

Hoopsters, wrestlers both lose

By Erick Studenicka
Emerald Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's basketball team's four-game winning streak came to a halt Sunday with a 91-78 loss to Boise State. The defeat marked the first time this season the Ducks, now 6-3, were beaten by an unranked team.

Sara Kunkin scored 25 points for the Ducks, but it was not enough to overcome the season-low 42 percent team shooting average. Cindy Murphy led Oregon with eight rebounds.

Oregon has played its last three games without leading scorer and rebounder Debbie Sporcich, who has been diagnosed with tendinitis and a stress fracture in her right ankle. Sporcich, who was averaging 16.4 points per game before the injury, missed 10 games last year with a stress fracture in her left foot.

The Ducks open Pacific-10 conference play this week with home games Thursday and Saturday against California and

Stanford, Cal., picked by pre-season polls to finish no better than eighth in the conference, is off to an 8-1 start and is now 24th in the latest national poll.

Defending national champion Stanford visits McArthur Court ranked fourth in the nation with an 8-2 record, having suffered both losses to top-ranked Tennessee. Val Whiting, the 1992 Conference Player of the Year, is again leading the Cardinal with her 16.7 point per game average.

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Jeff McCoy was named the Most Outstanding Wrestler at the Oregon Classic wrestling tournament last weekend in Corvallis. McCoy, a 190-pounder, narrowly outpointed Oregon State's Les Gutches 5-4 in the title match.

In the team competition, the Ducks lost to Oregon State by the slimmest of margins, 153-151.25. The narrow defeat was heartening as Oregon had lost to the ninth-ranked Beavers

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— James Stephens,
Oregon wrestler

22-13 on Dec. 12 in the team's Pacific-10 Conference dual-meet opener.

"We weren't surprised we were that close to Oregon State," said 126 pounder James Stephens, who placed third in the tournament. "We wrestled terribly in the dual meet, so our result from the tournament is more like we expected."

Other division winners for Oregon included Chris Jensen at 118 pounds and Cory Sonnen at 142 pounds. Kevin Roberts and Mat Sprague both captured second place in their respective weight divisions.

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Continued from Page 12

time we were lackadaisical and seemed to think just because we were showed up they would surrender."

Six NBA scouts were on hand for the game to watch Baker — a possible lottery pick in this year's draft — including Geoff Petrie and Brad Greenberg of the Portland Trail Blazers. Baker made 17 of 29 shots from the field and added four blocked shots.

Baker, a 6-foot-11, 232-pound forward, drew rave reviews from all who saw the game.

"I knew Baker was good, but I didn't expect him to do what he did," Potter said. "I was in his face a lot, but he kept knocking down the shots."

Oregon coach Jerry Green said he believes Baker will be a force on the professional level.

"Vin Baker is a heck of a player," Green said. "We tried to make the other players on the team play and limit him, but we couldn't. I think he will make a lot of money in the next few years."

Baker's performance was even more impressive because of the attention from the scouts in the crowd, but he said he felt no added pressure.

"There was no pressure," Baker said. "I don't think about the crowd or the scouts. I just try to do my best."

Baker used his height advantage over most of the Oregon players and scored from all over the court.

"I don't think my jump shot will be my strength in the NBA," Baker said. "I believe it will be the little things like defense and quickness. I think I can play on the next level."

The Ducks begin conference play with a trip to the Bay Area this weekend to face California on Thursday night, followed by Stanford on Saturday. Green said his team will have to play better to win either game this weekend.

"We must play better than we did tonight if we are going to win this week," Green said. "We have to focus one game at a time; if we worry about some battles down the line we'll struggle."

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