

Sports

OREGON DAILY EMERALD
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"Determined, dedicated, disciplined. I think he's ready to play. For Kobe, it's about re-establishing his dominance in the game."

Los Angeles Lakers coach Phil Jackson describing guard Kobe Bryant

In my opinion



CLAYTON JONES
SEVENTH INNING STRETCH

Writing shapes memories, future life

Well it is hard to believe, but this is it.

This is my last column and last week of being the sports editor, and what a ride it has been.

First, I have to say this gig has to be the best job a student could have, and to give it up to concentrate on my life outside the Emerald kills me because this has been my passion. For the last year the Emerald has literally been my life. I was able to write and edit my life's passion — sports. My staff from last year developed into my best friends. I found the most incredible woman (now my fiancée) I've ever met in the office next to my desk.

Sure, the amount of hours the sports editor invests in putting out the section every day plus a Game Day supplement during the week is a full-time job in itself, and the pay is horrible, but it was all worth it to me.

Since fall term last year, I've had the opportunity to provide the community at and around the University a look into the world of Oregon athletics. I've been blessed enough to cover football, men's basketball and softball in the last year, and while a couple of those teams had their worst seasons in recent memory, it has been a pleasure for me to cover the ins and outs of their prospective squads.

I've learned more about being a sports writer and editor in the last year than I would've ever learned in a class. Covering press conferences and big games and interviewing big-time coaches and players has not only given me a renewed sense of confidence but plenty of great memories.

Like last year when the Arizona men's basketball team came to town and beat Oregon, I had just finished interviews with Ducks coach Ernie Kent and some of the players after the game. I went racing to catch Arizona head coach Lute Olson, a college coaching legend, who was just about to leave the Mac Court floor after post-game interviews. I caught up with him and asked if he had time, and he said, "Sure." So for those couple of minutes, I had a one-on-one interview with one of the biggest names in college basketball. When I was done, I thanked him for taking the time, and he put his hand on my shoulder and gave me a great big smile and said to me, "No problem, son," and walked off the court.

I've had the chance to cover Oregon's win over Washington State in Pullman, Wash., last season and was down on the field when Kellen Clemens accounted for his fifth touchdown of the contest in one of the best games an Oregon quarterback has ever played. I watched Oregon last week compete with USC, maybe the greatest college football team ever, for a half. I got to watch Chris Hernandez of Stanford and Kent get in a shouting match after Stanford's victory at

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Oregon serves disappointing debut

Despite 27-23 deficit in game four, Cal recovered to win its third consecutive game on the road

BY LUKE ANDREWS
SPORTS REPORTER

In front of a raucous crowd of 726 Thursday night at McArthur Court, 14th-ranked California proved it is a team to reckon with in a deep Pacific-10 Conference, while Oregon showed it is a program on the rise.

Cal, now winners of three straight on the road, won the first two games with relative ease against the Ducks, 30-25, 30-16, but dropped the third game 28-30 before winning the final game, 33-31.

"It showed that we can play with anybody; we're right there," Oregon head coach Jim Moore said. "It's really unfortunate because I think (the Ducks) deserved to win."

Cal, coming off wins at UCLA and USC, started games one and two quickly and was aided by eight Oregon service errors. The Golden Bears never trailed the Ducks in the first two games. Oregon finished the match with 14 total service errors.

"That can't happen," Moore said. "We had one ace and eight errors in the first two games. We got better at it, but it just can't happen."

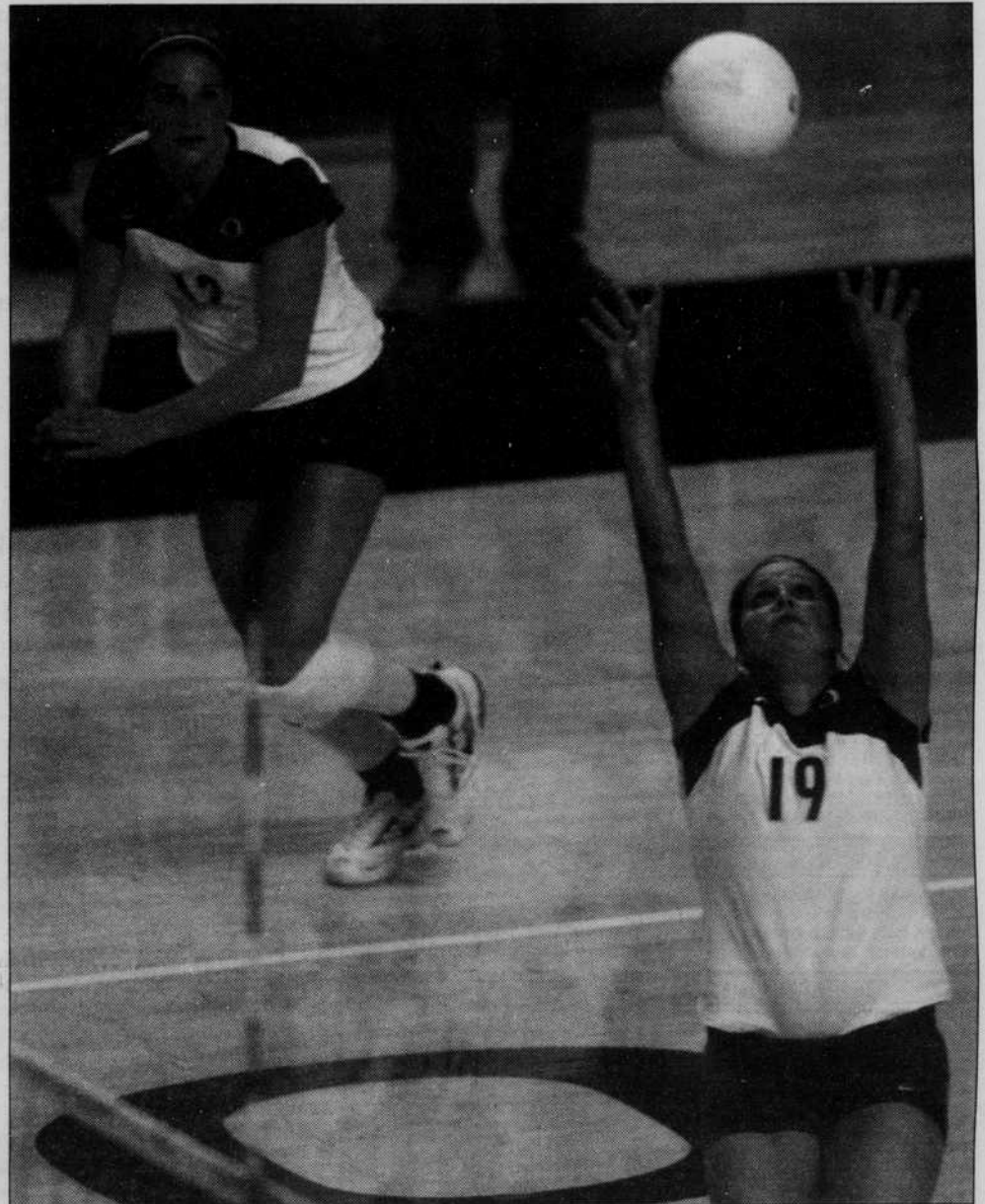
Oregon, behind freshman Mira Djuric's match-high 17 kills, rallied and captured its first lead early in an emotional game three.

The Ducks managed a 27-23 lead after a kill by outside-hitter Kelly Russell, but Cal, after a block and kill by sophomore Angie Pressey, scored four straight to tie the game at 27.

The Golden Bears then took the lead momentarily after a block, but Russell, one of Moore's senior leaders, would not let Oregon falter. One of her 15 kills tied the game at 28 and her ace put Oregon in position to win the game. The Cal attack sailed long on the next play, and the Mac Court crowd erupted as Oregon won 30-28.

"We have the mentality that we are going

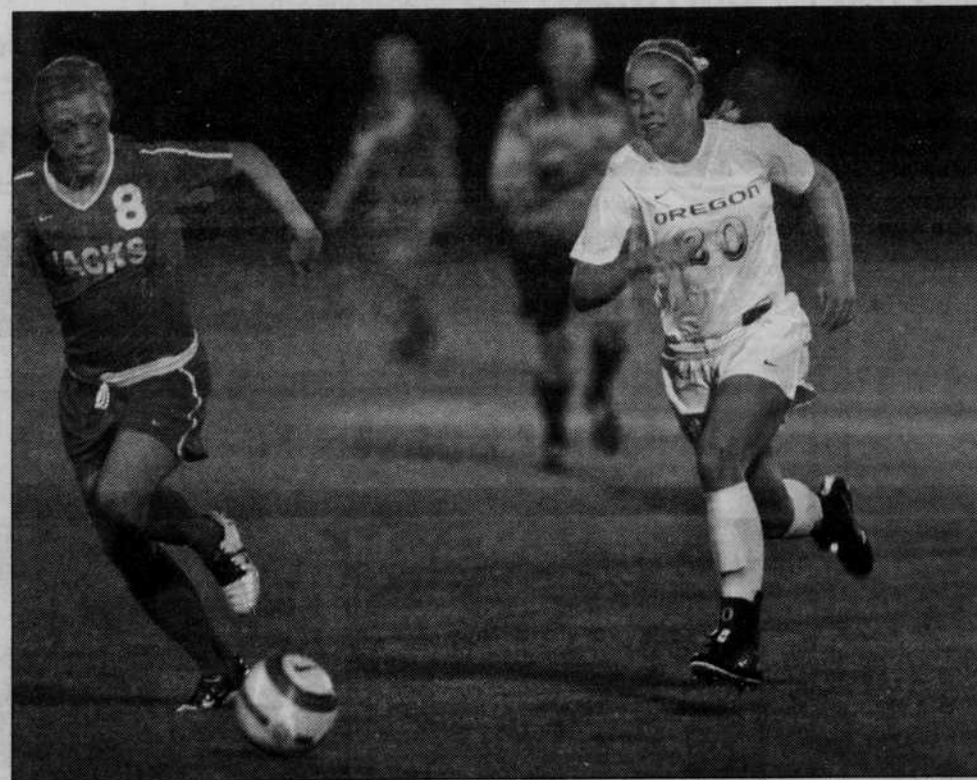
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NICOLE BARKER | SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Junior setter Heather Madison sets the ball as Kristen Bitter prepares to go up for a kill. Madison finished with a game-high 15 digs and 25 assists in Oregon's Pac-10 Conference home debut.

Ducks fly high, play at Wyoming



NICOLE BARKER | SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Eugene native Tiffany Smith sprints after a pass in Oregon's 2-0 win over South Dakota State Sept. 23. The Ducks play today against Nevada in Laramie, Wyo., for the Brown and Gold Tournament.

Oregon women's soccer gears up to play in a tournament 7,000 feet above sea level

BY SCOTT J. ADAMS
SPORTS REPORTER

The final tune up before conference play lies ahead for the Oregon women's soccer team this weekend as it travels to Laramie, Wyo., to play in the Brown and Gold Tournament hosted by Wyoming.

The Ducks (6-1-1) have not surrendered a goal in three straight games and look to improve on their near flawless record, which marks the best start in program history.

Action starts Friday at noon for the Ducks, who face Nevada (4-3-1), a team that handed Washington State and New Mexico their first losses of the season last weekend. Although the Ducks have not scouted the Wolfpack much this week, players such as goalkeeper Jessie Chatfield of Oregon are well aware of how talented Nevada is.

"We're very excited to be playing Nevada. They should be a good test for us," Chatfield said. "If we play our game we should do fine."

The biggest concern for Oregon senior

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