

JOHNSON

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knew I would miss basketball, I really looked forward to the mission."

Johnson returned from the mission with many concerns.

Only one of the players remained from the team he played with two years earlier. Oregon also had a new head coach (who Johnson didn't even meet face to face until this summer). Moreover, Johnson was 25 pounds heavier than he was during his freshman year, and he wasn't even sure if he would even be able to play organized basketball again.

"When I first heard Oregon fired coach Monson, I wasn't sure if I still had a scholarship," Johnson said. "It was a big relief when I learned I still had my scholarship."

Actually, Green didn't exactly call Johnson, the coach called Johnson's parents because the Mormon Church tries

to discourage missionaries from receiving incoming calls.

"I called them and told them that we would be happy to have Aaron play for us," Green said. "I had them relay that message to Aaron."

Then there was the weight problem.

While Johnson was at Aloha, he tipped the scales at 200 "after a big meal." At one point during his mission, he weighed 250 pounds.

"I was so busy, I didn't have time to run or do any exercise, for that matter," he said. "I ran about once a month. It was really weird being that big."

Last summer, Johnson was able to knock off 25 pounds, but an ankle injury a month before practice began caused him to put some of that weight back on.

Three weeks of practice has Johnson in better shape, and he feels comfortable running the floor for the new-look Ducks. In Oregon's opener against Can-

berra, Johnson scored 10 points and muscled his way in for eight rebounds.

Green couldn't be happier with Johnson's performance so far.

"I'm really amazed," he said. "He didn't touch a basketball for two years. I'm amazed at the ground he's made up."

Johnson said he knows he has a long way to go as far as getting back to 100 percent, but is satisfied with his progress.

Being the only "new" member of the basketball team has lessened the pressure Johnson felt being a former state player of the year.

"My freshman year, I felt a lot of pressure because I had such a good senior year in high school," he said. "Now, I don't feel nearly as much pressure, because no one remembers who I am."

Becoming a household name on the Oregon campus may just be Johnson's new "mission."

HOOPS

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coaching staff they're ready.

Expect Green to use his entire 10-man roster this year.

"We're going to play all the guys," Green said. "In this system, nobody's going to be able to play 37 minutes."

Antoine Stoudamire averaged 20 points for the Ducks last year and returns for his senior year.

Sophomore guards Orlando Williams and Johnnie Reece will also be looked upon to fill it up from the outside. Williams averaged nearly 10 points a game last season.

Reece is a point guard, but his strong point is his outside shooting.

Senior Andre Collier will share time at the point with Reece. Collier is a great passer and is also very tough on

defense.

At the forward positions, sophomore Jeff Potter and junior Clyde Jordan are the most proven Ducks. Last season, Potter came on strong at the end, averaging 10 points and five assists during one five-game stretch.

Jordan missed the final third of the season last year with a stress fracture in his foot.

Sophomore Aaron Johnson is the only newcomer for the Ducks this season, although that moniker isn't exactly true. Johnson played his freshman year at Oregon before going on a two-year Mormon mission.

Junior Bob Fife is back after redshirting last season. Fife is tall at 6-foot-11, but he only weighs 205.

Junior Jon Mitchell and sophomore Damon Runyon round out Oregon's 10-man lineup.

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