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# Women cagers face conference leaders

By Capi Lynn  
 Of the Emerald

The Oregon women's basketball team begins its most important weekend of NorPac Conference play tonight when it hosts Washington State University at 7:30 p.m. at McArthur Court. The Ducks then host the conference-leading University of Washington Huskies Saturday at 6 p.m. in a showdown for the NorPac's automatic berth to the NCAA tournament.

When the Ducks, 18-6 overall and 7-1 in the NorPac, traveled to the state of Washington, they squeaked past WSU in 68-67 in overtime, but lost 69-68 to the Huskies in a tough overtime battle.

"We know the teams (WSU and Washington), and we know how they play," Oregon coach Elwin Heiny says. "Each player individually wants to show that we are a better team than what we showed last time."

Heiny is hoping that home court advantage comes into play this weekend, as his team boasts a perfect 9-0 record in games played at McArthur Court this season.

"I definitely feel we play better at home," Heiny says. The coach considers his team almost 20 points better playing at McArthur Court.

Despite Oregon's domination of its opponents within the friendly confines of McArthur Court, Heiny isn't about to overlook either of the Washington schools.

"It is important for us to realize that both teams can beat us," Heiny said. "It is going to be difficult to play WSU the night before, knowing that the Washington game is so important."

The Ducks will, however, be without the services of spunky 5-foot-4 guard Carol Drouet. Drouet sustained a tear of the anterior cruciate ligament of her left knee near the end of the San Jose State University game Feb. 14.

Drouet's injury is almost identical to the one suffered by Kenny Sprague of the Oregon men's team and will sideline her from action for six to nine months.

"Drouet's injury is a definite loss for us and will have an effect on the team for sure," Heiny says. "She gave us an added spark and got us going a lot of times. She was clearly our most aggressive player and probably the quickest."

Drouet played in all 23 games this season, starting in 10 and averaging 5.5 points per contest. But Drouet's true value to the team was as a floor leader and a fiesty defensive player in the Ducks' full-court press. She was third on the team in assists with 83 and fourth in steals with 28.

Heiny was looking forward to pressing both teams this weekend, but with Drouet's absence he now is unsure.

The Cougars, 9-13 overall and 2-4 in the conference, are led by forward Marcia Miles and guard Pat Broaden. Miles, the NorPac's top scorer, is averaging 17.3 points per game, while Broaden is averaging an even 13 points per contest. Both players are deadly perimeter shooters, Heiny says.

The conference-leading Huskies, 19-3 for the season and 7-0 in the NorPac, are led by Yvette Cole, who comes off the bench to lead the team in scoring with 11.8 points per game.

Washington is presently enjoying a nine-game winning streak and has won 21-straight conference games. Its last loss was to Oregon in the 1984 NorPac Tourney.

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