

"I don't think he's going to have a lot of fun over the next 31 games...but it could be worse. He could be going to the Clippers."

Bill Fitch on interim Timberwolves coach Kevin McHale



The views and varied terrain of the 2,062-foot-high Spencer Butte attract leisure hikers and avid runners alike. Hikers can see the Willamette Valley, Fern Ridge Reservoir, the Three Sisters and the city from atop the Butte.

NICOLE BARKER | PHOTOGRAPHER

## Outdoor recreation

# A view from the butte

Spencer Butte boasts two trails of varying difficulty that lead to a panoramic view of the valley

BY ASHLEY GRIFFIN  
OUTDOOR RECREATION REPORTER

Eugene seems to have as many buttes as it does coffee shops, and like espresso drinks, everyone has his or her favorite.

Spencer Butte, located five miles south of downtown Eugene, provides a steep 1.5 to 2-mile hike just minutes from the city's edge. The park at the base of the butte has a ropes course, picnic tables and a fire pit, but it is the hike to the butte's peak that draws the most visitors.

Spencer Butte loop is part of the South Hills Ridgeline Trail in a forested area filled with Douglas Fir and Sword Fern. In choose-your-own-adventure fashion, the hike starts just outside the small parking lot with two trail options.

The main trail is a straight shot from the parking lot and is slightly longer than the trail that veers to the left. This one-mile trail begins as a broad dirt path through a meadow and eventually becomes a rocky climb toward the butte's peak.

For those who prefer a looped or steeper route, the left-veering trail is the best option. This trail begins as a rough path that continues for .4 miles and leaves hikers to blaze their own paths over the summit's bare rock. To finish this loop, hikers descend on the far side of the

summit and hike down through the forest until they reach the parking lot.

On either route, hikers will be rewarded with a sweeping panoramic view of the city and beyond. Hikers can stand or sit on top of the 2,062-foot high butte and see Willamette Valley, Fern Ridge Reservoir and the Three Sisters in a matter of minutes.

The view is particularly beautiful during morning and evening hours. Many hikers climb to the summit to watch sunrises or sunsets on a clear day. The park is open until 11 p.m.

"I think seeing the sunset was the most magnificent part of it all and then seeing the moon come up ... it was very surreal with the view of the mountains," said freshman Patricia Miesch, who hiked the butte at night for her first time in February.

Josh Keller, a grad student who joined Miesch on the Outdoor Program sponsored hike, had similar sentiments.

"As the sun sets, the lights in the city appear, and with darkness the whole city is lit up," he said. "To the east, toward the Cascades, it is all black. The moon rising was orangish-yellow and huge. The Butte was bright like the day, we could almost see our shadows."

He added that walking back in the dark forced him to rely on the feel of the trail and the sounds of the forest as his guide.

"It's a very typical lush Oregon forest. It can get pretty wet," said junior Emily Monfort, who works for the Outdoor Program. "I think it's just gorgeous. There's a meadow with wildflowers in the spring."

Keller, who has hiked the butte at least 10 times, agreed.

"Moving between ancient forest and second and third growth sections provides a clear example of the diversity and beauty of an old growth forest," he said. "Breaks in the canopy offer nice views of the city. Lush ferns are everywhere."

The trail can also be used for more than simple outdoor enjoyment.

Monfort used the steeper trail to train for a backpacking trip she took in Canada. Strapped into her backpack, she physically prepared herself for the trip by doing laps that broke in her new hiking boots in the process.

The Club women's soccer team ran the trail in the fall for weekend training. Many local runners use the butte as a hill workout to add variety to their training.

The butte is a well-known location to local runners as part of the annual Butte to Butte run. The 10K run and 4.5 mile Mayor's Walk are Fourth of July traditions. This year will be the 32nd occurrence of the event, which begins on Donald Street.

Last year's youngest participant was 4 months old and in a stroller; the oldest was 79.

"With both a competitive run and a fitness walk, there is something for every ability level," said Tom Jordan, the co-race director. "Entire families often take part, some in the run and some in the walk. And the run course is challenging, with a steep uphill at the start."

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## IN BRIEF

### Ducks look to break series tie with Portland State Vikings

The 21st-ranked Oregon softball team plays Portland State today at 3 p.m. at Howe Field.

The two teams split a doubleheader Feb. 20 at Howe Field after games at the UC Riverside Invitational were canceled because of bad weather.

In the first game, freshman Alicia Cook

started for her first time at home by tying the third-best single-game strikeout performance in Oregon history with 12. The Ducks won the game, 2-1, as Cook allowed only three hits and no walks.

The Vikings struck back in the second game with home runs by Kayla Lewis and Alayna Petersen to beat the Ducks, 6-5.

Lately, Beth Boskovich has been leading the Duck offense. The junior first baseman went 5 for 8 with a home run, two doubles and four RBIs at the UNLV Rebel Classic last weekend. The Camarillo, Calif., native is hitting .333 on the season and is tied as the

team leader in RBIs with 10.

On the other side, Kimi Daniel has been a solid contributor for Portland State. She is hitting .333 with a home run and six RBIs in 12 games this season.

Providing power batting for the Vikings is Lewis. Though she is only hitting .194, four of her five hits this season have been home runs, and she also has six RBIs.

Leading the Vikings on the mound is Michelle Hext. Despite a losing record (1-2), she has a 1.59 ERA and 24 strikeouts in 22 innings.

— Clayton Jones

## Club Sports

# Disputed call costs volleyball tourney title

An ace secured victory for Boise State after a call gave the team a one-point lead and possession

BY LUKE ANDREWS  
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

The Oregon Club men's volleyball team advanced to the championship game of its home tournament this weekend, but after a controversial call, lost the final game to the Boise State Broncos.

The Ducks hosted, in addition to Boise State, Humboldt State, Simon Fraser, Western Washington and Step-Up, an adult club team from the Eugene area.

After defeating Simon Fraser, Boise State and Step-Up, Oregon marched into the championship game Saturday to meet Boise State for the second time.

This time, the Broncos answered the challenge. Boise State took advantage of two momentum-swinging runs and the Ducks' inability to overcome their errors to cruise to a 25-18 victory in game one.

It was more of the same in the second game for the Ducks as they handed the Broncos eight points on service errors.

However, Oregon kept battling. Boise State needed two points to win the game and take the tournament championship, but the Ducks came back from six down to tie the game at 24.

However, the next play resulted in a questionable call that gave Boise State both possession and the lead.

Tied at 24, Oregon's Judson Mead attempted to tip the ball over the net, but a whistle was blown as a Boise State player blocked the ball back onto Oregon's side. The referee ruled that Mead reached over the net to hit the ball, and because the ball bounced on Oregon's side after the block, Boise State was awarded a point to make the score 25-24.

"The call was wrong," Mead said. "It was mishandled, and I was very upset. When a game is that close and at the very end, the referees should not influence the outcome as much as they did."

Boise State got an ace on the next serve to pick up the 26-24 victory and the tournament championship.

The Ducks, who travel next to Las Vegas, recently switched to jump serving, and while the adjustment paid off for the team in the earlier games, it proved costly in the championship.

"We kind of expected the service errors. We just wanted to focus on things that would help us in the long run," said Derek Olson, one of three returning players. "But I know we could have beaten (Boise State) regardless."

Earlier in the tournament, the Ducks devastated Simon Fraser — last year's tournament winner — winning two of the three games.

Oregon's jump serving provided a useful tool as the team racked up the service aces in a dominating 25-13 win in game one. Oregon took control again in the second game, winning 25-17 to get the victory over the Clan. Simon Fraser eventually defeated the Ducks in the meaningless third game, 25-23.

"(Simon Fraser was) not able to stop our attack, and we pretty much controlled the game from the beginning," Olson said.

After the victory, Oregon faced Boise State for the first of their two meetings of the day. The Ducks were sluggish in the first game,