



Walk-ons Craig Bolton (left) and Colby Matney earned spots on the Ducks' team this season.

Walk-ons seize opportunity

By Chris Gladwell
Emerald Contributor

The instability of this year's men's basketball program has created an opportunity for two players who may have otherwise been relegated to pick-up games in Esslinger.

Mike Murphy, Colby Matney, and Craig Bolton have all worked their ways on to the Oregon roster sheet as walk-ons for the struggling 7-11 Ducks.

Mike Murphy, a freshman from Santa Monica High School, didn't receive many scholarship offers, so he chose to attend the University.

Murphy, who averaged 12 points and eight rebounds his senior season, saw an opportunity when former Duck basketball coach Don Monson was fired.

Murphy approached the new coach, Jerry Green, and asked him for an opportunity to practice. Green gave him a chance and Murphy earned a spot on the Duck team.

"I had to give it a try," Mur-

phy said. "Oregon's a division 1, Pac-10 team. It's a lot of fun practicing and working hard."

Colby Matney, a junior from Mt. Hood Community College, also didn't receive many offers. Colby received one offer from George Fox (NAIA) but chose to attend Oregon. With a team-leading 17 points a game at Mt. Hood and some impressive video tapes, Green gave Matney a chance to practice and he eventually made the team.

Matney admits that practice is tough at times, but he's not complaining.

"I'm having a lot of fun, especially traveling," Matney said. "The Great Alaskan Shootout was a great experience."

Green said he is pleased with what the walk-ons have brought to his program.

"Mike and Colby have done a really good job for us and I am pleased to have them on our team," he said.

Bolton joined the squad at the beginning of winter term. So just how did these players



Sophomore Jon Mitchell has gone from being a walk-on last season to earning a scholarship and occasionally starting for Oregon this season.

get an opportunity to play division I basketball?

Green said the program he inherited from Monson had more than the obvious problems.

Turn to WALK-ON, Page 8

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