UO starts with Georgia Tech

The Oregon men look to ride momentum this weekend

> By Alex Tam Freelance Reporter

Momentum and confidence from big wins or long winning streaks can carry a team to further success



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The men currently have momentum and confidence after coming off a rare upset over No. 18 Washington this past Sunday, while

the women are searching to return to their early top season form.

The 45th-ranked Oregon men (7-2 overall) defeated the Huskies for only the sixth time in 113 matches and look to ride that momentum heading into play this weekend against No. 51 Georgia Tech today and No. 27 Minnesota on Sunday.

Oregon head coach Chris Russell said the upcoming matches are another chance for his team to defeat a couple of historically strong squads from top conferences.

"This weekend will be another great challenge and opportunity," Russell said. "Both schools are traditionally in the NCAA Tournament and we know that we have to keep getting better if we want to be there

The Ducks' three Switzerland natives have cemented the top three spots in the singles lineup. Juniors Manuel Kost and Sven Swinnen and sophomore Thomas Bieri make up that trio and have a combined 21-5 in dual match singles this year. Kost leads the group with an 8-0 record and is coming off an upset over Washington's Alex Vlaski, who is currently the No. 3 singles player in the nation.

Minnesota (3-3) will be the toughest test this weekend and is lead by senior Aleksey Zharinov. The fourth-year Golden Gopher is 4-2 in singles this season and was ranked as high as 38th in the country during the preseason.

Minnesota head coach David Geatz said his team's doubles is a concern and is an area that the Ducks have excelled in by winning 21 of 27 doubles matches so far this year.

"We expect (Oregon) to be a great

team and especially tough to beat at home," Geatz said. "We will need to play a very good match to be competitive with them."

Women in L.A.

The Oregon women (9-3 overall, 2-2 Pacific-10 Conference) look to break their current three-match losing streak when they take on two more nationally ranked schools.

The 23rd-ranked Ducks travel to Los Angeles to face No. 13 USC today and 11th-ranked UCLA on Saturday in a stretch that sees the women play the next month in California.

Oregon head coach Nils Schyllander said his team will need to step up their play after not winning any singles or doubles matches last weekend and put themselves in position to pull out an upset.

We know that if we play well, we can compete at the highest level," Schyllander said. "The desire is there - we just need to make sure that the execution is there as well.'

Alex Tam is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

SPORTS BRIEF

Ducks win two in Florida

Sixteenth-ranked Oregon softball extended its winning streak to a school-record 12 games Thursday with two victories in the Speedline Invitational in Clearwater, Fla.

The Ducks (15-4) started their day with a 6-0 win against Rutgers. After a 30-minute break, they played Temple and picked up a 6-2 win for Oregon's first 12-game winning streak in school history.

"I like the way that we are continuing to play with confidence," Oregon head coach Kathy Arendsen said. "We have the feeling that we are going to win when we play and I think we're playing very good softball right now. The biggest thing is for us to continue to get better and continue to improve.

Anissa Meashintubby and Lindsey Kontra combined to pitch a three-hit shutout of Rutgers for Oregon's first win Thursday. Shortstop Breanne Sabol was 4

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for 4 against the Scarlet Knights and designated player Beth Boskovich was 2 for 3. Catcher Jenn Poore was 1 for 4, with three RBIs.

Meashintubby improved to 6-1 on the season with a five-inning effort.

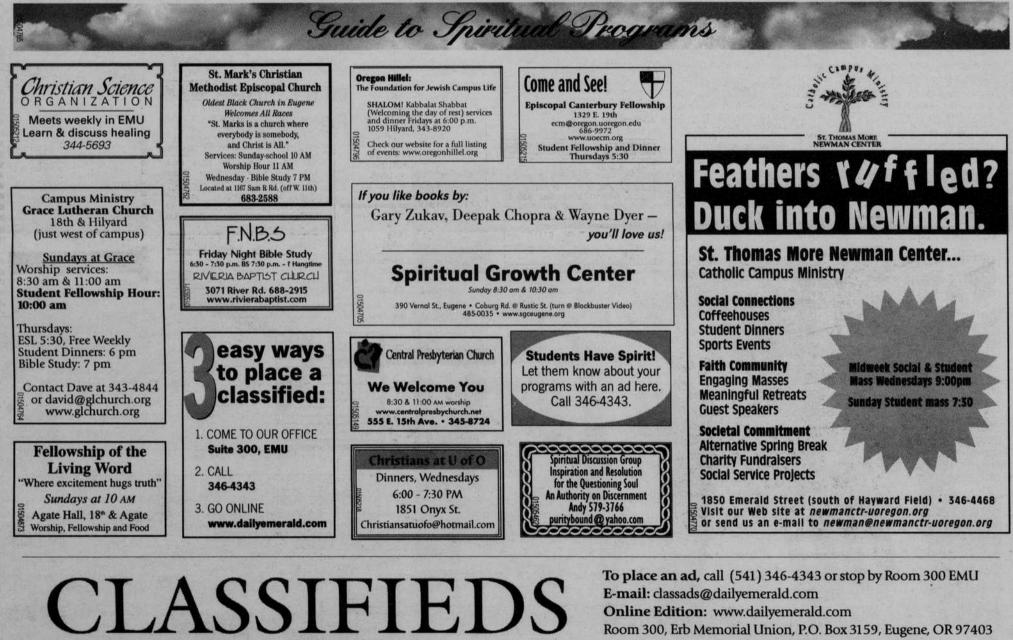
In Oregon's second game of the day, a 6-2 victory against Temple, the Ducks were again led by Boskovich, Poore and Sabol.

Boskovich was 2 for 3 with two RBIs, while Poore was 2 for 2 with two runs scored. Sabol went 1 for 1 with a walk. Julie Jaime went 1 for 3 with two RBIs in the game.

In the second game, Amy Harris and Kontra combined for a twohit effort. Each pitcher gave up one hit. Harris struck out five to earn the victory, moving her record to 2-1 this season.

Oregon continues tournament play today with a game against Jacksonville and a game against Northwestern. The Ducks play Coastal Carolina and Team USA on Saturday.

- Mindi Rice



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