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Ducks battle the best at Alaska

By Brent De La Paz

Of the Emerald

Basketball, Alaskan style, will be on the agenda for the Oregon men's team this weekend as they travel to the land of ice and snow for the Great Alaska Shootout Nov. 23-25 at Sullivan Arena.

The Shootout, based in Anchorage, has been rated as one of the best holiday tournaments of its kind. The Alaska Shootout's eight-team field boasts some of the best teams in the nation, including the University of Illinois, ranked No. 2 in the Associated Press Top-Twenty Poll. Four of the teams played in last year's NCAA playoffs while two others have National Invitation Tournament experience.

"I don't know how we'll do?" says Oregon coach Don Monson, who opens the official regular season after an exhibition victory over the University of Victoria, 81-52 at McArthur Court Nov. 9. "Hopefully we will be representative and play well."

Oregon's chances of winning the tournament will rest on the shoulders of co-captains, center Blair Rasmussen and guard Chris Harper. Both will need to play key roles, if the Ducks hope to find themselves playing for the championship Sunday at 4 p.m. PST.

"I think we are going in prepared to play up to our potential," says Harper, who scored a game-high 19 points against the Vikings of Victoria. "We have to play as well as we can to get by everybody. I think that (the high-ranked teams) should motivate us to play our best."

Rasmussen, who pumped in 18 points and pulled down 11 rebounds against Victoria, knows the competition will be a test for the Ducks, who received some votes in the top-twenty rankings.

"I think we are ready, but we won't know until the actual game situations," says Rasmussen of the competition that has two top-twenty teams among its ranks.

Besides Illinois, the tournament includes the 19th-ranked University of Kansas Jayhawks. The Fighting Illini, 1-0, are in the upper bracket of competition while Kansas is paired with Oregon in the lower bracket. The upper bracket consists of Illinois, Idaho State University, the University of Alabama-Birmingham coached by Gene Bartow and the University of Tennessee.

Before Oregon sets its thoughts on a possible meeting with Illinois, Monson's team must get past first-round opponent and host, the University of Alaska, Anchorage. The Seawolves are 2-0 after back-to-back wins against San Francisco State University last weekend. Alaska's offense is triggered by 6-1 senior guard Ron Beach and 6-9 sophomore Hans-Jurgen Gnad.

If Oregon gets past Alaska in the first round,



Photo by Kirk Hirota

Center Blair Rasmussen (40) will play a key role in the Ducks' chances for a shot at the championship of the Great Alaska Shootout this weekend.

they meet the winner of the University of Maryland-Kansas contest Saturday at 5 p.m. PST.

Monson thinks Kansas coached by Larry Brown will "probably" win the matchup against coach Lefty Driesell's Maryland Terrapins. Kansas, 22-10 last year, has a pair of twin towers on the baseline which could present problems for Oregon under the the basket.

"We will be at a disadvantage," says Monson of the Kansas height which features 7-foot-1 center Greg Dreiling and highly recruited 6-11 freshman forward-center Danny Manning.

Providing Oregon advances to the championship round, the team they most likely will face is Illinois at 4 p.m. PST on Sunday. The Fighting Illini, 26-5 last season, have three returning starters, including 6-9 center George Montgomery. Illinois completely dismantled fifth-ranked University of Oklahoma and Wayman Tisdale, 81-64 in the Hall of Fame Tip-Off Classic Sunday in Springfield, Mass.

The Great Alaska Shootout is being covered by Metrosports television network. KEZI TV Channel 9 may televise Oregon's final game in the tournament on Sunday.

Staff

Sidelines is the Emerald's weekly sports supplement published each Wednesday except during exam weeks and vacation.

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Projections

Editor's note — Pac-10 Projections has been a weekly scorecard of Emerald sportswriters attempts to pick each week's winners in the Pac-10 race. The following is the final results for the 1984 season.

Final Game Scores:
•Oregon, 31; Oregon State, 6;
•UCLA, 29; USC, 10;

•Washington, 38; Washington State, 29;
•Stanford, 27; California, 10
•Arizona State, 45; Colorado State, 14;

Emerald Sportswriters Final Scores:

•Editor Brent De La Paz, (25-5-1)
•Rob Collias, (23-7-1)
•Al Lazo, (17-13-1)
•Jesse Burkhardt, (16-14-1)

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