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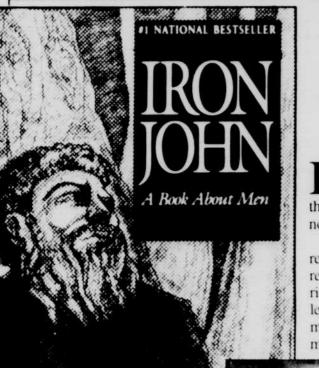
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Ducks' Potter gains confidence

By Dave Charbonneau merald Sports Reporter

It was probably the biggest game of this ugly season for the Oregon men's basketball team. It was playing straight up with dreaded Oregon State.

It was not a time for freshmen to be taking dumb shots. But Duck freshman Jeff Potter

took what some considered a 'dumb" shot.

The 6-foot-9 forward launched a 15-foot jumper from behind the free-throw line, and it went in.

But it wasn't pretty.

'I didn't think it was going to bank in," Potter said.

No one else thought it would even be close

As Potter ran back down the court, coach Don Monson's eyes followed him all the way down the court, as if to say: "What kind of shot was that?"

That shot, more than anything else, showed that Potter was gaining confidence in his game, despite being a freshman who was maybe thrown into a situation too fast.

Potter, a native of Redmond, Wash., will return to his home state this weekend as the Ducks, 2-9 in the Pacific-10 Conference and 6-14 overall. face Washington on Thursday and Washington State on Saturday

The fact Oregon was scheduled to play in Washington later in the season worked out well for Potter, who did not see much playing time during the beginning of the season.

It wasn't until the Arizona State game two weeks ago that



Jett Potter

Potter made a solid contribution to the team. In that game and the three following it, Potter has averaged nine points and five rebounds a game.

To make things better for Potter, he has been moved into the starting lineup.

"It's been a good situation," he said. "Now that I'm starting, it makes it even more sweeter.'

'Jeff is one of the better freshman fundamental players I've had," he said. "His aggressiveness has really helped our ball club lately."

Potter attributes much of his confidence, especially offensively, to Monson.

"Coach talks to me about being aggressive and taking my shots if they're there," Potter said. "If it's a bad shot, he just says it's a bad shot. He doesn't rag on me or anything.

Lately, it has been Monson who has been getting ragged on. Speculation has been floating around since mid-season about the possibility of this being Monson's last year.

As if injuries and poor attendance weren't enough for the young team to deal with, the Ducks also have to deal with the possibility of losing their coach

We've all dealt with it pretty well," Potter said. "Coach has been up front about it with us.

Monson said the players have done a good job of handling the situation

"As athletes, I think they sift through that stuff pretty well," he said. "I don't think it has much to do with winning and losing.

The Ducks are hoping they can sift through the defenses of the two Washington schools this weekend.

Washington coach Lynn Nance said despite its problems, Oregon is not a team to overlook.

'The one thing I've noticed about them is they've shown no signs of quitting," Nance said. 'I think coach Monson is really concentrating on things he can control - helping his team play good basketball.

Potter said Monson has helped his team through the turmoil

"It's hard losing these games," he said. "But it's nice hearing from coach Monson that we're getting better. We're not the same team who was getting blown out earlier this sea-SON

The Ducks are a little more banged up, but maybe they're a little stronger.

IRON JOHN ROBERT BLY

In this ground-breaking and extremely learned book, Robert Bly, the National Book Award-winning poet and translator, offers nothing less than a new vision of what it is to be a man.

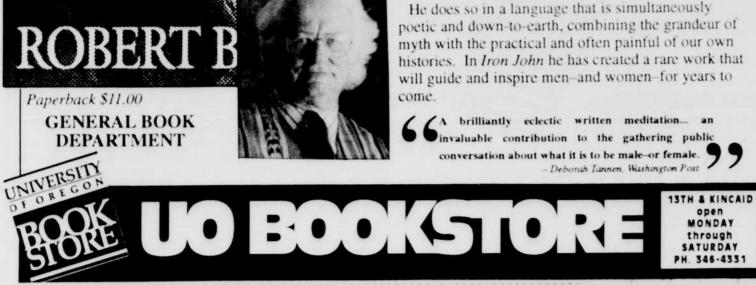
Bly's vision is based on his ongoing work with men and reflections on his own life. He addresses the devastating effects of remote fathers and mourns the disappearance of male initiation rites in our culture. Finding rich meaning in ancient stories and legends, Bly uses the Grimm fairy tale "Iron John," in which a mentor or "Wild Man" guides a young man through eight stages of male growth, to remind us of images long forgotten-images of a

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