

# sports

## Oregon falls in exhibition

Athletes in Action give Ducks 80-67 loss at Mac

By DONALD COULTER  
Of the Emerald

Oregon played a great first half of basketball against Athletes in Action Wednesday night.

But, alas, it takes 40 minutes of concentration to beat experienced teams, something the Ducks failed to do in their 80-67 exhibition loss before a Mac Court crowd of 4,925.

"The second half was like night and day compared to the first," Oregon head coach Jim Haney lamented after the game. "We lost our mental toughness and became careless on offense. It was discouraging."

The highlights for Oregon in the game were almost all in the first half. Despite shooting only 42 percent from the floor, the Ducks played strong man-to-man defense in what had to be their finest half of basketball this season.

Oregon's defense forced Athletes in Action (AIA) to turn the ball over 14 times in the first

half, while the Ducks tied a taller AIA team in the rebounding department (19 each). Besides an inability to box out effectively on the offensive boards, the Ducks showed patience in their half-court offense, and kept the score close throughout the half.

With the score tied at 27-27 with 37 seconds to go, David Brantley made two quick hoops — the first on a fast break pass from Fred Cofield, the next on a soft 10-foot jumper in the key — and the Ducks took a 31-27 halftime lead.

"I felt we did good things defensively," Haney said of the first half, "... and we were able to get the ball inside. But then we got hurt in our first ten possessions of the second half."

"If we had them concerned at halftime, we sure invited them back into the game at the beginning of the second half."

The Ducks certainly did. Oregon turned the ball over four times in the first six minutes and Athletes in Action kept the

Ducks off the offensive boards. Meanwhile, AIA hit its first three shots from the field and seven of its first nine to go up by seven, 45-38.

After Haney called a timeout with 12:43 remaining, the Ducks scored their first field goal in four minutes on a John Greig lay in, and moments later pulled the score to 45-44 on a driving lay up by Rodnie Taylor. Taylor's basket came off an excellent pass from Barry Walker, who had driven the ball the length of the court through three AIA defenders.

But Oregon could get no closer for the rest of the game. Athletes in Action forced the Ducks to lose their poise on offense and take hurried shots, while taking advantage themselves of 21 of 25 free throw attempts in the second half to pull away from Oregon.

"We stood around, offensively, in the second half," Haney said. "We became selfish on offense and didn't move the ball well."

Despite outrebounding Athletes in Action 42-40, the Ducks turned the ball over 19 times. As a team, Oregon shot 38 percent from the field, while AIA shot 52 percent. Most amazing of all, AIA blocked 14 Oregon shots, twice as many as Oregon opponents combined for in the first three games of the season.

For the game, which will not count on Oregon's records for the season, Jerome Williams was once again the high scorer for the Ducks with 13 points. Gary Gatewood added 11 for Oregon, and David Brantley had 9. John Greig and Fred Cofield finished with 8 points each.

Athletes in Action had three players with 16 points each: Dave Johnson, Gig Sims and Steve Botranger. The game marks the fifth consecutive year that AIA has defeated the Ducks at Mac Court.

Tonight, the Rhode Island Rams come to Mac Court (7:30) in a game rescheduled from Monday night. Rhode Island enters the game with the same record as Oregon, 2-1. The Rams lost their most recent game to Old Dominion last Saturday.

"I'm just glad we didn't play this way in the second half against Rhode Island," Haney said after last night's loss. "Maybe playing better teams will force us to play at a higher level."

"My biggest concern now," Haney continued, trying in vain not to sound like a broken record this season, "is that we learn how to sustain an effort for 40 minutes rather than 20."

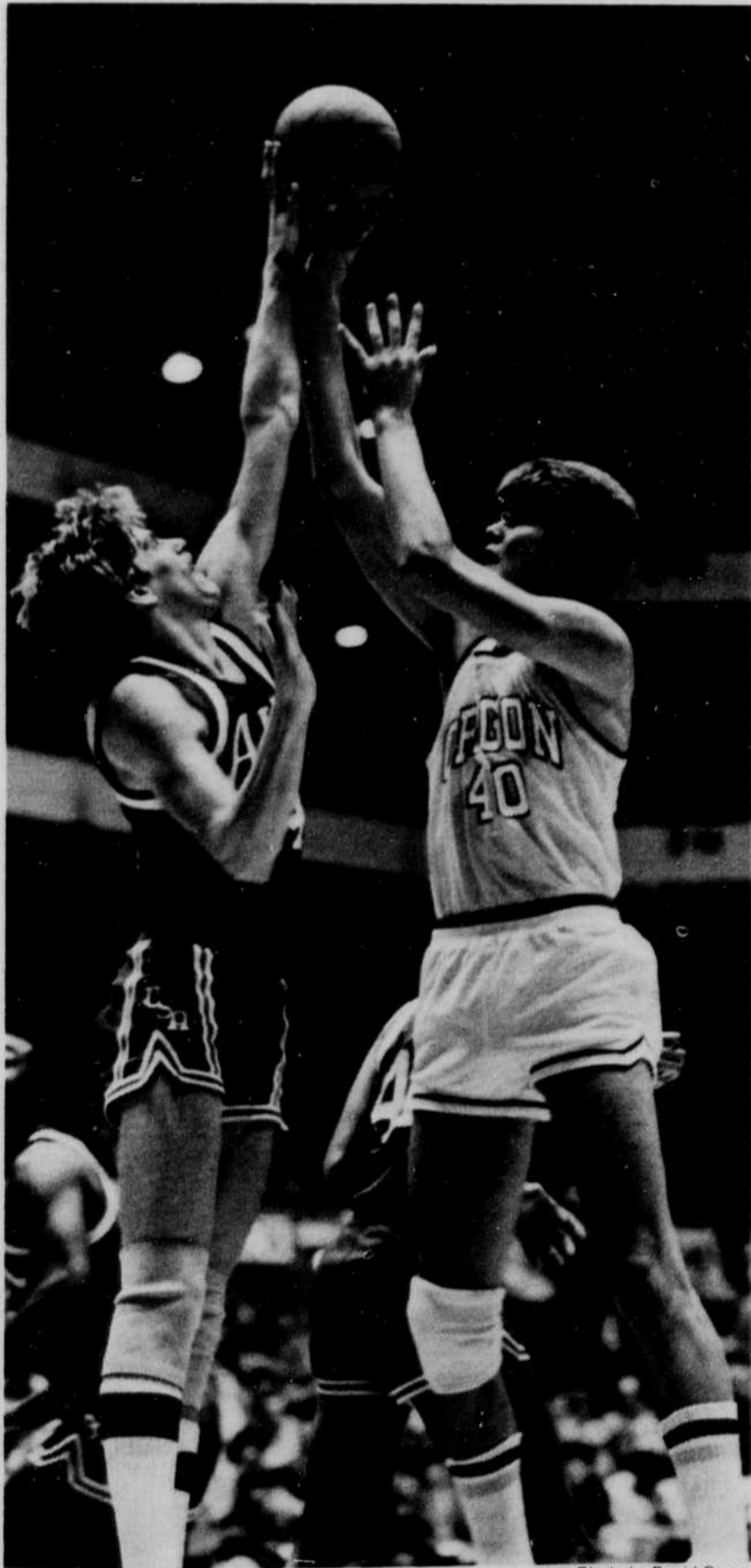


Photo by David Corey

Oregon center Blair Rasmussen has shot blocked by Gig Sims of Athletes in Action. AIA blocked an incredible 14 shots in the game at McArthur Court Wednesday night. The Ducks take on Rhode Island tonight at 7:30.

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