

Lady Ducks play in tourney, expect to halt losing streak

By Dennis Fernandes
Of the Emerald

The Oregon women's basketball team finally gets the opportunity to pick on someone its own size this weekend after two consecutive losses to teams ranked among the nation's top 20.

Coach Elwin Heiny will be lacking in size, however, as his team heads up to the four-team Bulldog Invitational at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash. Starting center Gabi Neumann has chicken pox and will not make the trip to Spokane.

Heiny will replace the 6-foot-5 senior with either forward Shelly Ray or 6-foot-7 Stefanie Kasperski. Ray, the 5-foot-11 forward, started the first two games before being replaced by Kris Glidden.

With the loss of Neumann,

the Ducks will be without the Pacific-10 Conference leader in blocked shots (seven in two games). She is also fourth in rebounding with 10 boards a contest and eighth in scoring at a 17-point average.

Neumann has carried the Ducks the past two games, cashing in for 18 points and 10 rebounds against Texas Tech and 24 points, 12 rebounds against Long Beach State University.

Oregon will open the tournament against University of Idaho, last year's 26-5 National Invitational Tournament champion. However, the Vandals have lost all five starters from that team and stand at 2-3 in this young season.

The Ducks may be looking for a little revenge in this one after losing the two previous

meetings to Idaho, including a 73-55 pounding in last year's Idaho Tournament finals.

Other tournament participants are Gonzaga (1-2) and Concordia College (3-2).

Heiny may be worried more about his team's shooting percentage than about the Vandals. The Ducks' execution in finding the hoop the last two games stands at less than 38 percent, and their 40.8 percentage for the season is good for last in the conference.

Leading scorer Lauri Landerholm (18.0), bothered by the flu bug last week, will probably improve on her stats after only hitting for 35 percent the last two games. Sheila Sattiewhite stands as the best shooting starter at a 50 percent clip, while averaging 12 points a game.

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