

OSU's Anderson tries to get struggling team on track

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Oregon State coach Jim Anderson admits he's frustrated by his team's disappointing basketball season, but he insists he isn't worrying about his job future.

"I've been with three very, very tough coaches, and I've learned through the process that you can only do your very best," he said Monday. "Whatever else happens you don't have control over, so I'm not going to waste my time, energy and mood on it."

Anderson, whose contract expires after the 1993-94 season, has heard the boos in Gill Coliseum as his team struggled to an 11-11 record.

The senior-dominated Beavers were picked before the season as a possible contender for the Pac-10 title, but an inconsistent offense has doomed them to mediocrity.

Oregon State is shooting .452 from the field. If that figure holds to the end of the season, it would be the Beavers' lowest

since 1966-67.

"Every coach has to have high expectations because that is sometimes what motivates players," Anderson said in a telephone interview from his Corvallis office. "You have to have a dream."

"The only problem that comes with those kind of expectations is, if you don't realize them, and people don't understand the reasons why, people can become very critical of your players, your team and everyone around here."

Athletic director Dutch Baughman said Anderson's performance will be reviewed after the season, as is routine. Any decision to get rid of the coach would be a difficult one.

Anderson, 55, is as personable a coach as can be found in major-college basketball, and he bleeds Beaver orange. He played three seasons for Oregon State and was an assistant coach there for 26 seasons. When Ralph Miller retired in 1989, Anderson finally moved up to the head

coaching job.

His first team, led by Gary Payton, shared the Pac-10 title. But since then, the Beavers are 40-41 and are virtually certain to miss the NCAA tournament for the third straight year.

Anderson traces the inconsistency to players' weaknesses.

"Sometimes if you're not a real complete player in all phases, your weaknesses come back to haunt you," he said. "It's like the old saying: You're only as strong as your weakest link."

Sometimes it's hard to tell which player will do the best job, Anderson said.

"You think one player is playing well, then all of a sudden he has six turnovers and can't defend anybody," he said.

Scott Haskin, the Beavers' 6-foot-11 all-conference center, is having an up-and-down season. He's scored as many as 32 points, against Oregon, and as few as two, against Southern Cal.

"In most games, he's getting the ball a lot, but sometimes he misses some easy shots. And he gets frustrated sometimes by foul problems," Anderson said.

Sagging defenses also have hampered Haskin's effectiveness, the coach said.

Brent Barry, Oregon State's sophomore point guard, also has been erratic, sometimes making a sensational play and other-times throwing the ball into the fourth row of seats. Barry, son of former NBA great Rick Barry, is still learning what it means to be a playmaker, Anderson said.

Backup Pat Strickland has a better feel for the position, but he is not a good shooter and has trouble seeing over defensive players because he's only 5-9.

Anderson insists the team has not given up as it prepares to play fourth-ranked Arizona Thursday night in Tucson.


"I really like this team," he said. "They work hard. They've got great intentions. They try to do things the right way."

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