

■ Duck volleyball

Bay Area losses to Stanford, Cal sink Oregon

The Cardinal and the Golden Bears, ranked No. 12 and 13 respectively, overpower the ailing Ducks

BY STEPHEN MILLER
SPORTS REPORTER

Oregon's roster was rearranged, but no adjustment could remedy its troubles as it suffered two defeats against California and Stanford this past week.

Sophomore outside hitters Sarah Mason and Erin Little could only watch Oregon's dwindling offense from the sidelines because of health problems. Mason sprained her ankle last week in practice and will be out for two to three weeks, according to Oregon head coach Carl Ferreira. Little was struck with illness after the California match.

Those misfortunes forced Coach Ferreira to shift his team's positioning and reassign players to unfamiliar spots on the court, while facing two nationally ranked teams that are flourishing in the Pacific-10 Conference.

"We were forced to play with a completely different lineup, but each player responded to the challenge," Ferreira said. "It was impressive to see us continue to stay mentally focused despite our injuries and illnesses."

Oregon (9-8 overall, 1-6 Pac-10) went up against a Stanford program that had swept the Ducks in each of the past five meetings. The Cardinal made it six straight on Saturday with a 3-0 victory, 30-25, 30-17, 30-22.

Junior Kelly Russell had a breakout performance at California and helped Oregon capture the first game, but the Ducks surrendered the next three,

26-30, 30-23, 30-17, 30-23, to the Golden Bears on Friday night.

The Cardinal (14-4, 6-1 Pac-10) improved their all-time series advantage against Oregon to 40-2. Sophomore Kristin Richards made a generous contribution for No. 12 Stanford with her 42nd double-double of the season. She recorded 14 kills and 12 digs.

With the absence of Little, Oregon outside hitter Jaclyn Jones posted a season-high 17 kills — two shy of her career-best — on 32 attempts with only four errors. Russell pitched in with nine kills, and Allyson Leavitt added six.

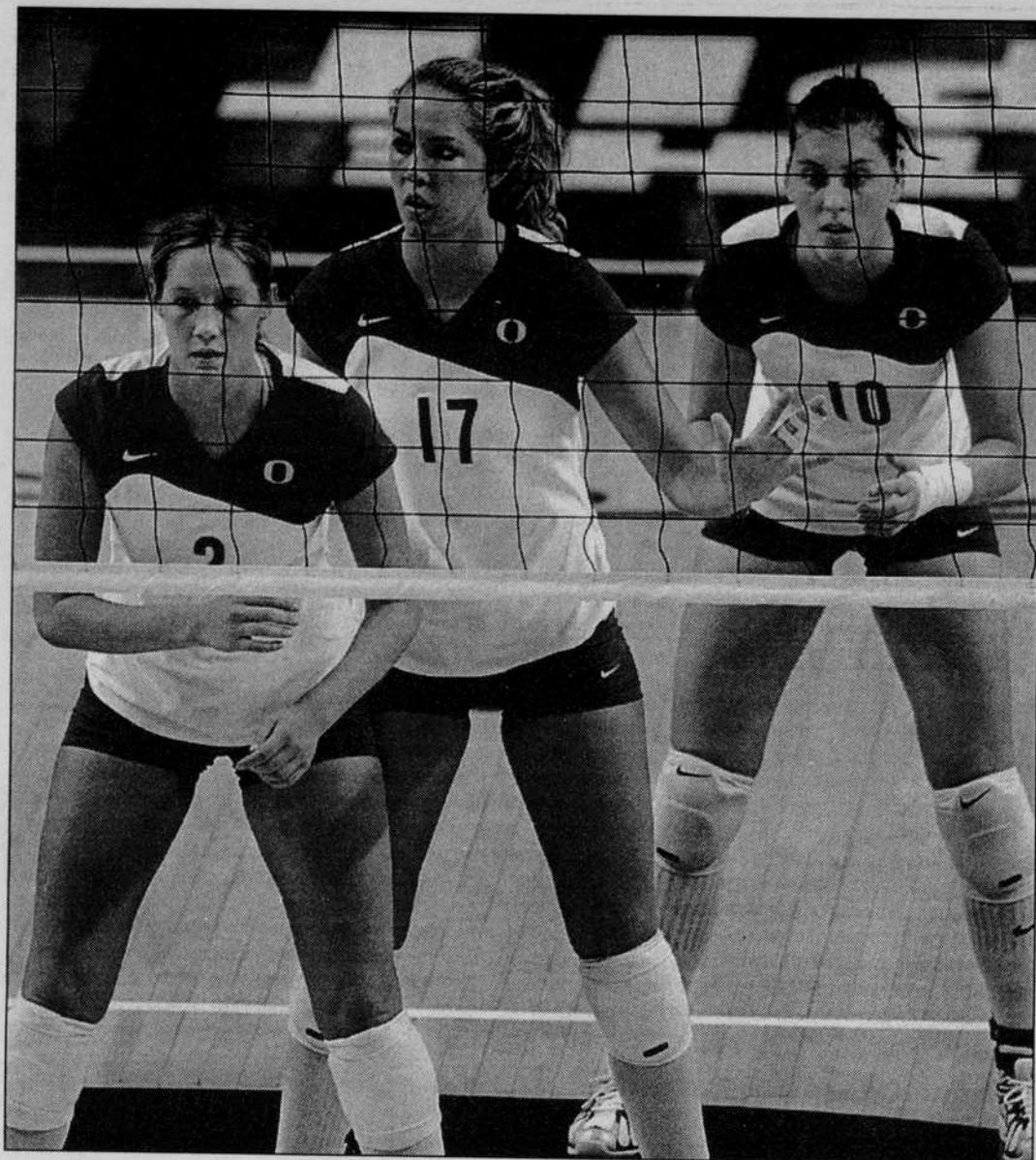
"Jaclyn Jones had one of the best matches of her collegiate career," Ferreira said. "Erin Little was unable to go (Saturday), and Allyson Leavitt moved from defensive specialist to outside hitter and did a phenomenal job."

Oregon's defense stood strong in front of Stanford's Ogonna Nnamani, who was limited to 14 kills after tallying 28 against Oregon State the night before. Ferreira knew who his team would have to contain, but the task was still too overwhelming for Oregon.

"Stanford is a premier program," Ferreira said. "Richards and Nnamani are top-level players."

California (10-6, 5-2 Pac-10) relied on consistency from more than just a pair of high-caliber attackers.

The Golden Bears had four players post double-digit totals in kills,



Oregon's attack was without sophomores Sarah Mason (17) and Erin Little (10) because of injury and illness. The Ducks lost to Stanford and California last weekend.

ERIK R. BISHOFF
PHOTOGRAPHER

including senior Camille Leffall, freshman Angie Pressey, and juniors Jenna Brown and Gabrielle Abernathy.

For the match, Cal hit at a .195 clip, but in the third game, the Golden Bears registered a .341 team attack percentage. Oregon hit .058 through four games.

To compensate for the loss of Mason, Russell displayed some resilience with a match-high 18 kills and a team-best .237 hitting percentage.

After recording 27 kills over the duration of the Bay Area trip, Russell leads the Ducks with 201 kills this season.

Despite its winless conference record, Oregon remains optimistic

about the upcoming schedule.

"I thought we did a tremendous job of coming out prepared," Ferreira said. "We have a tough stretch of matches coming up so it was important to play with mental toughness. I felt we did a good job."

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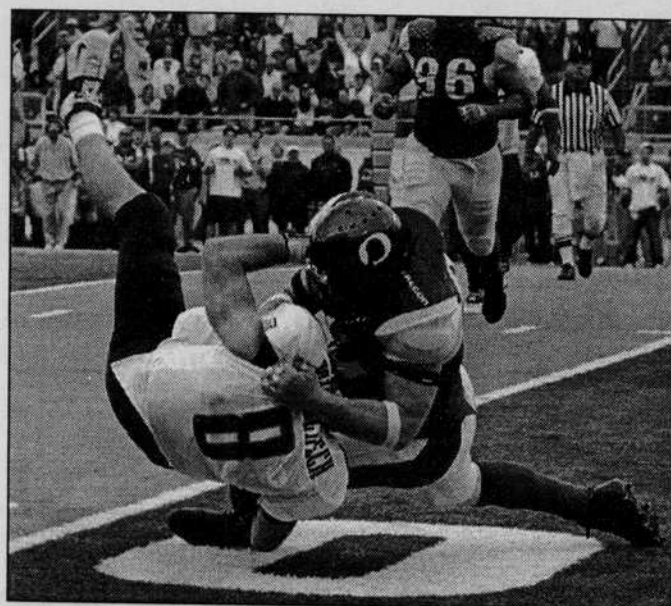
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Oregon's Devan Long sacks Arizona's backup quarterback Richard Kovalcheck. The sack moved Long to seventh all-time at Oregon with 17 sacks.

TIM BOBOSKY
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Football: Penalties continue to hinder offensive production

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limiting penalties. The Ducks, who lead the conference in penalties, were penalized 11 times for 114 yards, and one of them cost punt returner Justin Phinisee a touchdown.

"Somewhere down the line these penalties are going to get to us," Phinisee said. "Until we can eliminate those penalties, when you think about big bowl games, we'll be just another team."

The penalties that occur during a play don't bother Bellotti as much as the ones received before and after a play.

"I think there were some penalties

by some people that were plain and simply stupid and selfish," Bellotti said. "I'm going to find a way to get that across to them."

Despite the penalty woes, Oregon has crawled its way back to a 3-3 overall record and a 2-1 conference record.

"We feel very good about being 2-1 and still being in the hunt," Clemens said. "I think some people might have thrown the towel in for the 2004 season, but we said the heck with it, we're going to go out and play every game like it's our last one."

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