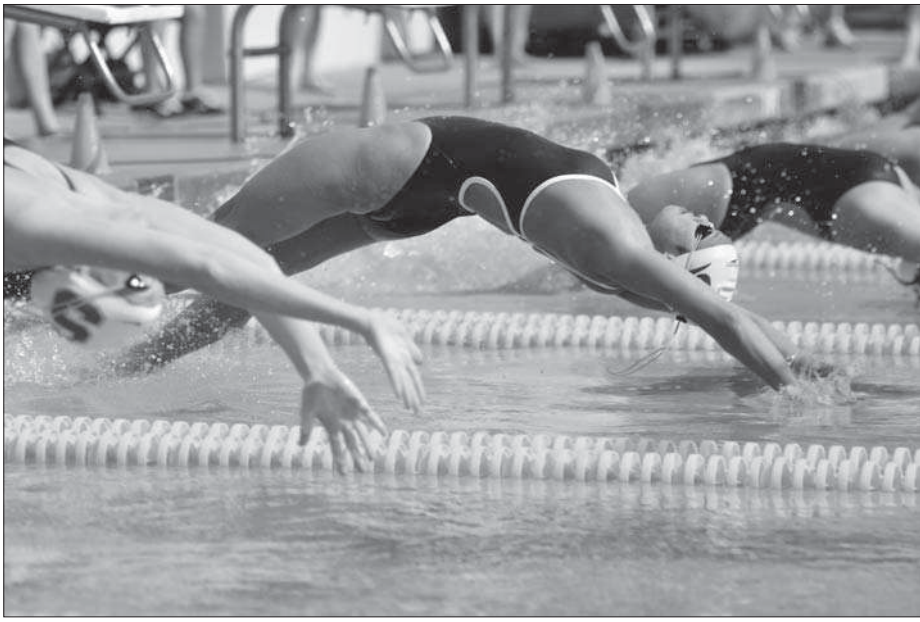


W. SWIM



MICHAEL GETHERS/FILE

The women's swimming season has consisted solely of dual meets, but that changes on Wednesday as the Bears head north to Federal Way, Wash., for the Pac-12 Championships.

Bears gear up for Pac-12 tournament

Cal reclaims No. 2 national ranking entering NCAA season

By Jessica Lim | Staff
jlim@dailycal.org

After dropping to No. 7 earlier this month, the Cal women's swimming team is back to a No. 2 ranking in time for the most important stretch of the season.

In the last few weeks, the top five has been experiencing some shifts. In Cal's final dual meet against No. 4 Stanford last weekend, Cal edged the Cardinal by a close margin of 10 points on Feb. 16. Two weeks earlier, the Cardinal defeated the No. 1 USC.

Though rank has no effect on NCAA championship eligibility, the Bears' change in rank perhaps indicates the voters' trust in the two-time NCAA champions' ability to swim competitively within the Pac-12 and NAAs Championships.

The Bears will kick off the four-day Pac-12 Championships in Federal Way, Washington on Wednesday night. Aside from USC and Stanford, Cal will race three other top-25 teams.

With the key stretch of its season underway, Cal is focused on improving its racing by picking up the pace in practices.

"We've been working on just getting sharper and getting ready for racing," Cal associate coach Kristen Cunnane said. "We've been concentrating on swimming at race speed and sprinting turning (and) starting instead of more cardio-paced speed."

In addition to focusing on sprints and racing techniques during practices, the Bears will showcase its depth, exhibited specifically against Stanford, into the Pac-12s. Complementing star swimmers Caitlin Leverenz, Rachel Bootsma and Cindy Tran were junior Stephanie Au and freshmen Kelly Naze and Rachael Acker.

Coming off its last win against the Cardinal, Cal (7-2) will defend its Pac-12 title against some of its toughest competitors from the dual meets. Cal will compete against USC and No. 6 Arizona, who both defeated the Bears, again during Pac-12s.

Cal's depth and speed were not evident in the first dual meet of the season with a 168.5-112.5 loss to Arizona. A week later, the Bears had a close ten point loss to

No. 1 USC.

As the 2008 NCAA champion, Arizona are consistently strong competitors despite currently hovering outside the top-five rankings. Arizona's five time All-American Ellyn Baumgardner has the third fastest NCAA time in the 100 breast. Junior Margo Geer also holds the fastest time for the 50 free in the NCAA this season.

The Trojans have not fallen from its top ranking in the NAAs. USC's Haley Anderson, the first American to medal in the marathon swim in the Olympics, will likely dominate the longer distance events.

The Pac-12 Championships is the last time this season that the Bears will race as a full team because competing in the NAAs is contingent on qualifying times.

Pac-12s are also the last opportunity for Cal players to reach NCAA caliber times.

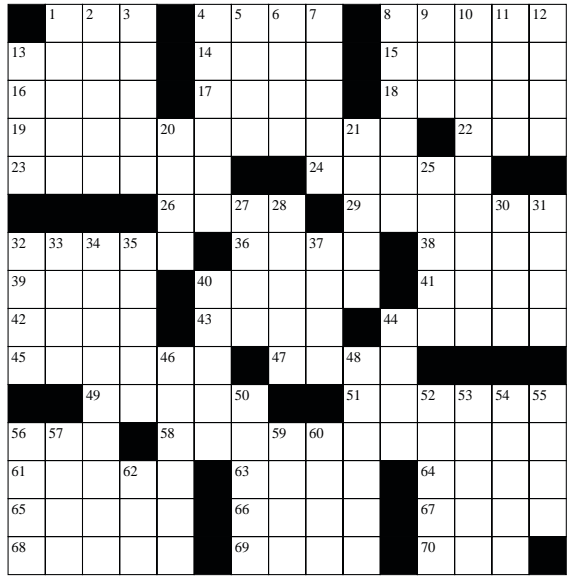
Cal, however, is still not making winning Pac-12 its main priority. The Bears are just focused on constantly improving until the NAAs.

"Our goal as a team is to go to the Pac-12 meet and perform our best whether we win or not, we just walk away knowing we did our best," Cunnane said. ■

PUZZLES

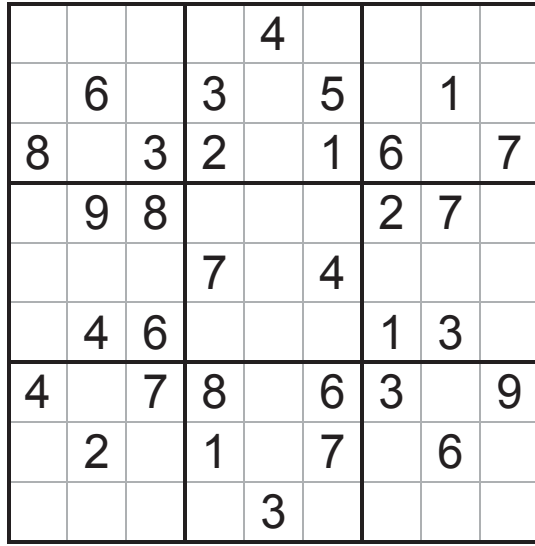
ACROSS

- 1. Four-year degs.
- 4. Do miserably
- 8. Cures
- 13. Bath powder
- 14. Too
- 15. Miss ___ of "Dallas"
- 16. ___ Stanley Gardner
- 17. Talk wildly
- 18. Fall flower
- 19. Part of a telephone
- 22. NNW plus 90°
- 23. End a dispute
- 24. Creature with a flattened tail
- 26. Painting and sketching
- 29. Laughing cowards
- 32. Put off
- 36. Building projection
- 38. Companion of 17 Across
- 39. Ending for who or what
- 40. Prickly plant: var.
- 41. Suffixes for residents
- 42. Give for a time
- 43. Long and slender
- 44. Looks hard
- 45. Cat breed
- 47. Utah's lily
- 49. Conveyances
- 51. Stop
- 56. Encouraging sound
- 58. Well-wisher
- 61. That is: Lat.
- 63. Study of the body: abbr.
- 64. Sand formation
- 65. Unrelaxed
- 66. Spare
- 67. Miner's passage
- 68. Goose genus
- 69. Ending for mob or young
- 70. ___ room



DOWN

- 1. Wilkes-___, PA
- 2. ___ once; suddenly
- 3. Fragrance
- 4. Crop raiser
- 5. Jai ___
- 6. Common contraction
- 7. Game of chance
- 8. Robust
- 9. Rail systems
- 10. Go back and forth
- 11. Claim against property
- 12. Dried up
- 13. Vietnamese holidays
- 20. Wipe out
- 21. Old anesthetic
- 25. Odd
- 27. O'Hara estate
- 28. Revolves
- 30. Assert
- 31. Meeting: abbr.
- 32. Oscar ___ Hoya
- 33. Smooth
- 34. Stretches
- 35. Zeal
- 37. Benefit
- 40. Point the finger at
- 44. Harbor
- 46. Roof support
- 48. Legging
- 50. Wooden pieces
- 52. Speeder's nemesis
- 53. Piano piece
- 54. ___ boom
- 55. Weight allowance
- 56. Ms. Moreno
- 57. Yemeni capital
- 59. D or E, for lke: abbr.
- 60. Solicitude
- 62. Wind direction: abbr.



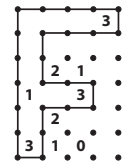
PREVIOUS ANSWERS



by The Campus League of Puzzlers

Congratulations to Shang, Eric Tzeng, and Stephanie who were the first three to submit the correct answer to last week's puzzle on our website (<http://puzzle.berkeley.edu>).

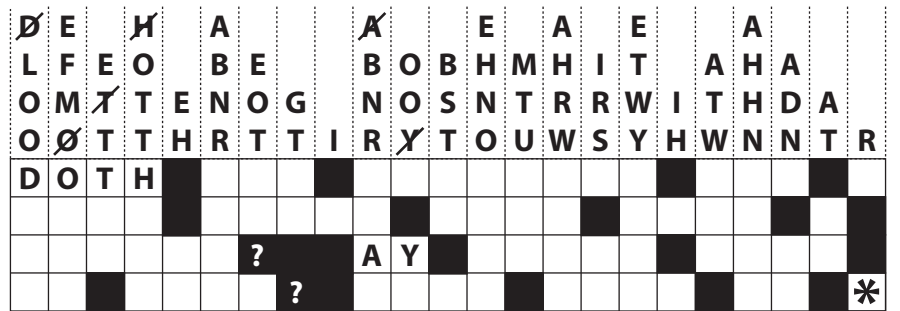
Solution to FENCES:



The solution traces out the letter F.

This week's puzzle is called a Dropquote. To solve it, fill the white boxes in each column with the letters above that column, such that the grid spells out a quotation from a famous work. Black boxes separate words. If there's no black space, words will wrap around the end of the line. We've started the puzzle for you. The box marked with an asterisk will give you your final answer, but don't fill it in like the other boxes: fill it in by completing the quote. Remember that the answer will be a single letter.

DROPQUOTE



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