

The Pit won't help if Ducks don't shoot

By PAUL BUKER
Of the Emerald

The steamy horror of The Pit may provide the emotional verve Oregon needs Thursday night against top-ranked UCLA. Mac Court has been sold out for weeks and the student ticket allotment of 4,000 was gobbled up by Monday afternoon.

Pandemonium may mean points on the scoreboard by virtue of intimidation. But armed guards on the Bruin basket won't help if the Ducks shoot like they did in Los Angeles a month ago.

Dick Harter's team, thrust into UCLA's own chamber of horrors—Pauley

Pavilion—for the opening game of the Pacific-8 season, had trouble finding the hoop. Trouble like 7-for-23 at halftime. Oregon's poised stall should have produced a 10-point lead. Instead the Ducks were down 18-14.

The Bruins in the first 20 minutes were held to their lowest score in history and still owned the lead.

"If we'd have shot anywhere near like we could have, we could have had a big edge at halftime," Harter said shortly after UCLA mopped up a 64-38 win.

Consider the Ducks legally blind from the floor in that one. Only 16 of 49 shots

found their mark and center Gerald Willett was completely blanked.

He remembers the night vividly.

"I went 0-for-5, and all the shots I missed were easy ones," said Oregon's 6-foot-8 freshman.

"We're just going to have to shoot better this time," said Willett before the start of practice Tuesday afternoon. "I guess everybody was just scared down there. I know I was."

From a first-year man who got his first introduction to Pac-8 basketball via Bill Walton, not surprising. But in his first encounter with Super Bill there was more

poise than apprehension. Walton got six points and it was Bruin forwards Keith Wilkes and Larry Farmer who killed the dogged Ducks.

That first meeting with UCLA was rather traumatic for Ron Lee, too. He led all Webfoot scorers in the game with 10 points and was the only man able to come close to making half his shots from the floor.

"I was really nervous out there," Lee admitted. "I'd always wanted to play UCLA and I think I was trying a little too hard. We all were."

Trying harder gave Oregon an astounding sweep of Stanford and Cal. But if you compare those two with John Wooden's Bruins you belong in a strait-jacket.

Harter's team will give it a try, like the last 66 opponents have. When they make the introductions and 10,500 fans go nuts in The Pit, all eyes will focus on the big man. And when the game begins, the center of attention will be in the middle. Walton and Willett.

Willett's getting help. The red-head can beat anybody one-on-one.

"I'll just have to front him, and as long as I have weak side help, he can't get the ball."

The last time it worked, Walton shot just six times. And it became apparent as the game wore on that the big man wasn't about to leave his post under the basket. Willett couldn't make the short jumper to force the issue. Result: Walton pulled down 13 rebounds and shut off the middle.

The philosophy is the same when the Bruins work their feared zone press. "With it," says Harter, "UCLA dares you to shoot the 15 or 16-foot jumper."

Ronnie Lee palmed a practice ball and smiled at the recollection.

"We missed a lot of easy shots. The last time Walton just let Willett shoot—I don't know if he intimidated him or not.

"But everybody's shooting the ball now. We're getting the shots when we need them."

The first thing Harter did at Tuesday's practice was drill his center on the quick jumper from around the key. Willett swished eight of 10.

Those are the shots that Walton only reluctantly will go out to cover. At least until somebody burns him or Wooden begins screaming from the bench.

"Gerald's shooting the ball now," says Lee of his teammate in the middle. "If Walton gives him those shots again, he'll kill him."

If Willett starts smoking, there's still Walton's supporting cast to worry about. The nagging fear that UCLA's second-string is ranked No. 2 by a secret wire service poll is compounded by Harter's admission of how the Bruins can be beat: "It's almost inconceivable to me," he said this week, "that a team with four or five great shooters hasn't been able to blow them out . . . obviously we don't have the four or five great shooters."

Three years ago Mac Court had those shooters, and Oregon beat UCLA 78-65. That thrashing administered by the Stan Love-Larry Holliday team is still talked about.

Comparisons between the Steve Belko team of 1970 and Harter's squad are far-fetched. Belko's team didn't believe in defense.

Harter's intense preoccupation with shutting off the other guy has brought the miracle Ducks to their unlikely position of third place in the standings with a 6-3 record.

John Wooden's philosophies sound like corny cliches, but no one approaches his success. The Bruins roll into Eugene Thursday with 66 straight victories and 38 in a row in the Pac-8.

On the road, UCLA has taken 31 straight but none of the Bruins enjoy Mac Court. Last year Walton complained about the showers, the dressing room, and had the audacity to call Harter's pride and joy "A hole." The Webfoots are unbeaten at home (9-0) and according to rumor Mac Court's floor is resurfaced after every home series. If the Bruins don't want to play floor-burn basketball, the Ducks have a chance to make it a game.

"If we play the best we can and play good defense," said Lee, "We'll do it. It'll be a good game."

Played in The Pit, Bill, not the hole.
Wednesday, February 21, 1973



WALTON GIVES INGRAM THE BASELINE JUMPER

NCWSA swim test at Leighton

Unbeaten women's team hosts meet

Sixteen teams from four states and British Columbia will compete in the Northwest College Women's Sports Association Swimming and Diving championships at the University Friday and Saturday.

The two-day meet, to be held in Leighton Pool, has attracted entries from Washington, Idaho and Montana as well as Oregon. And Oregon swimming coach Virginia Arvidson expects the University of British Columbia to offer some good competition.

Many of the Canadian Olympic swimmers attend that school, Arvidson points out, although UBC may not bring all their competitors.

Oregon goes into the championships with an impressive record of its own. Its team is undefeated in dual meets this year and has won the championship for three of the last five years. Oregon was second to the University of Washington in the northwest finals last year.

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"I think we'll do quite well," says Arvidson. She predicts, "we'll be at least in the top three, with a chance of winning."

Swimming for Oregon this year are a couple of standouts from last year's teams as well as some outstanding freshmen.

Sophomore Cindy Marks placed fifth in the three-meter diving and ninth in one-meter diving at the national competition last year. Arvidson says she expects a first-second finish for Oregon divers in this year's northwest championships: Marks first and junior Betsy Beckett, second. Beckett placed in the national diving competition.

Another sophomore, Sally Landis, is defending northwest champion in the 200 yard freestyle and finished thirteenth in the 100 yard individual medley at the nationals last year.

Marks and Landis have already earned positions in this year's national meet. Marks automatically qualifies because she

placed last year; Landis hit national qualifying times in earlier meets this year.

Several Oregon freshmen have also hit qualifying times: Marion Buvick, Debbie Lee and Ellen Schrier. These three women, with Gloria Nixon, are all members of the freestyle relay team which has also qualified.

Swimmers and divers who have not yet met the qualifying times or scores will have a final chance to do so at this weekend's meet. This year's national competition is in Moscow, Idaho March 15-17.

Admission to all the northwest championship events is free. Preliminary competition begins at 2 p.m. Friday and finals in those events begin Friday afternoon will be at 8 p.m. that night. More preliminary competition runs Saturday at 9 a.m. and the meet concludes with finals at 2 p.m. Saturday.