-0, 15-0).

An MRI exam revealed forward Justin Davis' left knee is not healing quickly enough for him to play next week in Washington. Davis, out since

Jan. 29, is now hoping to return for the Pac-10 tournament, which begins March 11.

That means he'll have just one week to prepare for the NCAAs.

"I'm going to have to bust my butt in practice to get back to where I was," said Davis, who has a partially torn ligament and bruised bone.

The MRI results were the only interruption in an otherwise delightful stretch for the Cardinal.

Childress awoke Thursday to discover he's one of 20 finalists for the Naismith Award, given to the nation's top player. In addition, Hernandez learned he's one of 16 finalists for the inaugural Bob Cousy Point Guard Award.

— Jon Wilner
Knight Ridder Newspapers

Ducks travel to Texas

The No. 17 Oregon women's softball team has a weekend of second looks ahead of it at the Texas A&M-hosted Aggie Invitational.

The Ducks face Penn State and Southern Mississippi for the first time this season in two games Friday morning. Oregon then gets a second look at both teams with another game against each on Saturday.

Sunday, the Ducks play their final game of the tournament against No. 23 Texas A&M. The Aggies beat Oregon, 8-3, when the squads met two weeks ago in the Phoenix Fiesta Bowl Tournament.

"It's how well we adjust to them and they adjust to us," Oregon head coach Kathy Arendsen said. "What I like with our ballclub is that we're able to give different looks. It's a chance for us to flaunt that we have an excellent pitching staff whereas most other teams have one main pitcher and maybe a second one that's decent."

In Friday and Saturday's Camp-

bell/Cartier Classic, the Ducks played three games before rain caused the cancellation of their final two tournament games. Oregon won its three games, increasing the squad's winning streak to five consecutive games. The Ducks were led by catcher Jenn Poore. The senior went 4 for 10, hitting her second home run of the season.

"We have to keep that momentum going this weekend against three decent ballclubs," Arendsen said.

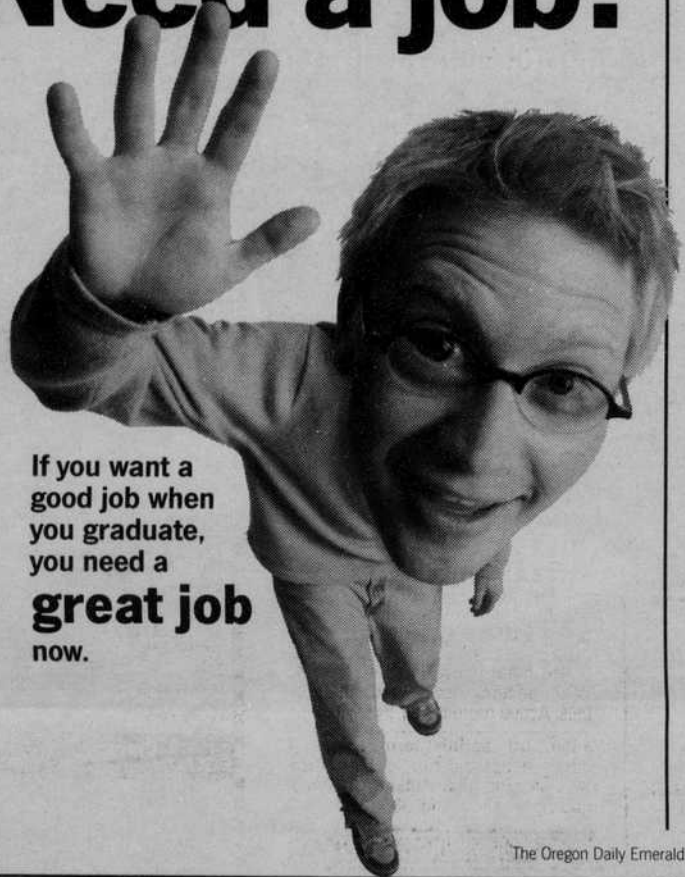
Penn State is 0-5 this season, while Southern Mississippi is 5-7 and Texas A&M is 8-7.

Freshman outfielder Suzie Barnes sprained her right ankle in a play at home plate in the 3-0 win against Sacramento State. She will miss the Aggie Invitational and possibly the following tournament or two, Arendsen said.

The Ducks have one more tournament, the Speedline Invitational, before opening their home season with a double header against Team Canada on March 10.

— Mindi Rice

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