

Kost leads Ducks' upset win against Washington

Junior Manuel Kost beats third-ranked Alex Vlaski to beat the Huskies in Sunday's final match

By Alex Tam
Freelance Reporter

High emotion and high intensity characterized the dual match between the Oregon and Washington men's tennis teams on Sunday at the Student Tennis Center.

The result came down to the last singles match between the No. 1 player on both squads, and, in the end, the Ducks came out on top by overcoming the 18th-ranked Huskies, 4-3.

Oregon head coach Chris Russell said he is proud of the way his team competed toward the end and how they overcame the emotion of the

loud and raucous crowd cheering after every point.

"I think the guys did a good job of putting emotion aside," Russell said. "They kept their heads down and tried to take care of their own business."

The dual match tiebreaker came at the No. 1 position between Oregon junior Manuel Kost and the Huskies' Alex Vlaski, who is ranked third in the country. All eyes were on this intense three-setter as Kost triumphed 5-7, 7-6 (12-10) and 6-4.

After the contest, teammates rushed onto the court, and the crowd gave a standing ovation to the third-year Duck. Kost, who is 8-0 in singles play, used a strong first serve and forehand to give Vlaski his second singles loss of the year.

What does this victory against one of the top players in the nation mean to Kost?

"It means more to me that we beat Washington," Kost said. "We haven't beaten them in years. We played great."

The Ducks (7-2 overall) ended their losing streak against Washing-

ton that dated back to 1947.

"We have been haunted (by the streak) for a while," Russell said. "But finally, we're no longer haunted."

Oregon took a 2-0 lead after winning two of the three doubles matches and sophomore Thomas Bieri's straight-set match against Christoph Palmanshofer, 6-3 and 6-4 at the No. 3 position.

Doubles were led by the duo of Kost and Bieri, who overcame the 45th-ranked team of Vlaski and freshman Alex Slovic, 8-4.

The Huskies came back to tie the dual match at 2-2 when the Ducks lost both singles contests at the No. 5 and No. 6 positions.

Junior Sven Swinnen, who is rated No. 92 in the country, gave Oregon a 3-2 lead with two matches left after he beat the left-handed Slovic in three sets, 6-2, 3-6, and 6-3 at the No. 2 position.

Needing one more singles win to cement the victory, sophomore Markus Schiller could not get past Huskies freshman Daniel Chu despite winning the first set in a 6-7, 6-3, and 6-3 loss.



Danielle Hickey Photo Editor

Oregon's Thomas Bieri defeated the Huskies' Christoph Palmanshofer, 6-3 and 6-4.

The dual match tiebreaker was up to Kost, who said he can still play better and is not yet satisfied with the victory.

"It's great beating the No. 3 player in

the country," Kost said. "(But) I'm still trying to get better. It is not over yet."

Alex Tam is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

SPORTS BRIEF

Softball goes undefeated in Aggie Invitational

The No. 17 Ducks were the only squad to end the Texas A&M-hosted Aggie Invitational with a perfect 5-0 record Sunday.

In Oregon's first game of the tournament, designated hitter Beth Boskovich and catcher Jenn Poore led

the team with two hits each. Pitcher Ani Nyhus gave up one hit in five innings as the Ducks claimed a 4-0 victory against Penn State.

The Ducks (13-4) then took two consecutive games from Southern Mississippi. Oregon earned a 13-3 win Friday and a 12-1 victory the next morning.

Right fielder Ann Marie Topps and shortstop Breanne Sabol both hit home runs in the first game. Freshman

center fielder Kayleen Hudson hit a grand slam in the sixth inning to close the game.

In Saturday morning's victory, Boskovich, Poore and Topps each hit a home run in Oregon's offensive reign. Amy Harris pitched a complete game and gave up one run on five hits.

"I like that we're continuing to build momentum," Oregon head coach Kathy Arendsen said. "We're starting to be more consistent with our offense and we've been able to get

key hits throughout our lineup. The biggest key is to continue to play and improve and not let up."

Saturday afternoon the Ducks faced No. 23 Texas A&M. The Aggies beat Oregon earlier this season, but the Ducks returned the favor with a 4-1 win Saturday. Anissa Meashintubby and Nyhus combined for a five-hit game. Oregon took the lead, 2-0, in the fourth inning when three freshmen put together three hits that scored two runs.

Meashintubby closed the tourna-

ment for Oregon with a one-hit complete game. The Ducks beat Penn State, 2-0, for the second time during the Aggie Invitational.

"We put together a string of well-played games," Arendsen said. "I thought we played very well on both sides of the ball and remained very consistent. This weekend is a tremendous accomplishment for our players."

The Ducks play at the Speedline Invitational in Clearwater, Fla., beginning Thursday.

- Mindi Rice

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