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SPORTS

Best bet
NHL Playoffs
San Jose at Colorado
6 p.m., ESPN

Monday, April 26, 2004

Ducks shock No. 1 Arizona in extra-inning win

Oregon's Ashley Richards hit a walk-off home run in the bottom of the eighth to hand the Wildcats their first Pac-10 loss this season

By **Mindi Rice**
Senior Sports Reporter

For seven and a half innings Sunday, it was a challenge to pick out the nation's No. 1 team on Howe Field.

Oregon left eight runners on base and managed five hits against Arizona pitcher Alicia Hollowell, who was 32-0 entering Sunday.

The Wildcats, who had six runners stranded on base, also managed five hits and only had one baserunner find her way past second against the combined strengths of Duck pitchers Amy Harris and Ani Nyhus.

DUCK SOFTBALL

In the bottom of the eighth, Oregon third baseman Ashley Richards drove a lead-off home run over the left center field fence to give the No. 12 Ducks (34-12 overall, 8-4 Pacific-10 Conference) a 1-0 win against No. 1 Arizona (45-2, 9-1).

"I still can't find the words," Richards said,

nearing the end of her post-game interviews. "I've been talking to so many people and I still can't figure out what this feeling is. I feel like our team's on the top of the world right now."

The moment the ball came off Richards' bat, teammates jumped into the air and screamed as they ran to home plate to congratulate the junior from Richland, Wash.

"We kept talking about 'when we win,' not 'if we win,'" Oregon head coach Kathy Arendsen said. "I told them 'when we win today, I don't want you to get too excited. Act like it happens every day.' But when you win in the bottom of the eighth on a home run, you can get excited. I

don't care who you are."

Once again, the dominant story line for the Ducks was pitching. For five and two-thirds innings, the sophomore Harris returned to her freshman-season form, controlling the pace of the game and relying on the Oregon defense to handle anyone she didn't strike out.

"Amy Harris stepped up," Nyhus said. "She's back and she's ready to go and that's huge. You can't look at that game and think that it would have gone anything like that if she hadn't been throwing that well. She frustrated every one of their batters."

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Oregon track and field shines against top talent

The Oregon men's track and field team captures six individual event victories at the Oregon Invitational

By **Jon Roetman**
Sports Reporter

When a sprinter is coming off an injury, several things factor into his successful return to the track.

After patiently waiting for the injury to heal, staying healthy during and after the race is of the utmost importance. Secondly, finishing with a respectable time helps the athlete rebuild confidence.

Sophomore Matt Scherer accomplished these feats with ease Saturday, when he won the 400-meter dash (47.11 seconds) during the Oregon Invitational at Hayward Field.

Making his 2004 outdoor debut after nursing a right hamstring injury he suffered during the indoor campaign, the Sumner, Ill. native edged Highline Community College's Melvin Jenkins (47.28) by .17 seconds.

"It was exactly what (sprints coach Dan Steele) wanted me to do and exactly what I wanted to do," Scherer said. "I think my hamstring is fully recovered. I just wanted to come out here and give it a really good test."

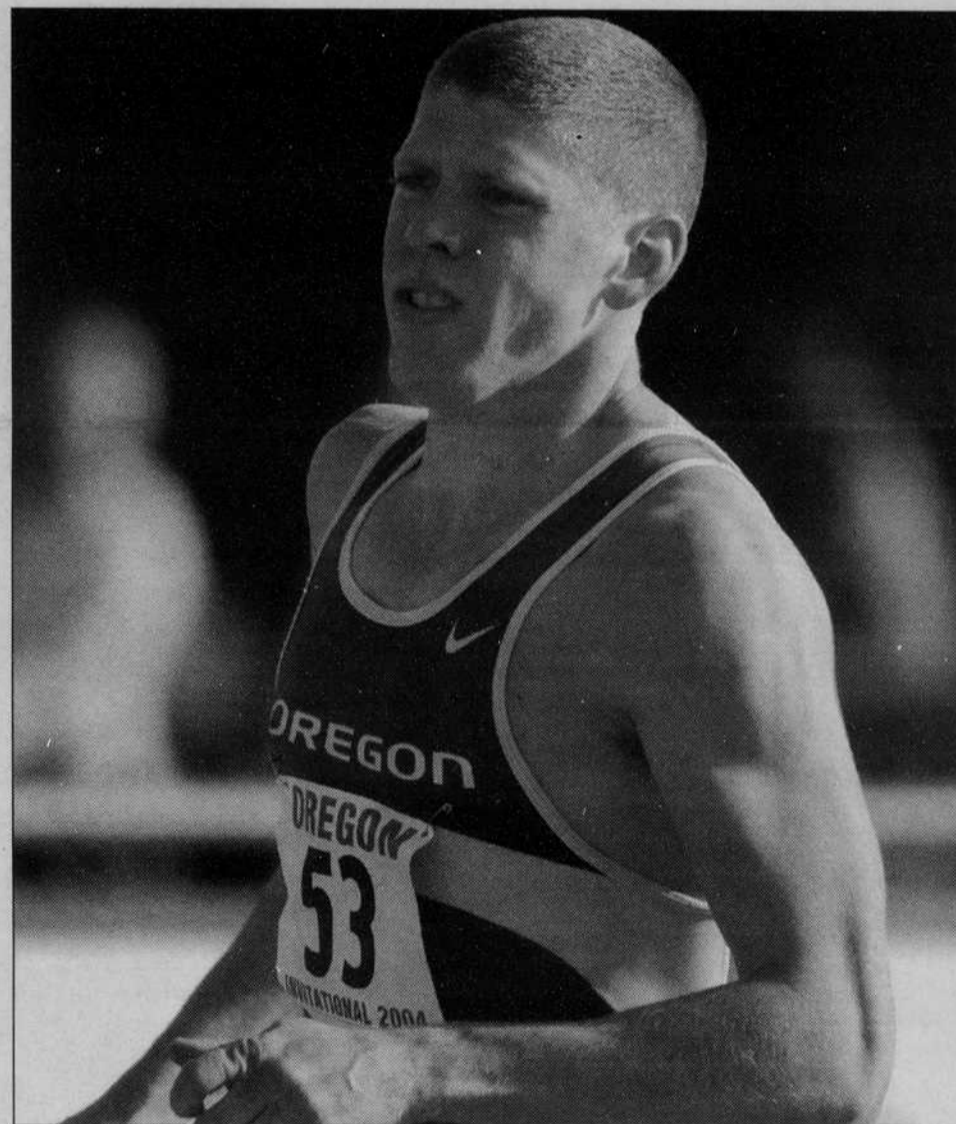
MEN'S TRACK

The key to Scherer's success was his ability to put the injury out of his mind.

"It's almost like you forget how to race (while sitting out with an injury)," Scherer said. "You have to go out there and think what the coach trains you to think. I've been really patient trying to get this injury gone and it just feels good to race again in front of the fans."

Along with Scherer's win, five other Ducks captured event victories for the Oregon men's track and field team, during a meet that featured some

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Danielle Hickey Photo Editor

Sophomore Matt Scherer won the 400-meters during his 2004 outdoor debut Saturday at Hayward Field.

The Oregon women post four event wins and 11 Pac-10 qualifiers during the Oregon Invitational on Saturday

By **Alex Tam**
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's track and field team continued its trend of improvement as the road to the Pacific-10 Conference championships looms just ahead.

In fact, a cold and windy day did not deter the women from setting new personal bests at the three-day Oregon Invitational at Hayward Field, which ended Saturday.

"We had some good performances," head coach Martin Smith said. "I'm really pleased with the women. They have gotten better every week and they had some really plus showings."

Those improved showings began right from the start.

In the first event of Saturday's morning session, sophomore Haripurkh Khalsa won the 5,000-meter race and beat her previous personal record by 12 seconds at 17:25.33. The time was good enough to meet the Pac-10 standard of 17:30.14. Khalsa paced herself throughout the middle portion of the race before pulling ahead late to win by less than a second over Sities Marshall of Highline Community College.

"My goal was to qualify for Pac-10s and I got that," Khalsa said. "My race was a little uneven. I felt pretty good and, in the end, I kicked it in."

In the last event of the morning, junior Bree Fuqua also claimed victory in the discus with a throw of 164 feet, 1 inch. Fuqua, a first-year transfer from Wisconsin, improved her Oregon best by more than three feet and fell just under 18 inches short of earning a new personal record.

Her teammate junior Jill Hoxmeier took third

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WOMEN'S TRACK

Olshansky, Siavii selected back-to-back in NFL draft

A total of four Ducks players, including Igor Olshansky and Junior Siavii, are selected in the NFL Draft

By **Alex Tam**
Sports Reporter

The San Diego Chargers selected former Duck Igor Olshansky in the second round of this year's NFL Draft as the 35th pick overall.

Immediately after, Kansas City took 24-year-old Junior Siavii with the No. 36 selection.

Olshansky, who will turn 22 on May 3, declared early for the draft after choosing to forgo his senior year in Eugene. The Ukraine native is looking

forward to moving on and beginning his professional career.

"I didn't think about football until my junior year in high school," Olshansky told Chargers.com. "I've only been playing for six years, so my best football is ahead of me. I'm happy to be a San Diego Charger."

His flexibility to play at any position along the defensive line is what intrigued NFL scouts. He started all 13 games for the Ducks last year, where he played both defensive end and tackle.

"The thing about him is he's got great size," Chargers head coach Marty Schottenheimer told Chargers.com. "He's a very tough, physical, hard-nosed guy who gives great effort all the time."

Leading up to the draft, Olshansky

said he had no idea where he would go and what team would take him. Olshansky said many other teams, including Kansas City and Dallas, left impressed with his pre-draft workouts. His strength proved to be his greatest asset with 43 bench press repetitions at 225 pounds to secure the record among NFL prospects. He also ran the 40-yard dash in 4.95 seconds.

Despite entering only his seventh year of football, Olshansky remains confident that he can make an immediate impact at the professional level.

"I'm going to do whatever it takes," Olshansky said. "I can play anywhere. I consider myself a good run stopper. I could stop the run anywhere along the line of scrimmage."

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Adam Amato Senior Photographer

Junior Siavii (94) and Igor Olshansky (53) were drafted back-to-back Saturday.