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Oregon State coach Ralph Miller has been through a lot of close wins in Corvallis' Gill Coliseum...

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...but Oregon mentor Dick Harter would like it fine if the Ducks come up with their fourth straight victory over the Beavers Saturday afternoon.

It's do-or-die for OSU as Ducks pay visit

By JEFF NIELSON
Emerald Sports Editor

This may be a slow week for Pacific-8 basketball officials in Walnut Creek, Calif. After all, the lone scheduled conference game is that rivalry in Corvallis.

But to the two teams involved, it's Civil War time again as Oregon visits Oregon State for a 4 p.m. battle that will be broadcast on the regional NBC-TVS network for those who can't get tickets to the sellout.

The Ducks are in a four-way tie for first place with a 4-1 Pac-8 record; the Beavers are alone in fifth at 2-2. But the outcome of the game will mean a lot more than just numbers in the win-loss column.

Ducks whip N. Mexico

Oregon's men gymnasts increased their season undefeated record to eight meets Thursday night in Albuquerque, N.M., with a 211.85 to 208.55 victory over the University of New Mexico.

Women face SOC, AAU

Coming off a big win over Oregon State, the Oregon women's basketball team will try to extend its winning streak this weekend as the Ducks play a pair of games. Saturday will find Coach Elwin Heiny's club in Ashland for a confrontation with Southern Oregon College, then the Ducks will come back Sunday to friendly McArthur Court where they will host Dr. Bernards, an AAU team from Portland.

In each of the games, the Ducks will be trying to regain the form they exhibited in the second half of Wednesday's come-from-behind 57-55 win over the Beavers at Mac Court.

"The comeback shows that the team is starting to play as a team," she said. We'll be stronger as the team plays more and more as a team."

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OSU head coach Ralph Miller knows that as well as anyone, for his hot-and-cold Beavers stand to drop out of title contention with another loss.

"Our most important game? Certainly," said Miller in his Gill Coliseum office following the Beavers' Wednesday practice. "With two losses, you're still in the race in this league. With three, maybe. There's more closeness this year between teams than in the last several seasons."

The biggest problem for Oregon State has been playing with consistency. With a nucleus of three seniors, guards Rocky Smith (6-2) and George Tucker (6-4) and forward Don Smith (6-7), the Beav-

ers were supposed to come on strong. But all three of their centers are freshmen, and Miller said, "they sometimes make mistakes."

That doesn't mean, however, that all is bad. The Beaver boss has seen some good things from Steve Johnson, the 6-10 rookie who will most likely start Saturday. "Johnson has had some good games, some bad ones and some that were middle-of-the-road," remarked Miller. "That's not very unusual for a freshman ball-player."

The Ducks will probably counter with sophomore Kelvin Small, whose jumping ability goes far beyond his 6-8½ height. According to Oregon coach Dick Harter, Small has been playing "with intensity" lately.

Providing the defense for Oregon on Rocky Smith, who has been leading OSU with a 18.9 per-game scoring average, and guard Tucker will most likely be Mike Drummond, who is leading the league in field goal accuracy (69 per cent) and sophomore Rob Closs. Greg Ballard and Ernie Kent will start at forwards.

Oregon is also hoping that injured forward Joe Moreck will be available for more playing time this week.

But whatever the lineups, the game promises to be intense. The

Tempe, Ariz., to take on the Arizona State Sundevils. Last year ASU was rated first in the nation until Oregon upset it to gain the top ranking.

For the first time this season, the Ducks failed to win the all-around competition. Steve Ortiz of New Mexico scored 53.10 points to lead the all-around while Oregon placed the next four in Miki Moyal with 52.15, Breck Grigas with 51.15, Gene Christensen with 50.55 and Scott Phillips with 48.30.

Moyal was the individual winner in the vault for the Ducks with a 9.3 score. Scott McEldowney won the rings competition with a 9.4, and Tom Truedson tied with a New Mexico gymnast for first in the pommel horse with 9.25.

Saturday night the team will complete its three-night, three-meet away stand when it takes on Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.

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Ducks won both Pac-8 meetings last year, but it took a 10-foot turn-around jumper by Ron Lee to ice the victory in Corvallis, 57-56. And although the bitter interstate rivalry died down when the Chancellor's Trophy (annually awarded to the winner of the OSU-Oregon year basketball series), was dropped two years ago, the outcome still means a lot to alumni, students and many native Oregonians.

Miller knows all about Harter's motion.

"They're operating a much more deliberate offense than we are," said the Beaver coach. "We know what they're going to do, and I hope we just don't start bombing the basket unless we're hitting."

The NBC-TVS broadcast can be seen on Eugene's KVAL

(channel 13) or Portland's KGW (channel 8). KUGN (590) will start radio coverage at 3:45 p.m.

OTC hosting run on Sunday

Runners and joggers will have a choice of four distances at the Oregon Track Club Fun Run on Sunday at 1:30 at Alton Baker Park.

Runs of 2, 4, 10 and 16 miles will start simultaneously at the park, next to the Ferry Street Bridge. Each run will be completed in the park where times will be read aloud as each runner finishes.

No entry fee will be charged, and no prizes will be awarded. For more information, call 344-0498.

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