

Brandon hopes to put on show against Blazers

By Steve Mims
Emerald Sports Reporter

If Terrell Brandon ever worried that his fans would resent him for leaving Oregon after his junior season, he doesn't anymore.

A crowd of about 200 people, most of them autograph-seeking youngsters, showed up at an appearance by Brandon at The NIKE Store on Thursday to welcome the former Duck back to Eugene. Brandon is back in town with his Cleveland Cavalier teammates to face the Portland Trail Blazers in an exhibition game tonight at McArthur Court.

"I have been looking forward to coming back," Brandon said. "The Eugene fans have always supported me, and I appreciate what Eugene gave me."

Brandon was named Pacific-10 Conference Player of the Year after his junior season when he averaged 26.6 points

and five assists per game. Less than one month after the season ended, Brandon announced he would give up his final year of eligibility to turn pro, a decision he says he does not regret.

"It was a tough situation," the 5-11 point guard said. "I had to leave my friends, but it was all about looking out for myself; I think I gave my all to Oregon. I was a fair student and I did not flunk out like some people have speculated."

Brandon was selected 11th in the 1991 NBA Draft by Cleveland, but is not sure if that will be his home for long. Brandon signed a seven-year contract last year, but has the option to become a free agent after his third year.

Despite being away from Eugene, Brandon says he still follows the Duck basketball squad and thinks the off-season coaching change will help the program.

"I think hiring Jerry Green

was good for the school," Brandon said. "Everyone knew the change was coming. I appreciate what coach Monson did for me, he worked me hard and really pushed me."

Brandon said he plans to get his college degree soon, and has been taking classes during the season.

"I definitely want to graduate," Brandon said. "Last year I took some classes during the season and I am close to my degree. I want to come back to Oregon one summer to finish school."

Brandon says he was a Trail Blazer fan as a kid, but expects the Cavaliers to give Portland a strong test tonight.

"Portland is a talented and athletic club," Brandon said. "If we rebound and play aggressive, all the rest will take care of itself."



Photo by Michael Shindler
Cameron Fous of Eugene (right) shows off the Terrell Brandon autographed poster he won during a press conference for the former Duck who is in town with his NBA team, the Cleveland Cavaliers. The Cavaliers face the Blazers tonight at McArthur Court.

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