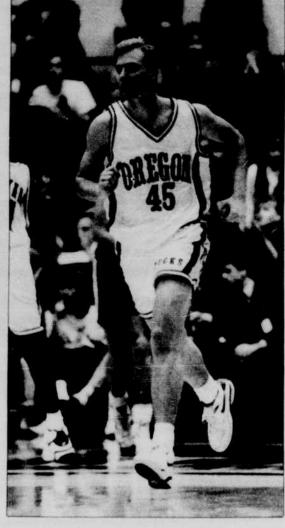
Oregon Daily Emerald Sports

After a two-year mormon mission, sophomore Aaron Johnson has returned to the Ducks' lineup under new coach Jerry Green. Both are hoping Johnson's return will help Oregon get a ...



MISSTOI

By Dave Charbonneau **Emerald Sports Editor**

Aaron Johnson knew all along that two years of his life would be spent away from the comforts of basketball.

After finishing his career at Portland's Aloha High School and being named the 1989 AAA player of the year, Johnson was ready to play Pacific-10 Conference basketball for his favorite

As a freshman, he played sparingly, going on the court with the likes of Terrell Brandon, Richard Lucas and Kevin Mixon. That year, he averaged one point and 1.4 rebounds in 21 games with the Ducks.

Johnson was extremely disappointed with his performance that season.

'My first game wasn't bad," he said, "but then everything just kind of fell apart."

Unfortunately, The 6-foot-9, 200-pound forward would have to wait a couple of years to

prove to Duck fans that he was, indeed, a money player for Oregon.

Following his freshman year, Johnson had a two-year reservation in Salt Lake City, preventing him from playing any sort of organized basket-

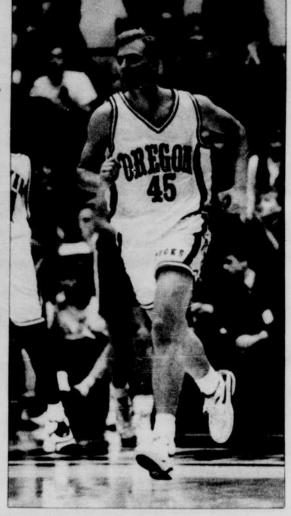
The two-year break from basketball was necessary because Johnson is a devout member of the Mormon Church, and, as a Mormon, he was expected to spend a two-year mission in Utah teaching, learning and experiencing the Mormon reli-

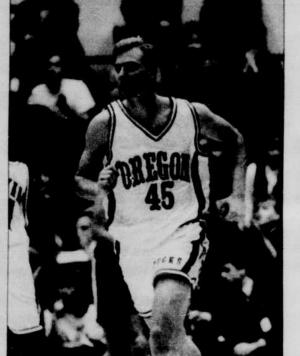
This season, Johnson is back on the Oregon squad, with hopes of becoming a valuable asset in Jerry Green's up-tempo style of play.

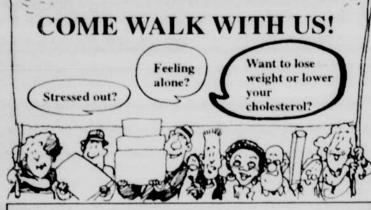
You could say Johnson was, and is, a "man on

"It was hard to drop basketball for two years," Johnson said, "but the mission was something I had planned for my whole life, and although I

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