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OU alum competes in World Cup

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

Few athletes are fortunate enough to win an Olympic gold medal. Former Oakland University women's soccer player Anita Rapp earned one while playing for her native Norway in the 2000 summer games in Sydney, Australia. Now the forward is pursuing another world title, this time leading Norway toward a possible championship in the **2003 Women's World Cup**.

The World Cup is presently being staged in six cities around the United States, featuring 16 teams divided into four groups. After posting a 2-1-0 record in Group B, Norway has advanced to the quarterfinals to face the United States, the reigning World Cup champion. The game will be played Wednesday, Oct. 1, at 4:30 p.m. in Foxboro, Mass. The winner will advance to the semifinals to play either Germany or Russia.

Rapp, who was a midfielder at Oakland from 1997-2001, contributed to her team's success with a goal in a 2-0 win over France on Sept. 20. Though a knee injury to captain Hege Riise has put additional pressure on Norway to generate a potent offensive attack, Rapp said she is confident her team will claim the trophy.

"We have to clear a few obstacles if we want to win the World Cup, and naturally that's our target," Rapp said in a World Cup press conference. "We're more fluid these days and we combine well as a unit. We have great confidence in our abilities as a team."

The fact that Rapp is familiar with many of the U.S. players undoubtedly adds to her confidence. After finishing her studies at Oakland, Rapp extended her soccer career when she signed with the **New York Power** in the **Women's United Soccer Association**. During the 2002 season, she played with and against nearly every member of the U.S. team. This experience could prove very useful in Wednesday's match.

In previous meetings, Norway lost to the United States in the 1991 World Cup final, but beat the Americans in the semifinals in 1995 and in the 2000 Olympics. Despite this success, Norway is still considered the underdog. The United States / Norway quarterfinal will be televised Oct. 1 at 7:25 p.m. in a taped broadcast on ESPN2.

Visit the **2003 Women's World Cup** Web site for more information, including team rosters, schedules, game stories, statistics, photos and more. For more information on Anita Rapp's soccer career at Oakland, visit the history section of **OU's Women's Soccer** Web site.

SUMMARY

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