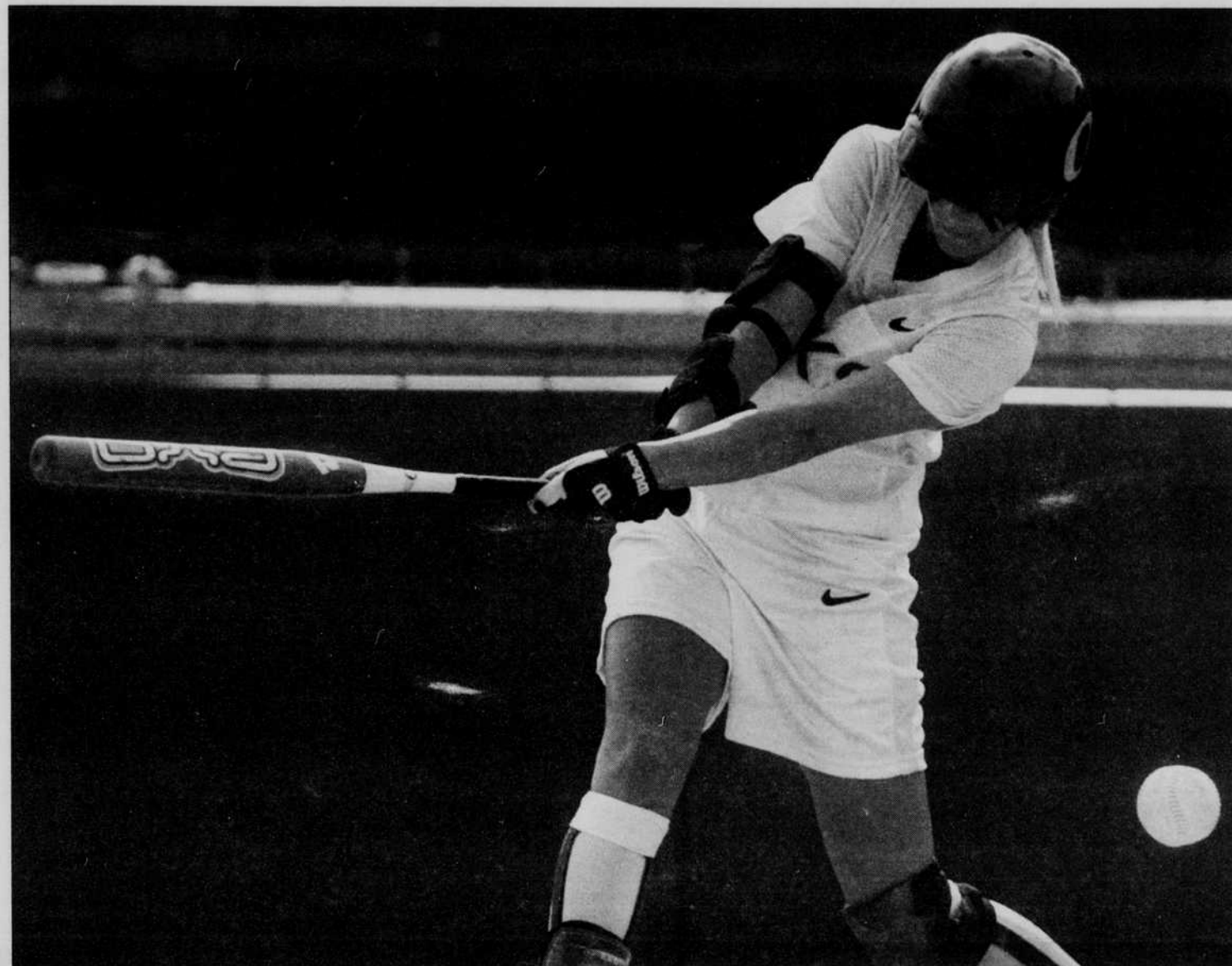


■ Duck softball



DANIELLE HICKEY | PHOTO EDITOR

Lovena Chaput, seen here earlier this season, and the rest of the Oregon softball team failed to qualify for the Super Regionals for the first time in two years after falling to No. 10 Oklahoma on Sunday, 2-1, in the first game of the Regional.

Season comes to a heart-racing finish

The Ducks couldn't come back from a two-run deficit against No. 10 Oklahoma, losing 2-1

BY CLAYTON JONES
SPORTS EDITOR

Living by the seat of its pants after capturing two must-win games Saturday, the Oregon softball team's season came to an end Sunday when the Ducks lost their first game of the Regional tournament Friday against 10th-ranked Oklahoma in Norman, Okla., 2-1.

It marks the first time in three seasons the Ducks haven't reached the Super Regionals.

A rough first inning sealed the Ducks' (35-25 overall) fate against the host Sooners (50-15).

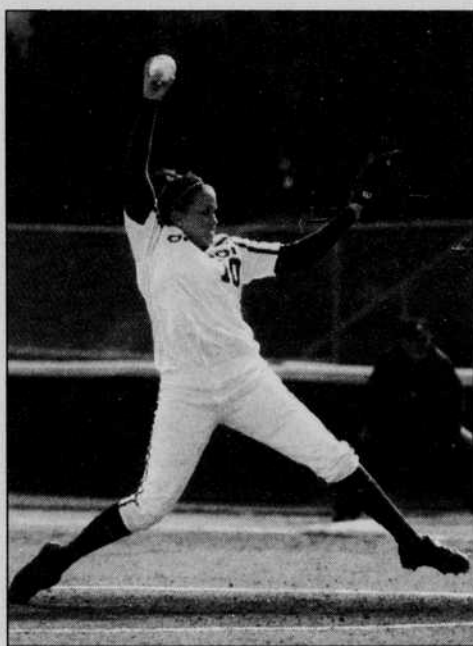
Oregon gave up the only two runs Oklahoma would score in the game on a double steal and an error by left fielder Lovena Chaput.

The Sooners started the inning with back-to-back singles by Norrelle Dickson and Kristin Vesely off Oregon ace Amy Harris. Oklahoma's Christina Enea sent a deep fly ball to right field that was caught, allowing Dickson to advance to third base.

With clean-up hitter Heather Scaglione at the plate, the Sooners executed a perfect double steal to score Dickson from third and move Vesely to second. Scaglione singled to left later in the at-bat, and a Chaput error allowed Vesely to score, giving the Sooners a 2-0 advantage.

Oregon fought back in the bottom of the second and had runners on second and third, but as was the case most of the day, the team couldn't get to Oklahoma pitcher Kami Keiter. First baseman Kristi Leiter popped out to end the inning. The Sooner pitcher dominated the Ducks most of the day, giving up six hits and an earned run while striking out eight and walking two.

With two outs in the top of the fifth, Harris was replaced by freshman Alicia Cook after giving up a single to Enea and walking Scaglione. Cook



KATE HORTON | PHOTOGRAPHER

Amy Harris became the Ducks' all-time leader in career strikeouts when she reached 476 against Wichita State on Saturday.

retired the next seven batters to keep the Ducks alive for a rally. The Elmira native didn't give up an earned run during the entire tournament (9.1 innings), and batters hit a microscopic .033 against her.

Duck hitters finally got to Keiter in the bottom of the fifth inning. Senior second baseman Erin Goodell singled, followed by a Suzie Barnes double to put runners on second and third with one out. Chaput drove in Goodell on a groundout to the second baseman, but the Ducks couldn't scrape together anything else as Sabol ended the inning by popping out to the catcher.

Oregon threatened again in the bottom of the sixth inning. Beth Boskovich walked and Ashley Richards reached when the Sooners attempted to

get Boskovich at second but were unsuccessful.

With runners on first and second and no outs, Keiter once again shut down the Ducks' bats, getting Kayleen Hudson to pop out and pinch hitter Ann Marie Topps and Goodell to strike out.

The Ducks were given a third chance to tie the score in the last inning, but they failed to convert. A single by Barnes and a single by Chaput put runners on first and second with one out.

Oregon couldn't capitalize with tying and winning runs on base, as Keiter mowed down Sabol and Boskovich to end the game and secure the Sooners a spot in the Super Regionals.

Oregon's journey to the Regional final started last Friday when the Ducks fell to No. 14 Louisiana-Lafayette in a high scoring battle, 7-5.

The Ragin' Cajuns used four home runs to garner the victory against the Ducks.

The Ducks fell behind early after a one-out home run by ULL's Danyele Gomez to give the Ragin' Cajuns a 1-0 first-inning lead. It was Gomez's 20th home run of the season.

The score remained the same until ULL scored three times in the top of the fourth inning to push the lead to 4-0.

The Ducks cut the lead to 6-5 in the bottom of the sixth inning after Boskovich crushed a three-run homer, but they couldn't quite make it all the way back.

"We had several opportunities in the game, and we weren't able to get the timely hitting we needed," Oregon head coach Kathy Arendsen said.

Oregon came back Saturday with an extra-inning victory against Wichita State. Richards doubled with two outs in the top of the eighth inning to drive in two and help the Ducks win 3-2.

Harris led the team in batting, going the distance for the Ducks' lone earned run in the contest. With her five strikeouts in the game, she became Oregon's all-time leader with 476 career strikeouts. In the game against Oklahoma, her two strikeouts also gave her the

■ Duck golf

Team out, LaVoie in for NCAA tourney

Gregg LaVoie will be the lone representative for Oregon after the team failed to receive a bid

BY SCOTT J. ADAMS
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

The final round of the NCAA West Regional on Saturday found the Oregon men's golf team trying to improve upon its dismal score Friday and to find a way into the NCAA Championships. Despite spectacular play by Gregg LaVoie and Jay Snyder, the Ducks fell short of qualifying by six strokes and finished tied for 14th.

An even par 280 — the lowest score of the third round — wasn't enough to vault the Ducks into the top ten, where all bids to the NCAA Championships were awarded. The tournament, played at the par-70, 6,742-yard Stanford Golf Course, was a microcosm of the Ducks' season: a frustrating start followed by a stellar finish, leaving the team just shy of reaching its goal.

Although Oregon will miss out on the Championships, head coach Steve Nosler was still pleased at the way his squad played Saturday.

"We had a heck of a round today," Nosler said. "It's too bad that we didn't have a better second round, but I'm really proud that these guys finished strong and represented Oregon the way they did."

Although the tournament marked the end of Oregon's season as a team, LaVoie will continue play June 1 at Caves Valley, Md., for the NCAA finals. The Pasco, Wash., native earned one of two possible individual seeds awarded to the top players at the Regional competing for a team not invited to the NAAs. LaVoie delivered consistent scores of 70, 70 and 71 to finish tied for 10th at 1-over 211 with Washington's Erik Olson. LaVoie's trip to the Championships will be the second of his career and the first individual berth for an Oregon golfer since Ben Crane in 1997.

"Gregg has got tremendous potential as a golfer, and we've finally begun to see that on a consistent basis this spring," Nosler said. "I hope this trip to the NCAA Championships, where he will be competing against the best golfers in the country, brings out the competitor in him and helps Gregg realize there's another level he can reach with his abilities."

Snyder recorded Oregon's lowest score in the final round by shaving two strokes off his previous career-low with a 67. The sophomore walk-on carded four birdies and finished tied for 61st at 220. Chris Dukeminier also saved his best round for last, improving his score Friday by four strokes and tying for 66th. Teammate Justin St. Clair ended the tournament tied for 49th at 218.

Matt Ma came into this tournament as Oregon's hottest golfer in spring but could not find his rhythm over the weekend, finishing with a pair of 77s in the first and third rounds and carding an 82 on Friday. He finished tied for 128th at 237.

Top-seeded UNLV and No. 2 New Mexico of the Mountain West Conference defended their top seedings at the tournament by finishing first and second place, respectively. The Running Rebels shot a final round 288,