

There's no legitimate reason to fire Monson



FROM THE SIDELINES

BY JAYSON JACOBY

The biggest question currently facing the Oregon men's basketball team is no longer whether a successful season can be salvaged. In terms of win-loss records, 1991-92 is already in the books as one of the Ducks' worst seasons ever, regardless of what happens in the final two games.

Now the unknown is the future of coach Don Monson. Given Oregon's injury woes and the lineup with which the Ducks faced the Pacific-10 Conference — which includes four 20-win teams — athletic director Bill Byrne could hardly justify firing Monson on the basis of one season.

Of course numerous factors, especially financial, may force Byrne to fire Monson anyway. With attendance at a 10-year low, the program may lose money. Considering the multimillion dollar athletic department deficits at Oregon and the state's other NCAA schools, Byrne may not be able to afford to keep Monson.

Still, if the political climate allows, on paper the future of Oregon basketball can only benefit from Monson's presence. The group Monson has assembled has the potential to be an up-and-coming team in the Pac-10, and Monson deserves to finish out the two years on his contract, the only true proof of his ability as both a coach and recruiter.

First, this season can only be seen as an anomaly. True, Monson has never won more than 16 games at Oregon, but he reached that mark three times and also won 15 games twice. The real story this year hasn't been who has played, but who hasn't.

The Ducks have played every Pac-10 game without starters Jordy Lyden and Andre Collier, and the last six — all losses — without another starter, Clyde Jordan.

That represents three of Oregon's top

four scorers, and its top rebounder in Jordan. The three combined for nearly 35 points and 15 rebounds per game, or more than half the team's point average and nearly half its per game rebounds.

The results — only two wins with Lyden and Collier out of the lineup and none since Jordan joined the injury parade — shouldn't come as a surprise.

Antoine Stoudamire has picked up some of the slack, scoring more than 20 points per game. But he has been forced to carry an inordinate portion of Oregon's scoring load. In the Ducks' only win since the conference opener Jan. 9 against Cal — a 64-63 win over Oregon State Feb. 8 — Stoudamire had 34 of Oregon's points.

In fact, Stoudamire has scored more than one-third of Oregon's points in Pac-10 games. Teams with that lack of scoring balance don't win many games.

The question is why has there been such a lack of support for Stoudamire? The answer is simply that the Ducks have had to rely on players — most of whom are freshmen — with no college basketball experience to back him up.

Oregon has started at least two freshmen in every league game, and for the past three weeks, first-year players and true freshmen Jeff Potter and Johnnie Reece, along with redshirt freshman Williams, have started.

Again, the Ducks' current seven-game losing streak shouldn't come as a surprise. It's no shock that the league's youngest and most inexperienced team is in last place.

So far it looks like all the evidence is against keeping Monson. However, one season does not a career make.

For example, Dick Harter, who was replaced by Monson's predecessor, Jim Haney, in 1978, was just 6-20 his first season. Harter went on to lead the Ducks to six straight winning seasons.

Granted, this isn't Monson's first season, but the same logic applies. You have to give a coach the necessary time to develop his program. At the present time Monson's program is made up mostly of



Don Monson

young players, the most experienced of whom have been injured. A 6-19 record under the conditions of this season don't warrant Monson's dismissal.

As disappointing as this season has been, it is likely to pay substantial dividends down the road.

Those dividends will likely start appearing next year. The Ducks, who this year have appeared at times like boys playing against men, will boast the league's most experienced crop of young players next season. Even better, all those freshmen who were initiated into college basketball by a veritable trial by fire will probably have the luxury of coming off the bench next season.

Stoudamire, Lyden, Collier, Jordan and returning 6-foot-11 junior Bob Fife — who has two years of Pac-10 experience under his belt — will likely be the starters in 1992-93. That's a pretty impressive lineup, even in the Pac-10.

Reece, Potter and Williams — all of whom are developing into steady performers — will likely be more successful coming off the bench, rather than knowing that they are the first line of defense against the likes of UCLA and Arizona.

Reece especially would seem to benefit. He has shown the skills that made

him the Rocky Mountain Region Player of the Year his senior year in a Denver high school and allowed him to score 28 points at Washington State. But Reece has been forced to do most of the ball handling since Collier's injury. That's not Reece's strong point, and it has seriously hampered his ability to get open for good shots.

And Potter has improved consistently throughout the year, while having to bang inside with the opposing team's center. Coming off the bench will take some of that pressure off Potter, and his offense play especially should improve.

Monson loses only 7-foot center Chuck Patterson from this year's squad, and his departure should be more than adequately filled by the return of Fife and the additions of 6-foot-10, 270-pound junior college center Damion Porter and 6-foot-8 Aaron Johnson.

Neither are proven NCAA Division I players, but the combination of the newcomers with the returners has the look of being a potent one. Of course it is way too early to make any predictions, but next year's team has a lot of strong points.

There is no evidence that Monson's presence is necessary for all of these players to do well. But he is responsible for bringing them to Oregon, and with two years remaining on his contract he deserves to see the results of his recruiting.

There are financial aspects in Monson's favor, as well. The University would still be responsible for Monson's salary for the remainder of his contract, and attracting a qualified coach will likely cost a lot more than it did when Monson was hired nine years ago.

But the basic fact remains that this season is not representative of Monson's stint in Eugene. And Oregon's dismal record can be directly related to key injuries and putting inexperienced players on the court. Obviously these are factors completely out of Monson's control, and he doesn't deserve to be fired solely because of them.

Jayson Jacoby is a sports reporter for the Emerald.

EMERALD CLASSIFIEDS



Call 346-4343 Before 1 p.m. Today To Put Us To Work For You Tomorrow!

<p>105 PERSONALS</p> <p><i>Hey Rosie & Karmen, your lov man...</i></p> <p>BOBCAT GOLDTHWAIT is coming April 10, 8 p.m. Mac Court. Be ready!!! <i>Kat & Thep (ASUO, 346-3724)</i></p>	<p>105 PERSONALS</p> <p>ODE CLASSIFIEDS 1-STOP SHOPPING</p>	<p>110 LOST & FOUND</p> <p>LOST: Friday, March 6 around Saleway area (18th & Peart). 6 months old, long gray/cream hair, bushy tail, brown flea collar. Will come to name "Angel". Call 345-2610 or msg!</p> <p>STOLEN Red Bridgestone 12-speed w/ pedal straps. Call Scott, 484-4696.</p> <p>Oregon Daily Emerald Classifieds</p> <p>WE'RE AT YOUR SERVICE!</p>	<p>115 TYPING SERVICES</p> <p>Typing & word processing 50 cents/double-spaced page 24 hr turn-around. Free pick-up & delivery on campus. John, 484-9648.</p> <p>Printed text to computer files SCANNERS 747 4580 3170 Franklin Blvd #3</p> <p>TPOS 344-4510 QUALITY WORD PROCESSING GRADUATE SCHOOL APPROVED TYPIST WordPerfect 5.1 Specialist 605 E. 13th</p>	<p>115 TYPING SERVICES</p> <p>TYPING UNLIMITED Barbara Land *** 485-2345 Serving UO area since 1981</p> <p>DIAL-A-TYPIST 683-7777</p> <p>FLYING FINGERS typing service. Fast, accurate, professional. \$1.00/page, up. 484-9038.</p> <p>JO THE TYPING PRO 17 yrs. exp. IBM compatible. Accurate • Fast • Dependable. Call 683-6068 anytime.</p> <p>At 344-0759. ROBIN is GRAD SCHOOL APPROVED. 20-year thesis class background. Term papers. Full resume service. Editing, Laser pr. ON CAMPUS!</p> <p>See Section 115 For all your typing needs</p>	<p>115 TYPING SERVICES</p> <p>THE WORD SPECIALISTS Word Processing & Desktop Publishing Grad School Approved. Laser printed editing, graphics, dissertations, theses, resumes, transparencies & more! CINDY 484-5454</p> <p>120 TUTORING</p> <p>GREEK MATH TUTOR meets Tues/Thurs, 7:30-9:00 PM in 232 Gilbert</p> <p>125 INSTRUCTION</p> <p>Pronto Spanish & Portuguese 10 years teaching in Eugene. All levels. Call 485-6647.</p>
--	---	--	---	---	--

CLASSIFIED POLICIES

- Placement**
Ads may be placed at Room 300, EMU (main office) or UO Bookstore, Main Floor.
- Payment**
All ads must be prepaid unless billing has been established. For billing arrangements please call 346-4343 or stop by the classified office, 300 EMU.
- Deadlines**
Line Ads: 1 p.m., one business day prior to insertion.
Display Ads: 1 p.m., two business days prior to insertion.

Doonesbury

BY GARRY TRUDEAU

Panel 1: A woman asks, "Hi, I'm Mike Doonesbury. I've got an appointment." The man replies, "Yes?"

Panel 2: The man asks, "That's nice. With whom?" The woman replies, "Um... Mr. Bellows. Your boss."

Panel 3: The man says, "I got a lot of bosses. I'm the receptionist for nine different 'consultants' who time-share one executive suite!"

Panel 4: The man says, "And what a fine job you're doing." The woman replies, "I have to keep up this complete pretense!"