

## ■ Outdoor recreation

# At home on the road

University professor Annie Dochnahl shows 'persistence, dedication' to cycling with treks such as her 500-mile ride through Costa Rica

BY ASHLEY GRIFFIN  
OUTDOOR RECREATION REPORTER

Annie Dochnahl's ambition for cycling has led her all over the world. Not many people have cycled from Eugene to Madison, Wis. — a distance of just over 3,000 miles. She has also biked in Hawaii, New Zealand and Mexico, to name a few exotic locations.

Dochnahl is a University professor deeply involved in aspects of health and the outdoors. Many students know her as an Exercise and Wellness 102 instructor, and she practices what she teaches.

"She's someone who walks her talk," Jen Strong, an adjunct instructor with the Outdoor Pursuits Program and friend of Dochnahl's, said.

Dochnahl is an avid outdoorswoman. Born in Madison, Wis., she came to Eugene 22 years ago and has taken advantage of Oregon's outdoor activities ever since.

"I feel lucky to be able to enjoy so many sports. I'm doing it because it feels so right, like a Border Collie that wants to be with sheep or an alligator that wants to be in the water," she said. "There's something extremely comforting about the outdoor environment where I feel at home."

Dochnahl's most recent adventure came by way of a 500-mile trek across Costa Rica with only her bike and partner Roger Bailey for support. The two left in December and biked for three weeks.

Preparing for the journey, many of the pair's friends were concerned about the lack of cycling safety on the twisting main roads of Costa Rica. However, Dochnahl said safety was not a problem.

"We were (only) on the main road for 12 miles. For about four days we saw nothing but horseback riders, motorcycles and trucks (on the off-roads)," she said.

By avoiding the main roads and riding on the trails, Dochnahl and Bailey got to experience some of Costa Rica's hidden treasures.

"On the little trails, it was so quiet that the monkeys, birds and wildlife really came out to us," she said.

While enjoying the scenery, the two also faced their share of challenges on back trails. On the Pacific coast, 90-degree temperatures limited the ability to bike after 2 p.m. In the highlands, where the temperature was cooler, the roads became steeper and more challenging to ascend.

I was just blown away by how steep the hills are," Dochnahl said, noting that Costa Rica doesn't have rules about road grades like the United States.

The lifestyle on a cycling vacation is a bit different from the typical tropical getaway, Dochnahl said. Swimming in the ocean replaces leisurely afternoons at the pool, and nights are spent in a tent on a beach, not at a resort.

The pair carried about 50 pounds of gear with them, including a tent, a tiny sleeping sack and a small stove that ran on denatured alcohol.

In the morning, they used the stove to make coffee. They feasted daily on big Costa Rican meals at different stores along the way — where the food was cheap and plentiful and the Costa Ricans were friendly and helpful.

"I feel in love with so many Costa Ricans," Dochnahl said.

When preparing for the trip, the pair had two options plan their own trip or let a group like



COURTESY

Annie Dochnahl, a professor at the University, takes a break during one of her cycling adventures in Costa Rica in December. Dochnahl has traveled the world to cycle in places such as New Zealand, Mexico and Hawaii.

Backroads, where all gear and food is provided, do it for them.

Dochnahl has always planned her own trips but takes precautions before traveling. She suggests using the Travel Clinic at the University Health Center to get the proper first-aid supplies and immunizations before going abroad.

Dochnahl also recommends getting airline tickets early to save money and suggests staying at a hotel on the first night of a trip. Bikers can then arrange to store their bike box at the hotel while they cycle.

For those students who can't afford the time or expense to travel abroad for an outdoor adventure, Dochnahl suggests trying local activities. She lets Oregon's distinct seasons dictate her

activities, opting for skiing in the winter and boating in the summer.

"I admire the persistence, dedication and gumption that Annie puts toward all her endeavors," Peter Lunger, who has been on many adventures with Dochnahl, said. "The list is impressive: running, bike-touring, kayaking, climbing, weightlifting, backpacking, hiking, telemark and cross-country skiing, dance and, most recently, yoga."

When living in a place with this many diverse outdoor offerings, students can follow Dochnahl's example and see what inspiration the great outdoors can bring.

ashleygriffin@dailyemerald.com

## ■ Men's basketball

# 'Energy' players to spark Ducks

Malik Hairston, Chamberlain Oguchi, Jordan Kent and Bryce Taylor are being called upon to improve the Ducks' season

BY JON ROETMAN  
SENIOR SPORTS REPORTER

Tuesday's practice was filled with intensity as the Oregon men's basketball team worked through live game situations at McArthur Court.

Separated by different colored practice jerseys, head coach Ernie Kent's "energy" group players donned green tank tops and dominated their counterparts in yellow.

Maarty Leunen grabbed a loose ball in the backcourt and jammed it home with authority. Bryce Taylor added a dunk of his own, which he followed with a thunderous yell of aggression. And just to remind everyone of Oregon's outside shooting ability, Chamberlain Oguchi drilled a three-pointer from the right wing — after which he screamed and hopped, allowing his cornrow mullet to swing freely from the back of his head.

While energy was the key to Tuesday's practice, Kent said, more importantly, it will be the key to improvement for the Ducks during the second half of the Pacific-10 Conference season.

"They work their butts off for you," Kent said. "They still have some adjustments to make come game time, but I thought our energy was really good today, and it's been good the past couple days in terms of intensity."

"Most of our problems are based on energy and competing," Oregon's Pac-10 season got off to a strong start when the Ducks followed up an 8-1 non-conference mark with a 90-83 win against Southern California on Dec. 31. Since then, Oregon (11-7 overall, 3-6 Pac-10) has lost six of eight

games, including the last four. The Ducks have looked confused offensively and have been outthrustled to many rebounds and loose balls. They have also gotten buried by terrible starts, often falling behind by double digits before starting to play with any coherency.

Kent said his youthful team ran out of gas and needs to find a way to rebound during the second half of the season.

"The biggest thing we're going to do in the second half is we're going to play energy guys," said Kent, referring to Malik Hairston, Jordan Kent, Taylor, Oguchi and a few others. "I think with energy guys, it gets you off to a better start. You compete better, you're loud and vocal and you talk, which brings energy to the other guys on your team."

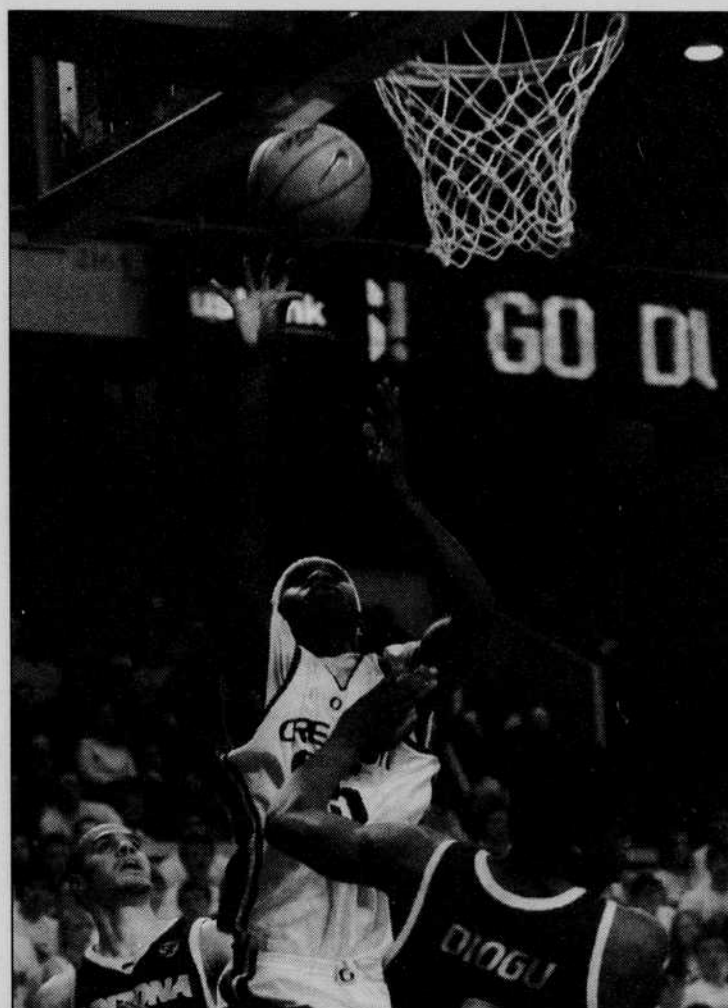
Kent also said the Ducks' four true freshmen are focused on returning their level of play to where it was earlier in the season. Hairston, Taylor, Leunen and Oguchi all tailed off at one point and will play a crucial role in how Oregon finishes its season.

"All four of them have hit the wall and kind of pushed back over it," Kent said. "I'm just hoping they can all kind of get on their groove at the same time now, because they've all shown moments of brilliance. If I can get them all on the same page at the same time, then I think we have a chance to have a great second half of the Pac-10 season."

Hairston is the only one of the group to have turned things around at this point. Touted as one of the top prospects in the country coming out of Renaissance High School in Detroit, the 6-foot-6 swing man is starting to play with more aggression and has scored in double figures in the last five games.

"There's no such thing as giving up," Hairston said. "As long as there's games on our schedule, we'll be fighting hard. This team still has great potential."

jonroetman@dailyemerald.com



ERIK R. BISHOFF | PHOTOGRAPHER

Oregon's Chamberlain Oguchi, seen here against Arizona State, is one of the "energy guys" that head coach Ernie Kent will be counting on to recharge the Ducks' momentum in the second half of the season.