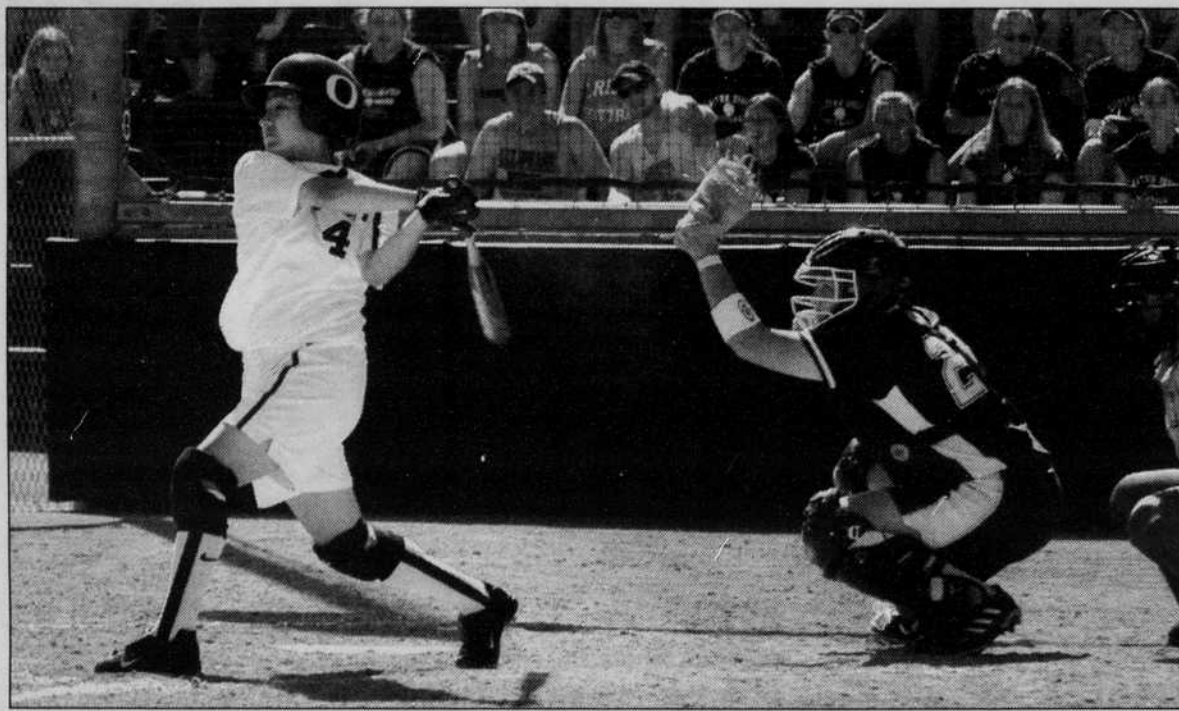




Tim Bobosky Photographer

Oregon senior Julie Jaime, seen here earlier this season, is one of two reserves to see a large amount of playing time with the Ducks this season. The Ducks wrap up their 2004 Pac-10 campaign by hosting Stanford and California for three games this weekend.

CONSISTENT

continued from page 7

offensive kick — scoring five or more runs in eight games that month.

Oregon is currently in a slight offensive slump after being shutout — 5-0, 1-0 and 3-0 — in Arizona during the weekend.

When the Ducks do well offensively, catcher Jenn Poore and third baseman Ashley Richards lead the way. Poore leads the team with the .323 batting average while Richards leads the team with a .531 slugging percentage.

Recently, Oregon has recovered its inconsistent defense and solidified the infield with extra practice and a dose of confidence. Other than a five-error hiccup Sunday, the defense has gotten off the roller coaster it had been on earlier this season.

Another part of Oregon's attack is the frequent use of reserves. While four players — Poore, Richards, designated player Beth Boskovich and shortstop Breanne Sabol — have started all 54 games, reserve players Julie Jaime and Ann Marie Topps have each

played in a majority of Oregon's games this season.

The most consistent facet of this season's Oregon team has been the pitching. Oregon's top pitcher — Ani Nyhus — recently became the fifth Duck to win 20 games in a season. The Ducks' team earned run average is 1.71.

Career K's

Three of Oregon's four current pitchers have pitched their way into Oregon's career top 10 list for strikeouts.

Senior Anissa Meashintubby has worked her way up to No. 5 on the list, with 82 strikeouts this season on top of her 228 last season.

Sophomore Amy Harris, who last season set Oregon's single-season strikeouts record with 180, has added 84 strikeouts this season to put her at No. 6 on the list.

Nyhus has jumped onto the list during her first season as a Duck. She has struck out 172 batters this season, putting herself at No. 9 on the list.

Desert disasters

Looking at recent history, the state

of Arizona has not been kind to the Ducks. In the past five seasons, Oregon is 2-13 at Arizona and Arizona State, with both wins against the Sun Devils. Since the Ducks' last winning record in Arizona — they went 4-0 in 1989 — they are 10-45 in the desert, with all 10 wins against Arizona State.

This past weekend was the first time this season that the Ducks lost three consecutive games.

Regional revealing

The 64 teams selected for the NCAA Division I Softball Regionals will be announced in a selection show Sunday. The show will be shown on ESPNNews, beginning at 5 p.m.

Oregon is eligible for five of the eight regional locations — at host schools Baylor, Michigan, Nebraska, Georgia and Florida State. Arizona, UCLA and Stanford will host their own regionals. Pac-10 schools are not eligible to participate in a regional at another Pac-10 site.

Ducks head coach Kathy Arendsen was unavailable by phone Tuesday.

Contact the senior sports reporter at mindirice@dailyemerald.com.

Game 2 beckons Flyers, Lightning

Philadelphia evened up the conference final series at one apiece with a 6-2 victory on Monday

By Ray Parrillo

Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

PHILADELPHIA — Ken Hitchcock began by talking about horse racing, advising his questioners to plop their cash down on Smarty Jones to win Saturday's Preakness.

"Don't even bother betting place or show on Smarty," the Flyers' coach said Tuesday. "I don't think there's any doubt he's going to win."

Inside stuff, maybe? "Yeah. I talk to horses. Sometimes the wrong end."

From thoroughbred racing, the news conference segued into the best-of-seven Eastern Conference final between the Flyers and Tampa Bay, which the Flyers locked up at one game apiece with Monday's 6-2 blowout at the St. Pete Times Forum.

The series resumes on Thursday night at the Wachovia Center, where the Flyers, who on Tuesday were given a day away from practice, happen to be 6-0 during the postseason.

The segue seemed appropriate. If the first two games of the series have suggested anything, it is that the Flyers are quite willing to engage the Lightning in the high-speed, high-risk approach that launched Tampa to the top of the conference during the regular season.

This may seem outrageous to anyone familiar with Hitchcock when he coached the Dallas Stars to the Stanley Cup in 1999 by demanding that his players adhere to a button-down, cautious system that emphasized defense, defense and more defense. Boring, but remarkably effective.

According to Hitchcock, he didn't want to play the game that way, but, he said, "We didn't have the foot speed and we certainly didn't have the mobility on the back end (defense) to play this way."

In the Flyers, Hitchcock believes he does have the speed and mobility to go stride for stride with Tampa Bay. So after a grinding second-round series against Toronto in which each foot of ice was challenged, and after five straight losses to the Lightning that included the 3-1 setback in Game 1, Hitchcock decided a change had to be made. A change of mind-set.

"Sometimes, when you play against a team like Tampa, you want to play conservative. We want to go the other way," Hitchcock said. "We want to play with some risk. We want to take chances, and hopefully it'll pay off. It did (in Game 2). Our thought process changed a little bit. We couldn't continue to play the same way we were because we weren't getting enough goals."

If the Flyers and Lightning continue this match race all the way to the finish line, it will be a welcome change in an era when the NHL can use a little octane in its game. Hitchcock said the Lightning's hell-bent style of play reminds him of the way the Edmonton Oilers played when they dominated the league in the 1980s.

"Neither one of these teams is playing with a conservative mind-set," he said. "We're all kind of going for it. It's good for the fans, and it's good for the game."

For the Flyers, the reward for their risk-taking was an astonishing five odd-man rushes in the first period of Game 2. In a blink, they were in front, 3-0. John LeClair scored his first goal of the postseason less than two minutes after the opening face-off when his shot from a tough angle went between the legs of goalie Nikolai Khabibulin.

"I should stop that shot," said Khabibulin, who was pulled early in the second period after giving up four goals, the first three on four shots.

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Horoscope by Linda C. Black

Today's Birthday (May 12). Your friends are trying to teach you something that you'd be wise to learn. You may think that you already know it, but practicing with a team helps. If you really apply yourself this year, you can advance to a whole new level. The exam comes when you realize the lessons are costing too much.

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

Aries (March 21-April 19) — Today is a 5. What things are really worth fighting for? Which things can be left behind? You're approaching a moment of truth. Reassess your priorities in light of new developments.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) — Today is an 8. Imaginative friends need you to keep them from getting too crazy. You add a touch of reality to their otherwise outrageous schemes, and they give you lots of new things to think about. It's a fair trade.

Gemini (May 21-June 21) — Today is a 6. There will be a test. Do you have all the facts and the figures? If not, better hustle. This might be the only warning you'll get. Be prepared.

Cancer (June 22-July 22) — Today is an 8. The urge to travel will strike soon, but the outcome doesn't look good. There are indications that if you run off now, it would strain a relationship. Why don't you wait and go together? That'll be much more fun.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) — Today is a 6. After you've decided what to do next, you need to determine the costs. Don't fall for the most expensive price. You can come up with a thrifty alternative and win everybody's admiration.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Today is a 7. It's almost time for another

meeting to discuss what you've done so far. If you're worried that you won't be ready, maybe it's time you asked for help. If you let people in on what you're doing, they become part of your team.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) — Today is a 7. The planning phase should almost be over by now. Get your materials and start making changes. The next few days will be perfect for innovation.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) — Today is a 7. Love isn't always about hearts and flowers. Sometimes it's about being there for a friend who's in pain. Sometimes it's about saying no to a child who could make a mistake. Be on the lookout.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) — Today is a 6. Take a break. Relax and think things over. This is how you let your subconscious chew on and digest the problem. Actually, some fine cuisine would be good for your attitude. Indulge.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Today is an 8. You race about at a hectic pace a lot of the time. How long has it been since you curled up with a good book? For an even better effect, read it out loud to someone you love, but not during work hours.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) — Today is a 6. Money is often a controversial subject, especially with folks who make purchasing decisions together and use the same checkbook. Approach financial topics gently.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20) — Today is an 8. Did you know that Pisces is the sign of miracles? In case you forgot, here's a reminder: You're not in the game by yourself. You have help.

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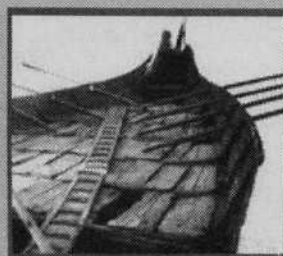
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