

Mac Court looking good after Oregon road trip

By Dave Charbonneau
Emerald Sports Reporter

McArthur Court never looked better to the Ducks.

The Oregon men's basketball team returns to its home court this weekend to face Washington State on Thursday and Washington on Saturday after suffering two brutalizing defeats at USC and UCLA last weekend.

The Ducks are 4-2 at home — not bad considering their overall record is 5-8 (1-3 in the Pacific-10 Conference).

Oregon coach Don Monson said it is obviously easier to play at home, especially with such a young team.

"If you get behind, the crowd lifts you up," he said. "If you get a lead, they really get into the game."

Oregon has struggled since the losses of Jordy Lyden and Andre Collier, losing seven of its last eight games. And the Ducks are not just losing, they are losing big.

The average margin of their last seven losses is more than 25 points a game.

The one thing Monson said he worries about most on this team is the guard situation. Since Collier's injury, freshman Johnnie Reece has been pushed into the starting role.

Reece played well in his first start against California but has struggled ever since.

"The guard situation has taken us out of our offense," Monson said.

Another problem the Oregon team has had is lack of leadership. Lyden was supposed to be

the "veteran" on the team, and Collier was running the offense with confidence and poise.

With both of them out for good, there is no real leader on the court for the Ducks.

"I don't know if any of our players are ready to handle that position," Monson said. "We have to make it more of a team effort."

Tonight's game against Washington State could be a good opportunity to rebound from the tough defeats in California.

The Cougars busted out to a 12-1 start but have since lost its first three Pac-10 games this season.

The Ducks match up well with Washington State. The Cougars use a three-guard offense and don't have a player over 6-foot-8 in the starting lineup.

They are led by guards Terrence Lewis, who is averaging 18.1 points a game, and Neil Derrick (17.6).

Washington possibly poses a bigger threat to Oregon. Rich Manning, a 6-10 center, could be one of the top centers in the Pac-10, as he is averaging 17.4 points and seven rebounds a game.

Duck center Chuck Patterson could have his hands full with Manning, although Patterson has performed well on the boards as of late, averaging more than six a game.

Every game, Oregon seems to become more dependent on the shooting of junior forward Antoine Stoudamire. Stoudamire is the leading scorer for the

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Stoudamire steps up for Ducks

By Jayson Jacoby
Emerald Sports Reporter

Oregon's Antoine Stoudamire bombs in a 23-foot three-point shot from the baseline.

A minute later, Stoudamire twists his wiry, 6-foot-5 frame between two Stanford defenders and spins the ball off the backboard and through the net, despite being fouled by the Cardinal's All-American candidate, 6-foot-9 Adam Keefe.

Until the Ducks' Chuck Patterson hits a rebound basket almost midway through the first half, no Oregon player other than Stoudamire has scored. He gets the Ducks' first 11 points in what turns out to be a 78-57 loss and finishes with 22 for the game.

In fact, since becoming eligible in mid-December, Stoudamire has led Oregon in scoring seven of the eight games in which he has played.

And now with starters Andre Collier and Jordy Lyden — who had been Oregon's two top scorers — out for the season with injuries, the junior guard/forward from Portland's Jesuit High School, and more recently Georgetown University, has become the Ducks' big-play man.

"The biggest thing he brings us is offensive ability, and he's certainly done that," Oregon coach Don Monson said, "especially since we lost our leading scorers."

Ironically, Oregon is lucky to have Stoudamire, who was an all-state and honorable mention Converse All-American pick his senior year, when he led the state in scoring and rebounding.

Stoudamire, who was also a prep academic All-American, wasn't heavily recruited in Oregon and opted instead for Big East Conference powerhouse and perennial national contender Georgetown.

"I had to look toward my other options," Stoudamire said. "My best option at that time was Georgetown."

After missing most of the first part of his sophomore season with a recurrent virus, Stoudamire decided after a



Photo by Andre Ranieri

Ducks leading scorer Antoine Stoudamire says moving from the Big East to the Pacific-10 Conference wasn't a step down in competition.

visit home that he wanted to move back to Oregon. He began working out with the Ducks last spring before becoming eligible late last year.

Despite not being an impact player as a Hoya, Stoudamire doesn't regret attending Georgetown.

"It was a good experience, both academically and athletically," Stoudamire said. "It gave me a chance to go to a school that was known to be challenging academically, and it gave me a chance to play on one of the best teams in one of the best conferences in the country."

Stoudamire poured in 24 points against Florida International as a freshman but averaged just three points a game coming off the bench.

And last year Stoudamire decided it was time for a change.

"I felt that I needed to be at the place I was most comfort-

able," Stoudamire said. "I thought that this was a better situation for me."

Stoudamire said he had other reasons for choosing Oregon besides being closer to his family.


"I saw a good chance that I could step right in and contribute to the team," he said. "I thought playing with Terrell Brandon would be a great experience, and also, my cousin was being recruited (by Oregon)."

Brandon gave up his senior season and became a lottery pick with the Cleveland Cavaliers, and Antoine's cousin Damon chose Arizona over the Ducks, but Stoudamire doesn't regret his choice.

"I still think it was a good decision," he said.

Stoudamire said the move from the Big East to the Pacific-10 Conference hasn't been

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Ducks hope to repeat Arizona sweep

By Jake Berg
Emerald Sports Editor

Last year, Oregon found salvation in the desert. Tonight, the Ducks will be looking there again.

The Oregon women's basketball team was 0-7 in Pacific-10 Conference play before its road trip to the Arizona schools last season, but the return trip had the Ducks feeling better as they won at both Arizona and Arizona State.

Coach Elwin Heiny's club is not in such dire straits now — Oregon is 9-5 overall and 1-3 in the Pac-10, but the team needs a win tonight at Arizona.

"Winning in Arizona has always been tough. Last year we got lucky," Heiny said. "This year, both teams have improved their performances. They both have a lot more athletic talent and are playing more aggressively."

Anything would be more aggressive than last year's Arizona team, though. The Wildcats' 6-25 finish was one of the worst in the nation, causing Arizona to do some serious rebuilding of its program.

In stepped coach Joan Bonvicini whose 325-71 mark as the 12-year head coach of Long Beach State has given Arizona hope.

And why not? The Wildcats' 6-7 overall record

(0-3 in the Pac-10) equals their win total of last season.

Arizona State has also been surprising, starting the year with a 10-3 record after being picked by the league's coaches to finish last in the conference.

The Sun Devils are 7-0 at home, making the Ducks' attempt to repeat last year's performance just that much tougher.

"Arizona State has become a very fast team and utilizes a number of bodies to throw at you," Heiny said. "We have been forced to rely on our backcourt more from a scoring standpoint because of our injuries."

Injuries have had Heiny juggling his lineups all season.

First, center Sara Wilson missed the first eight games, and then forward Debbie Sporcich was forced to sit (and is still sitting) because of a foot injury.

The latest casualties to the roster are Ilesha Smith and Cindy Murphy.

Smith was hospitalized last week with a bacterial infection that may keep her from the team for a couple of weeks. The sophomore is expected to be released from the hospital later this week.

Murphy will not make the trip to Arizona because of a bout with the flu.