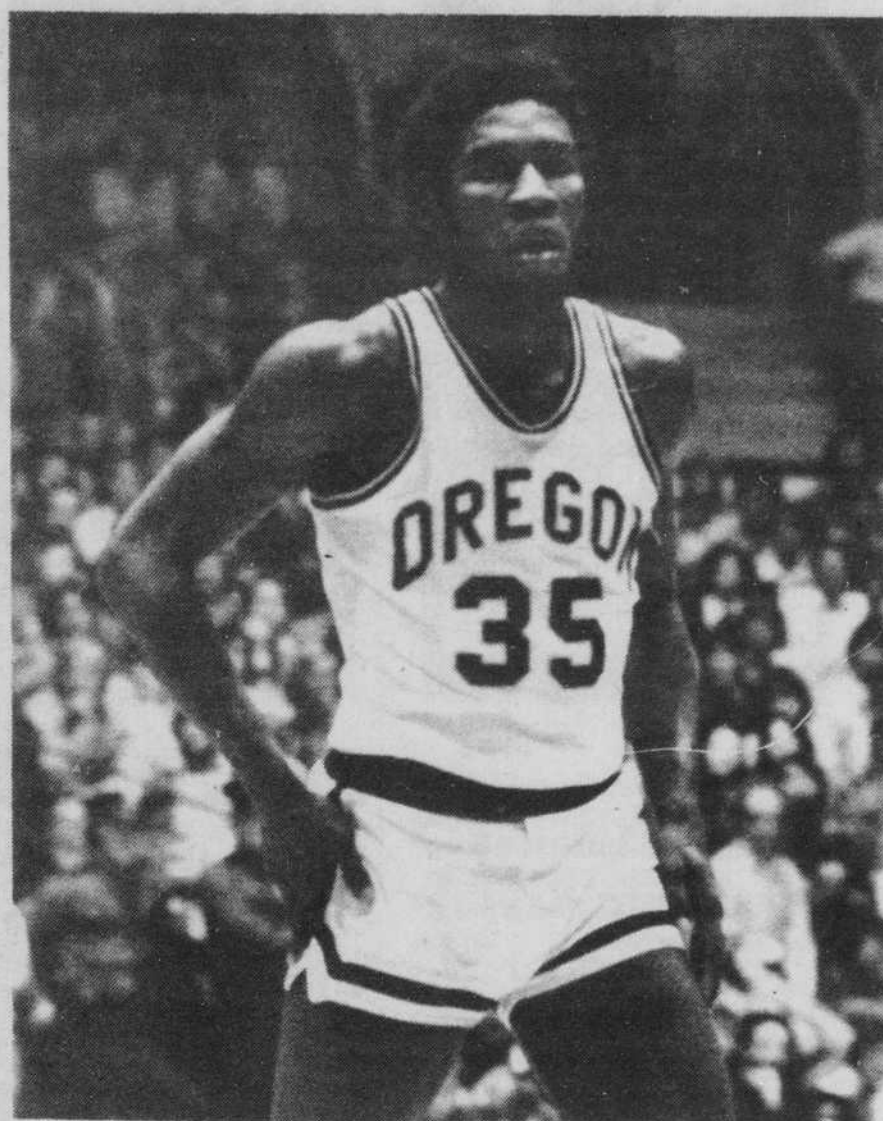


men's basketball



The looks on the faces of the people on the Oregon bench during the national anthem were about as serene as they got during the UCLA game. Coach Dick Harter hopes that people like Felton Sealey will prevent in the future what happened to the Ducks last Saturday when they were thrashed, 83-57.



Frustrating year has had bright spots

With one game remaining against Oregon State on Thursday, it might be a little premature to look at what the future holds for Oregon basketball.

But then again it's the future that looms all-important for a team that knows it'll be playing its last game of the year with the regular season finale. This marks the first time in four years the Ducks won't be playing in a post-season tourney and nothing would please Oregon head coach Dick Harter more than to know it's the last.

Perhaps the biggest benefit from an otherwise frustrating season would be the strong showing of all five freshmen. Harter has said Phil Barner, Felton Sealey, Rich Davis, Stu Lyon and Mike Clark are the best bunch of freshmen he'd ever brought to Oregon. If that statement is hard to swallow now, wait until 1981. It won't be then.

The biggest and only loss from this year's version of the "Kamikaze Kids" will be Mike Drummond. While the 5-8 senior doesn't have the size or stats to have professional scouts knocking on the door, Harter feels that people will definitely notice his departure.

"Michael is a very valuable team player," said Harter. "He makes everyone look better. It's a shame that there wasn't enough help to make him look better this

year. He plays better in a non-leading role, but this year he was kind of forced into a leading role."

With Drummond's absence, it looks like the Ducks will be minus the one man who you can always depend on to bring the ball up the floor in times of trouble. Before the quickness and cunning of Drummond there was the strength and speed of Ronnie Lee to get that job done. But if Harter is losing any sleep over the thought, he hides it well.

"Really it shouldn't be too big of a problem," said Harter. "I think Robbie Closs can handle the ball just as well as Drummond and Lee did for us."

Still the Ducks look like they could use a ball-handling guard, being blessed already with a number of good shooters at that position. And while Harter indicated he'll be going predominantly for big men in this year's crop of high school seniors, he also

stated that he's after a little man who can hang on to the basketball.

"We can get five people with the scholarships we have open," Harter said. "And we'll probably use all of them."

The question arises concerning how much trouble the Ducks might have luring some blue-

Story by
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Photos by
STEVE SCHNEIDER

chippers to the Eugene area next year. After all, this year's freshmen played such a predominant role and appear to have the stronghold on Oregon's future. You'd think a high school All-American would be worried about his chances of playing his first year, but Harter sees it differently.

"I think anyone who watches us play knows and realizes that we

need and use more than just five guys," he said.

Harter indicated he and his staff are actively recruiting where they usually do. Which means find a map of the U.S., cut out the states of Oregon and Washington along with your uncle's farm in Idaho, and you'll know what's left has more likely than not been stepped on by an Oregon assistant coach.

"There's really nobody to look at in Oregon or Washington this year," said Harter, "and that's really too bad."

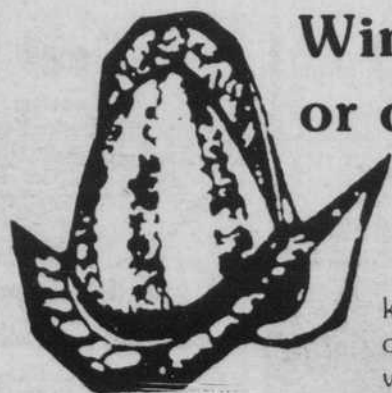
If the Ducks are able to sign the big men as Harter plans to, the 1978-79 Oregon basketball program will be interesting to watch. Besides the three freshmen previously mentioned who have played inside with success this year — Sealey, Davis and Clark — Oregon has also relied heavily on Dan Hartshorne and Kelvin Small, both of whom will be looking to become the Duck's

dominating force on the boards next year.

If Harter does opt to use all five open scholarships for next season, it could cause problems when it comes to time to pick from a flock of 16 for a traveling squad of 12. But then again, he'd rather face that than the headache of injuries and other circumstances cutting an already depleted number of bodies to the number zero.

The rule allowing freshmen to play at the varsity level has made a major change according to Harter; a change in recruiting as well as the actual playing of college basketball.

"You're never going to get a good recruit to play on a J.V. team now-a-days," said Harter when asked about his return to using the J.V.'s as a farm system. "No one is using the J.V. program for their recruits now. Guys are too spoiled for that now," he said with a smile.



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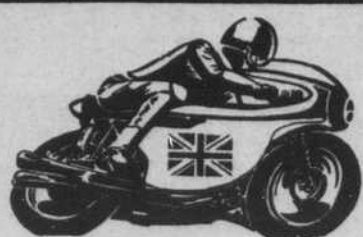
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