

Men go on the road for LA tilts

Face fine UCLA, bad USC teams

By Ashley Conklin
Emerald Sports Reporter

Sporting a modest two-game win streak, Oregon travels to the Los Angeles area for a pair of Pacific-10 Conference basketball games.

The Ducks (4-3 in the Pac-10, 9-7 overall) meet UCLA Thursday night and then face Southern California Saturday afternoon. The two games couldn't offer a bigger contrast, as UCLA is just a half game behind Oregon State in the Pac-10 race while USC is in the conference cellar.

The Bruins, 6-1 in the Pac-10 and 11-3 overall, are ranked No. 23 in the country. In his second season, UCLA coach Jim Harrick is used to the pressure associated with the UCLA job.

"Because of the past, I think people expect you to win more than anything," Harrick said. "That's the biggest problem here, but we're just trying to challenge for the conference title and it's nice to be contending for it."

The Bruins have looked very good this season, winning all eight of their games at Pauley Pavilion. The only Bruin defeats have come at Notre Dame, Louisville and Stanford.

Leading the way for UCLA have been forwards Trevor Wilson and Don MacLean, considered by many to be one of the best pair of forwards in the nation.

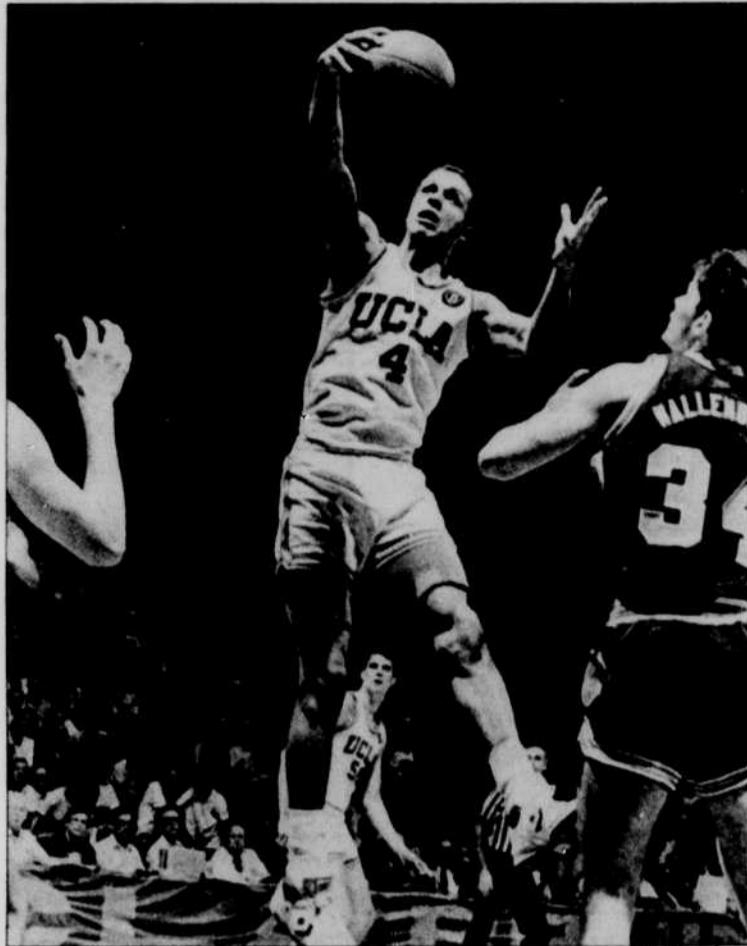
Wilson, a 6-foot-8 senior, is leading the Pac-10 in rebounding (9.1 boards a game) for the third straight season and is a two-time all-conference selection. He is also second on the team in scoring at 19.5 points per game.

The 6-foot-10 MacLean, a sophomore and last year's Pac-10 freshman of the year, pops in an average 20.0 points a contest to lead the Bruins and also snags 7.5 rebounds per game.

"They're the backbone of our team," Harrick said. "They're hard to match-up with."

"One is 6-8 and quick," he added, "and the other is 6-10 and can shoot inside and outside."

The Bruins meet Oregon State on Saturday with first place at stake in the conference. A sweep of the Oregon schools would put UCLA in



The Ducks will have to find a way to negate UCLA's Trevor Wilson, who combines with sophomore Don MacLean for nearly 40 points and 17 rebounds per game.

first place, but a loss to the Beavers would give Oregon State a two-game lead.

And while it might be easy for the Bruins to look past the Ducks toward the Oregon State game, Harrick said that won't happen.

"I really like Oregon's chances," he said. "They shoot the ball real well and have some real athletes who are solid."

On Saturday the Ducks meet USC, a team they've had good success against in the past. Oregon has won the last six meetings between the two schools.

Last season, USC was 2-16 in the Pac-10, finishing in last place, and were 10-22 overall. This season coach George Raveling has led a younger team to a 1-6 conference mark and an overall record of 6-8.

Although injuries and the loss of Anthony Pendleton to academic deficiency have forced Raveling to go with a younger lineup, he likes what he has in store for the future.

"I don't think there's any question we're a better team this year," Raveling said. "I think our future is very

bright."

One of the big reasons for Raveling's optimism has been the play of freshman guard Harold Miner who leads the Trojans in scoring at 17.9 points per game.

"I think that one, when you bring in a super athlete, who at 6-5 has good size for a guard, that helps make us a better basketball team right away," Raveling said. "Then when someone has such unique offensive skills, that makes them even tougher."

Oregon coach Don Monson and Raveling are old foes and Raveling likes the job Monson has done with this year's Oregon team.

"I think Don has done an excellent job, and talent-wise, this might be as good a team as he has had," Raveling said.

"(Bob) Fife is a future force in this league and makes you shoot from the perimeter," he said. "(Terrell) Brandon is an excellent guard and (Richard) Lucas is one of the most underrated players in the league."

The Ducks will return home to face Stanford and California next week.

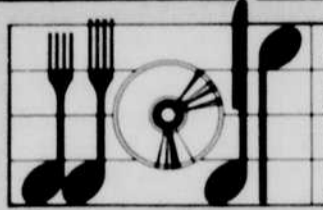
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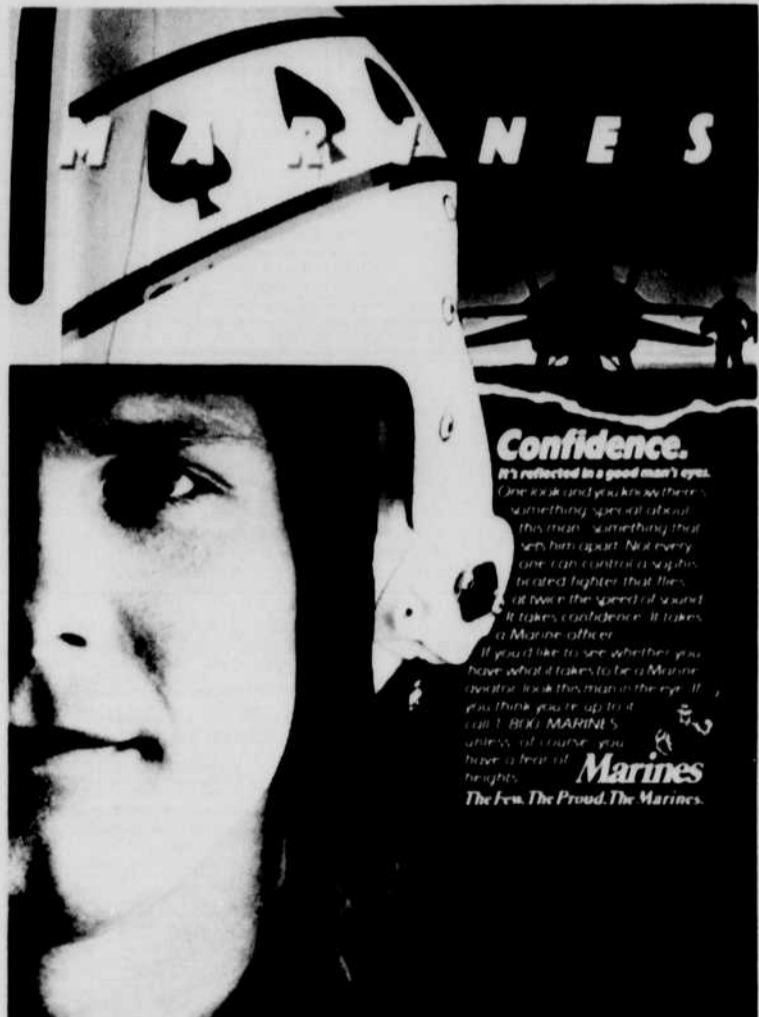
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