

All-American, All-World—All-person

After four years of enjoying Bev Smith, the era must end

*Has she no faults then, Sir?
Yes, she has one, I must aver;
When all the world conspires to praise her,
The woman's deaf, and does not hear*

— Alexander Pope, *On a Certain Lady at Court*

All-conference. All-America. All-world. Bev Smith has accomplished more in the last four years than most athletes accomplish in a lifetime, but the effect on the psyche of the 21-year-old Oregon women's basketball star may not be what you would expect.

She hasn't had a dunk named after her, nor does the word, "World" shimmer on a gold chain around her neck. In fact, Smith's trophies are "gathering dust" on top of the piano in her Salmon Arm, British Columbia home.

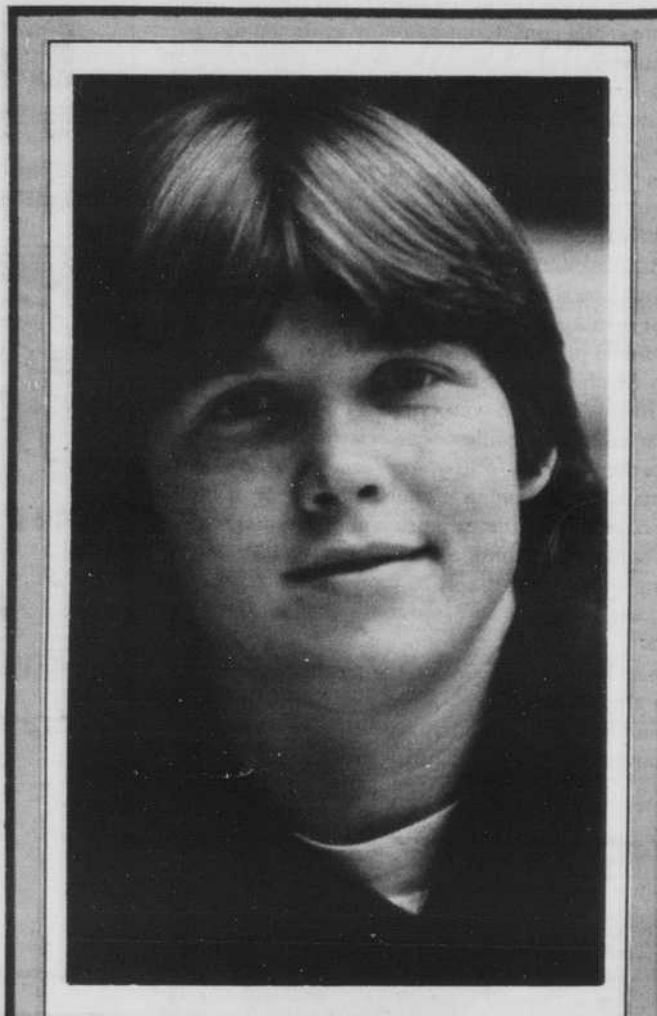
Smith is the Oregon career record-holder in scoring and rebounding, she has been a starter for the Canadian National Team since 1978 and has toured the world to play in the World Championships, World Student Games, Pan American Games and the Olympic Qualifying Tournament.

In 1981, she was named to the Kodak All-American team, nominated for the Wade Trophy (awarded to the top collegiate women's basketball player in the United States) and was the co-most valuable player of the Giusti Tournament with Anne Donovan of Old Dominion. This season, she took the Giusti MVP award again and is again a contender for the Wade Trophy.

Plainly, Smith is the name associated with Oregon women's basketball. But in her final season, while most outstanding basketball players are piling up their statistics hoping for all the accolades possible and a shot at making it in the pros, Smith isn't all that interested in making brownie points with national committees.

Realizing that putting out a maximum effort to add to her stats would increase her chances at national recognition, Smith says she would not feel right sacrificing her role with the team for her individual goals.

"It would be easier for me," the 6-1 strawberry blonde says "if I would score 30 points a night, but with the type of team we have, I don't think that is possible. We have a good inside game with Alison Lang, and to go and score 30 points against a team like Portland State wouldn't make me feel good, nor would it make any of my teammates feel good."



I will always remember what a stimulating place Mac Court can be.

"My prime motivation in playing basketball is to excel in something," she says. Whether she obtains the recognition for what she does just doesn't have the same impact for her as it does for others.

Recently, Smith denied *Sports Illustrated* an interview, because she dates one of that magazine's writers, Kenny Moore. She indicated that her decision had nothing to do with trying to suppress her accomplishments.

"I can't say it's not a big deal (an interview with a prestigious national magazine)," she says. "We all tend to have somewhat of an ego — we like to have the recognition — but the question is if it's right. I'm not sure that it is."

Some may not think that should stop one of the best athletes ever to grace the hardwoods at McArthur Court, but recognition has never been an overriding factor in her life.

"That's the type of person she has always been," says Lloyd Smith, Bev's father. "We see her play some when she comes home. She played in a homecoming game, but she slacked off and passed the ball — she's not out there to prove, I'm Bev Smith."

Her father, a semi-pro hockey player, says his daughter has excelled in just about everything she has tried, including hockey, but that modesty has always gone hand-in-hand with her success.

"She skated when she came home, and I could see she hadn't lost a thing (from her hockey skills). Some of the guys on the team said I should ask Bev to come out and play for us. But she wouldn't be for that. She likes to keep low-keyed."

Low-keyed — yes. Disinterested — definitely not! "She's a sincere and dedicated person; always has been," her father says. "She has always looked out for the little fella — those less fortunate than herself. That's what makes her the kind of person she is."

Her coach agrees. "Her impact off the court is just as great as it is on the court," Heiny says. "She makes a positive contribution to the community at large. She attends ESP (Eugene Sports Program for area youths) games and talks to little kids — all on her own time."

After home games Bev Smith can be found somewhere within the confines of Mac Court signing autographs for children who thrive on the personality of the all-American.

She says she spends the time with the children because she knows how young people try to emulate athletes of whom they are particularly fond.

"When I was younger, I had some idols that played very strong goals in my life that helped me set my goals," Smith says. "They led by example and I thought they were good examples to follow, and so I think it's really important, as a role model, that you display the type of personality that the kids might want to have."

"There are so many other things influencing them in school and sometimes in their families that could take them down another road."

So, she spends the time with the children signing

autographs, but even more important, she says, she spends time just talking with them. She used to spend a lot of time trying to make her autograph more legible for the kids, but now, she says, that may not be so important.

"Now, I think kids want the autograph more for the pleasure of the moment . . . I don't think they do much with it later."

The autographs, home-court crowds that cherish their team and their players, the rhythmic beat produced by a berserk crowd that has just watched Bev fake right and go left to the hoop — all will cease for Smith at Oregon at the end of this season.

"I will always remember what a stimulating place Mac Court can be," Smith says. "The people that come in and watch our games are special. It's a lot different playing in front of these people than anywhere in the country."

Oregon fans will remember Smith for her athletic ability and the way she can bring them to their feet. But they will also remember her as the single most dominating force that put Oregon on the map in women's collegiate basketball from the first day she put on No. 24.

"It's hard for me to put my finger on what I will remember most about her, because she has done so much," Heiny says. "Her attitude toward the game has been such that players know that if you don't put out you're going to get blasted. Players know that if they're going to play her they better be fit — I think the entire Northwest League has benefitted from her play."

Heiny says former Oregon baseball coach Mel Krause watched her outstanding performance in a 68-67 defeat of the Korean National team in 1979, and said it was the finest athletic performance by an individual he had ever witnessed.

"But for me —" Heiny says, "hey, I see it every day. "When she first came here as a freshman, she played so well that we were concerned about her improving, but she has. If it means playing against the guys, or whatever, she does what it takes to improve. Her mental game and her individual skills have both improved this year."

Even from the start, Heiny says, Smith came on like a seasoned veteran — "Like a senior when she was a freshman." But Smith says that since joining the Ducks, she has become a more complete player.

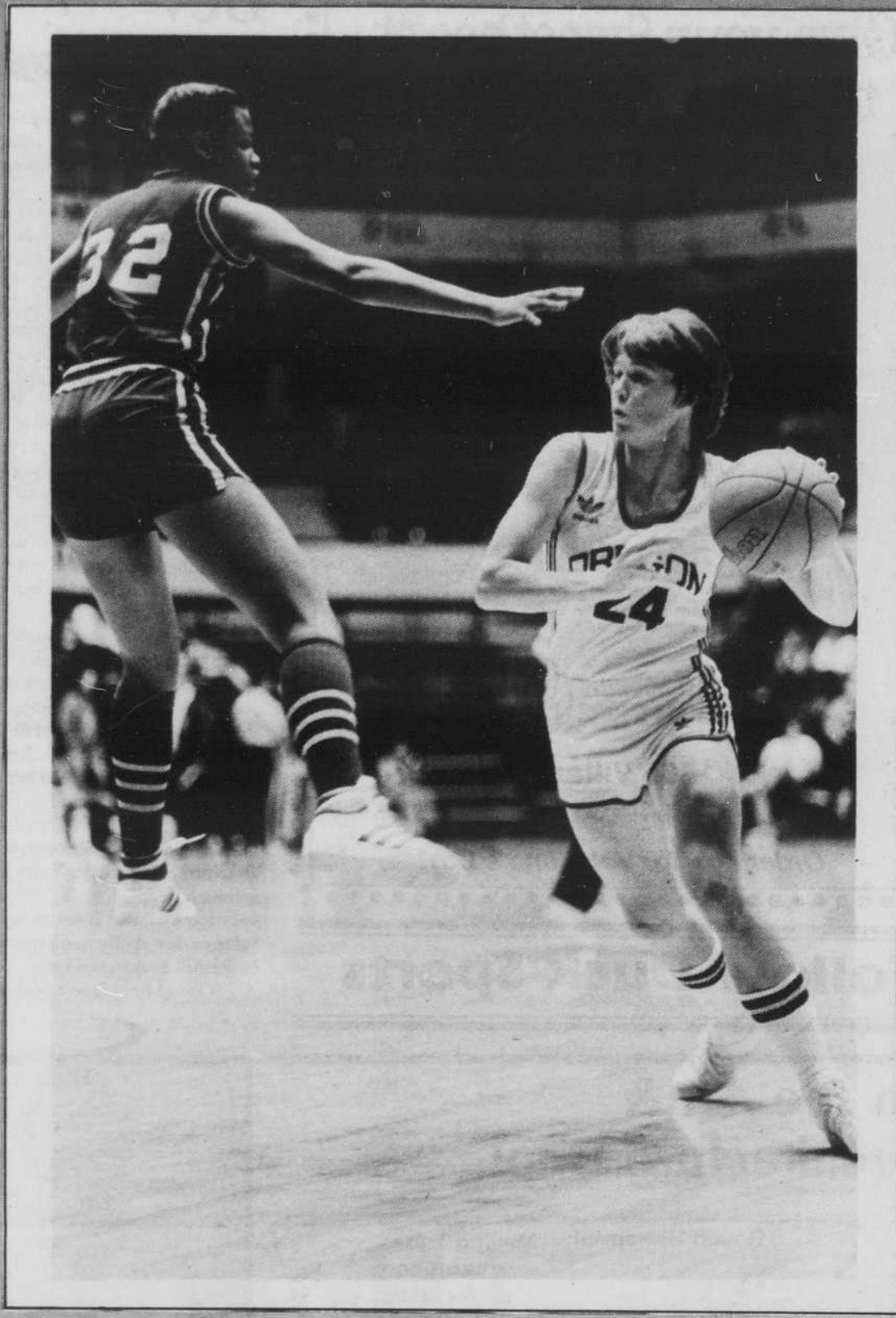
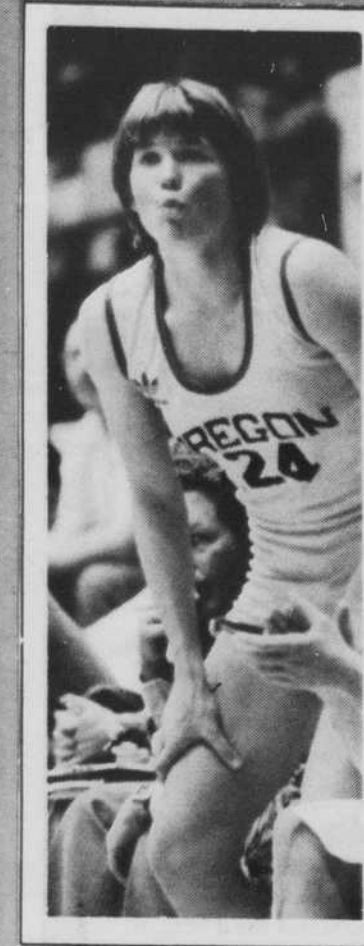
"I don't know if I'm that much stronger, physically, than I was when I first came to Oregon, but my overall offensive ability has improved," she says. "I'm a better shooter now, although I'm still not much of a pure shooter — I still have to work at it."

Work is something Bev Smith has rarely ceased to do in her tenure at Oregon. Her coaches and teammates have grown accustomed to her demanding style that pressures not only herself to perform, but everyone else as well.

Yet things have begun to change for Smith, who says there is more to life than just putting the ball through the ring.

"I've slowed myself down a lot, and I'm not as concerned

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When I get down I just think how lucky I am to be doing what I'm doing.

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extermination.
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and his henchmen would do well to welcome Danilo Dolci, to
ponder his words, to take a measure of hope. Haig, all
appearances notwithstanding, is not god. He can only play
god, and the performance is a dismal one. But Dolci plays
human, and in an open season on humans we had best take
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