



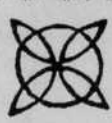
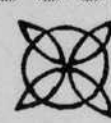
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Volleyball: Unbeaten Huskies still No. 2

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The wonder of Washington

The undefeated Huskies are ranked No. 2 in the nation, behind the Minnesota Golden Gophers. They sit atop the Pac-10 conference standings after a successful road trip that included a five-game upset of defending national champion USC. In the process, Washington has held its opponents to a .116 hitting percentage.

The Huskies' streak of consecutive games won was broken at 24 by UCLA.

Outside hitter Sanja Tomasevic was selected as the Pac-10 Player of the Week for the second time in her career. She posted a combined 45 kills (5.00

kills per game), 26 digs and nine blocks against the Bruins and the Trojans last weekend. As a senior, she leads her team in kills (149).

Washington (10-0, 2-0 Pac-10) hosts Oregon for its home-opener on Friday, followed by Oregon State on Saturday.

The Cardinal rule

Stanford (9-2, 2-0 Pac-10) has won its last six matches prior to Tuesday's showdown at Saint Mary's.

Senior Ogonna Nnamani leads the league with 216 kills this year. Nnamani and sophomore Kristen Richards combine for 9.27 kills per game, the most by any pair of outside hitters in the Pac-10.

At the front, Stanford's blockers

have posted a Pac-10-leading 55 solo blocks and 150 total blocks.

Tough crowd

Washington was ranked second in the nation after receiving 23 first-place votes. No. 3 USC (6-2, 1-1 Pac-10) received none, but still wound up gnawing at the Huskies' heels. UCLA (8-3, 1-1 Pac-10), Stanford and California (7-3, 2-0 Pac-10) lined up in the most recent poll, filling the No. 10, No. 11 and No. 12 spots, respectively. Arizona (8-4, 0-2 Pac-10) is the final Pac-10 team to appear on the Top 25 at No. 17, despite lacking a conference win this season.

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Smith: Big paycheck doesn't mean big respect

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Today's athletes are paid way too much money, are idolized a bit too much, and think they should never be criticized because they are so highly valued that a critique is never, ever warranted.

One of the other disturbing trends in sports is the lost art form of "team."

The fact that the Detroit Pistons beat the England Patriots because they win as a "team." People can't believe that a "team" could win anything anymore.

How 'bout those same Angels, circa 2002? That was a special team.

Individuals are celebrated. Individuals sell products. Individuals are now the feature of a team, instead of a team featuring an individual.

Anybody remember the last time the Oakland Raiders team sold a shoe? How about the Denver Nuggets cutting a rap album? Hell, Barry Bonds reportedly has a recliner in the locker room.

I've grown somewhat tired of watching Mr. Star Player pout, cry,

and get anything he wants because there are seven zeros at the end of his paycheck.

So Bill Stoneman, the novelty of an organization benching a player in favor of the team is a welcome one for me.

It means that some people still think the team is more important than the player and that Mr. Star Player still needs to think in terms of the team rather than himself.

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Football: Richie Incognito won't be eligible until 2005

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The second charge was dismissed and he was found innocent of the third.

Nebraska head coach Bill Callahan suspended Incognito indefinitely this season for what he called repeated violations of team rules.

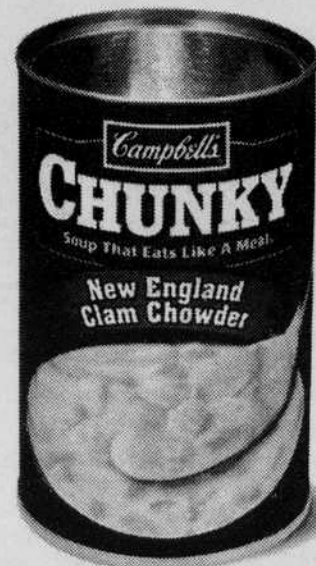
NCAA rules prohibit Incognito from playing for Oregon this year, but the Glendale, Ariz., native will be eligible to play during the 2005 season if he abides by a strict set of rules and attends an anger-management course.

Incognito has one year of eligibility remaining.

"We've got a year before he ever sets foot on the field so I think in that time he will be held to a very strict code of conduct," Bellotti said. "If he survives and makes it, he'll be a good student, a good player and a good person."

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