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SPORTS

Tennis sweeps NCAA first and second rounds

Trojans go undefeated at Marks

By JEFFREY DAVENPORT
Daily Trojan

The No. 12 USC men's tennis team completed an undefeated 17-0 season at home, sweeping defending NCAA Champion Pepperdine in the second round Saturday and UC Santa Barbara in the first round Friday of the NCAA Men's Tennis Championships at Marks Stadium on Saturday, both by 4-0 margins.

The Trojans (22-2) took an early advantage over the Waves (23-8) by winning the doubles point. The USC pair of Dejan Cvetkovic and Gary Sacks defeated Pepperdine's Andre Begemann and Mahmoud Kamel 8-4, while Jamil Al-Agba and Garrett Snyder sealed the point for the Trojans, topping the Waves' Bassam Beidas and James Lemke, 8-5.

When singles play began, USC took a 3-0 lead over the Waves af-

ter freshman Robert Farah defeated Richard Johnson, 6-2, 6-2, and freshman Jason McNaughton ousted Mahmoud Kamel, 7-5, 6-2, at No. 4 and No. 6 singles, respectively.

Al-Agba then clinched the match in No. 1 singles for USC, edging Pepperdine's Begemann, 6-4, 6-4.

"It was a really close 4-0 decision," USC coach Peter Smith said. "We won a couple of matches quickly and I think that put the pressure on Pepperdine. When you get three points up on the board, everyone is looking at the score and the momentum really tends to shift."

The team credits the student fan group, the "7th Man," for support.

"Going up against the defending champions is always tough," said Whit Livingston, who did not compete. "The fans play a huge part in firing us up."

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Sweeps | Lindsey Nelson rode the momentum from her Pac-10 singles title, helping No. 8 USC defeat Boston, 4-0, in the first round, and Texas, 4-0, in the second round of the NCAA championships.

Joel Zink | Daily Trojan

Doubles is clutch in USC's wins

By JEFFREY DAVENPORT
Daily Trojan

The No. 8 USC women's tennis team advanced to the Round of 16 of the NCAA Women's Tennis Championships after dispatching Texas on Sunday and Boston, both 4-0, on Saturday at Marks Stadium.

The Women of Troy (19-4) quickly grabbed the doubles point from Texas (16-10), as the No. 1 team of Judy DeVera and Amanda Fink defeated the Longhorns' Vanja Corovic and Marija Milic, 8-1. USC's No. 3 pair of Lindsey Nelson and Sarah Fansler then made quick work of Stephanie Davison and Jane Pringle 8-2 to clinch the point.

Nelson and Fansler recently received additional honors in the

conference. Nelson, the 2007 Pac-10 Singles Champion, was named Women's Tennis Player of the Year, and Fansler was named the Pac-10 Freshman of the Year. Anastasiu and Fink were also honored.

"We needed to play well in doubles and we actually did," USC coach Richard Gallien said. "It has been a weakness this year and we played quite well. I think that gave the team a boost of confidence."

In singles, senior Anca Anastasiu earned the first point for the Women of Troy in No. 4 singles, dominating Texas' Petra Dizdar 6-2, 6-1. Senior Dianne Matias followed with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Ristine Olsen on court No. 5, and sophomore Amanda Fink clinched the match on court No. 3

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Sorry UCLA, No. 100 is no big deal

Dear UCLA,
This Trojan has a confession: I may bleed Cardinal with a heart of Gold, but I grew up a Bruin. It wasn't my fault, I was a daddy's girl, and I inherited my love of UCLA athletics from him without question.

I never went to a game, but I Eight-Clapped along with Tyus Edney's NCAA Tourney heroics and 1996's 17-point fourth-quarter comeback that led to the double-overtime defeat of USC. I grew up with eight straight in football and Ed O'Bannon, Baron Davis, and Jason Kapono ruling the hardwood. I remember Shon Tarver and Toby Bailey and JR Henderson and Cameron Dollar and Jelani McCoy and the rest of the "Where Are They Now?"-worthy alumni (I had to look them up to make sure my memory wasn't failing me). Back then, my single-digit-age-old self believed Jim Harrick was infallible, and the mindless iconoclasm continued when Steve Lavin took the helm of the storied program.



ASHLEY ZELDIN

USC from A-to-Z

(What was I thinking? Oh, wait, I was a Bruin fan! Thinking? Obviously not!)

I treasured my Bruin teddy bear and proudly strutted around on Halloween (and whenever) in my Lil' UCLA Cheerleader outfits — in fact, my senior baby photo in the 2003 Calabasas High School yearbook implicated me as a Bruin after I'd decided to go to USC, prompting curious stares and quips like, "Traitor!" Indeed, the day I chose USC (blame UCLA for not having an undergraduate journalism department!) I broke my daddy's heart. Thank goodness USC was in the middle of its seven-year domination of UCLA in football (go ahead, UCLA, gloat over your eight-year streak) because that made it easier for him to commit

treason, rooting for USC to beat Auburn, and so many others on its way to back-to-back titles. I am proud to say that he was a true Trojan when he passed on November 29, 2005. I like to think that he had the best seat in the house for USC's 66-19 thrashing of the boys in baby blue four days later, and I can imagine him screaming at our defense for letting Vince Young score that eight-yard stunner.

Just like my daddy was reticent to turn to the Trojans, there are two (B)ruins of my pre-USC life I can't let go of: that baby photo and my admiration for John Wooden. I met him the first time when I was six. My mom and daddy dragged me to the California Federal Bank on Ventura Boulevard to meet the man, the myth, the legend. All I wanted was go home and play with my Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles action figures. I remember talking to a man with white hair like my daddy about his grandchildren — great-

| see ZELDIN, page 11 |

Women's crew blasts Pac-10 out of the water

The varsity eight finishes ahead of the rest, pacing No. 1 USC's first Pac-10 title.

By JASON FINKLESTEIN
Daily Trojan

For months, the athletes and coaches alike knew this was the race that would define their season. Gambling everything on just under seven minutes of all-out exertion, the nine women of the varsity eight crew made all their hard work pay off, by delivering a flagship victory for the No. 1 USC women's rowing team.

With the varsity eight's 3.8-second victory in the day's final race, the Women of Troy added another chapter to their storybook season by capturing their first-ever Pacific-10 Conference championship on Sunday at Lake Natoma, Calif.

By winning the conference crown, USC also earned an automatic team bid to the NCAA Division I Regatta, which will be held May 25-27

in Oak Ridge, Tenn. The Women of Troy sent its varsity eight to the competition last year after earning an at-large team bid in 2005.

"We were confident that we could win the varsity eight race, but winning the conference championship is just icing on the top of the cake. Every one of our boats performed at their level or above and that is what brought the success we had today," USC coach Zenon Babraj said.

Going into the varsity eight's grand final, the top-ranked Women of Troy trailed No. 16 Washington on the all-around leaderboard, but the competition is weighted such that the varsity eight race is worth as much as the other three races combined.

USC led wire-to-wire, as the crew built an open-water lead with an early move and finished in 6:39.8. No. 18 Stanford was second, followed by No. 8 California, and No. 10 UCLA. Oregon State was fifth and Washington was sixth.

| see CREW, page 11 |

ZELDIN: Trojans not inferior to Bruins

[continued from page 16] grandchildren? — who were my age. I didn't connect the fragments in my mind until five years ago, when I was looking for a book in my library and noticed a spine reading "Wharton" and Wiesel." I pulled out the book and my jaw dropped — I hadn't converted yet — even more so when I turned to the first page of the *Pyramid of Success* and saw he had signed it, offering words of wisdom. I ran to my mom asking when I'd gotten the book — at six, I would've preferred *Inch and Miles* to the grownups' version — and she showed me that he had signed a basketball, too — probably for my daddy, since I preferred He-Man to Don McLean in 1992.

Admittedly, I was starry-eyed when Wooden and I were reintroduced — he spoke to a USC journalism class, the invitation extended to my sportswriting class.

My Facebook photo hasn't changed since that fateful day.

And so, despite my eager participation in shouting "U.C.-L-A SUCKS!" during "Tusk," part of me has to cheer for UCLA on the incredible accomplishment. Part of me, as a converted Trojan, has to cheer the Bruins for how they got there. My blood may have been baby blue; now it's cardinal red.

Sport for sport, USC and UCLA compete at the top tier. But in some sports, only UCLA

competes. That's because at USC, certain programs are nonexistent. The Bruins tallied tides in softball (10), women's gymnastics (5), men's soccer (4), and men's gymnastics (2). These premier programs have combined for 21 of UCLA's NCAA-leading 100 championships. These potent programs have produced 25 Olympians, including Dor Richardson, Kerri Strug, and Paul Caligiuri.

MY BLOOD MAY HAVE BEEN BABY BLUE; NOW IT'S CARDINAL RED.

These powerful programs are lacking at Troy. USC has 84 titles, and how many were won by the Trojans in these sports? One; USC fielded a men's gymnastics team long ago, and the 1962 incarnation won a title. Granted, UCLA's days of Peter Vidmar are over, as neither school participates nowadays.

Since UCLA's last-second (literally) triumph over the Women of Troy in the 2006 NCAA Women's Water Polo Championships, the Bruins have been in constant contention for championships over the last year in softball (let's go, Loyola Marymount!), women's gymnastics (good going, Georgia!), men's soccer (thank you, UC Santa Barbara!), as well as in women's soccer and volleyball (nice work, North Carolina and

Nebraska!), and men's basketball (fantastic feat, Florida!).

As the Battle of the Pac-10 Sportswriters Pool raged on Facebook, I said I was rooting for UCLA against the Gators after they ruined my bracket by turning the Jayhawks into chalk. After UCLA left my Women of Troy (I covered the No. 3 USC women's water polo team this season) in its wake on the way to its unprecedented third water polo title and 100th overall, I am lamenting that Arron Affalo or Tasha Schwikert didn't lead UCLA there first.

It wasn't all that long ago that USC held the edge, 67-63. Since 2000, UCLA has racked up NCAA championships at a blistering rate, outpacing USC, 20 to 10. In the 1990s, the margin favored UCLA over USC 17 to 7. The most startling statistic of all is the count since I switched my allegiance in 2002. UCLA leads USC, 13-9. Oh, the irony.

So, UCLA, enjoy no. 100 and ring the Victory Bell while you have it (not for too long). USC may not have 100 championships yet — we will one day soon! For now, the Westwood wunderkind should be thankful for your South Central counterparts, for the intense rivalry and for the invaluable memories (and for yet another shot at no. 100).

Formerly yours, now a Trojan through and through,

Ashley Zeldin, USC '07

CREW: Second varsity boat takes third; men finish fifth

[continued from page 16]

"We stayed relaxed and rowed within our boat, making a few technical changes as the winds changed, but rowing pretty evenly all the way down the course," coxswain Lauren Cowan said. "This is the race we all imagined, every stroke of it. We had a plan, and we knew that as long as we stuck to it, we would come out victorious."

“

I THINK WE DID THE SO-CAL SPELLOUT AT LEAST 10 TIMES."

Jessica Smith
women's crew co-captain

USC's second varsity eight finished third in its event in 6:59.3, six seconds behind first-place California but five seconds clear of the fourth-place Bruins, avenging a dual-meet loss.

Co-captain Jessica Smith, who rowed in the second eight, was elated with the team championship.

"We were all so pumped," she said. "I think we did the So-Cal Spellout at least 10 times. I can't think of a better way to end my senior year."

The Women of Troy's varsity four also finished third in their race, behind Washington and Gonzaga, in

7:44.2. USC finished just ahead of Oregon State and Stanford, as only 1.6 seconds separated third through fifth places.

Even USC's novice eight crew qualified for the grand finals. The Women of Troy finished sixth in 7:33.9, well behind winner Gonzaga (7:06.8).

USC finished with 71 points. Cal (61 points) was second, and Washington (58) and UCLA (56) were in third and fourth place, respectively.

...

In men's action, USC's club men's crew team took fifth place, finishing the competition with 32 points. The Trojans finished ahead of rival UCLA (sixth place), sending all four of its boats to grand finals and recording a third place finish in the varsity four, the crew's second Pac-10 medal ever. USC's varsity eight finished sixth.

"When you look at the results you can distinguish the haves and the have-nots," USC coach Gene Kininmonth said of comparing the Pac-10's varsity and club programs. Also a factor is the crew's move from renting a boathouse in Marina Del Rey to San Pedro.

Despite its club status, the Honorable Robert Hanson had invited the crew to the Henley Royal Regatta, but not feeling that the crew was up to speed, Kininmonth instead asked that Hanson donate a new shell.

"Next year we're going to be at the next level," Kininmonth said.

• Ashley Zeldin contributed to this report.

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Joel Zink | Daily Trojan
Double-up | Kaes Van't Hof and the No. 12 men's tennis team will build on the USC-Notre Dame rivalry in the NCAA Round of 16.

MEN: Trojans knock out 2006 champ Pepperdine

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After the doubles teams of Farah/Kaes Van't Hoff and Cvetkovic/Sachs polished off their Gaucho opponents, 8-0, USC's freshmen came up clutch against UCSB, as McNaughton, Farah, and Sachs won their matches to earn the Trojans' margin of victory.

The Trojans will face No. 5 Notre Dame tomorrow in the Round of 16 in Athens, Ga. It's a rare tilt between the two rivals in tennis, but USC holds a 9-1 record since the teams' first meeting in 1971.

For the second time in his Pacific-10 Conference career, Smith has

been awarded Pac-10 Men's Tennis Coach of the Year for engineering the Trojans' biggest turnaround in program history. He first won the honor in 2004.

Smith brought USC back to sterling 22-2 record from last year's 8-14 finish. The Trojans began the season 11-0 until a loss to No. 1 Georgia, USC's best start since 1987.

Al-Agha was named to the Pac-10 First Team, while Cvetkovic and Van't Hof made the Second Team, with Farah an Honorable Mention.

• Ashley Zeldin contributed to this report.

WOMEN: Tennis seeks revenge on 2006 foe Miami

| continued from page 16 |

with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over the Longhorns Courtney Zauft.

"I thought we were pretty fired up and came out there wanting it instead of trying to defend something," Matias said.

"We played very well and everyone was on top of their game and looked like they wanted to win and advance," said DeVera, whose no. 6 singles match was suspended following Fink's win.

DeVera had no problem with Elizabeth Corrao of Boston (16-3), giving up just two sets on her way to a 6-1, 6-1 victory. Fink defeated Rebecca Row 6-2, 6-0, and Anastasiu took down Francine Whu, 6-1, 6-0. The duos of DeVera/Fink and Fansler/Nelson handily won the doubles point.

The Women of Troy face Miami Friday in Athens, Ga. The Hurricanes knocked USC out of the semifinals of last year's NCAA Championships, 4-1, in a match that was interrupted by rain.

"(The Hurricanes) are very similar to us in that their top two players are strong and the rest of their team is gritty and tough," Gallien said. "I think of all the Round of 16 matches it is going to be one of the more competitive ones."

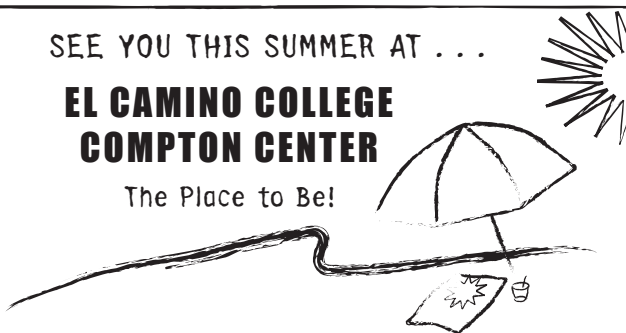
Matias and the Women of Troy now know how to take on Miami.

"They are just really feisty and they came out there ready to play," Matias said. Last year I felt that we were kind tentative with our game but if we go out there fired up and play our game we should be fine."

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