

Coaches, athletes, teams deserve Christmas gifts



DAVE CHARBONNEAU

Finally realizing Rich Brooks is going to stay with both jobs at Oregon is a little like finding out Aunt Bertha is coming to your house for Christmas dinner: You can't stand the idea, but you have no choice because she's in charge of the athletic department. Huh? Well, maybe it's not like that, but you get the idea.

Calling for Brooks' head is a dead issue. He's staying whether anyone likes it or not. Anyway, it would be inappropriate to expect someone to fire himself so close to the holidays.

But that doesn't mean we can't use the holiday season as a time to reward and penalize

members of the athletic community with Christmas bonuses and Christmas penalties.

So, I'll act as Santa Claus (after Thanksgiving dinner, I almost weigh as much as him) and hand out the goodies.

Jerry Green — Green gets a bonus. As coach of the men's basketball team, Green will not be satisfied with mediocrity, an attitude that is sorely missing at Oregon.

Green won't accept mediocrity (even though he may have to tolerate it for a couple of years), but if he doesn't have the Ducks near the top of the Pacific-10 in four or five years, he says he'll give someone else a shot.

Green's bonus — A sell-out at McArthur Court of fans who know how to do a cheer in sync, unlike the weenie crowds who have so far attended the games this season.

Oregon men's basketball team — No bonus here. Why? Because they missed nine straight free throws in the first

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half against Athletes In Action, forcing the crowd to raise their collective hands nine times without the joy of being able to say, "Whoosh."

The team's penalty — Play in the Far West Classic featuring Portland, Oregon State and North Carolina-Wilmington. Oh yeah, the Ducks already have to play in that.

Jon Mitchell — Mitchell gets a bonus because with all the new guys arriving to the Duck roster this year, many figured Mitchell would be a forgotten soul on this team. However, Mitchell has continued to play hard, and has looked good at times in Oregon's first three games.

Mitchell's bonus — During

one of the Ducks' home Pac-10 games, Mitchell will be on a break away and will suddenly have the ability to reach the rim and will jam one home as the Pit crowd goes nuts.

The Portland Trailblazers — For a number of reasons, the Blazers are going to be sad during the holidays. First of all, Portland and its fans talk like the Blazers are still among the elite in the NBA. Sure, and the football team has a chance at the Rose Bowl soon. Face it, the Blazers are the Pacers with spider uniforms.

The other thing is that Paul Allen, owner of the Blazers, is considering naming the new arena "The Vortex".

Blazer penalty — Trade Jerome Kersey and Tracy Murray to Utah, where they got in a little trouble last winter. On a bright note, at least then they'd make it on SportsCenter.

The Seattle Supersonics — Just what every Blazer fan fears. The Sonics took advantage of some trade opportunities over

the summer and have turned their team into title contenders. Seattle finally lost a game after winning 10 straight to start the season.

Portland used to be the team that went after the top-notch players, before they started going crazy-go-nuts over players like Chris Dudley.

Sonic's bonus — An NBA championship in June.

Leon Lett, defensive lineman, Dallas Cowboys — We have to give this guy a bonus. After all, anyone that stupid can no longer be classified as bad athlete. After Lett tried to dive on that blocked field goal, eventually leading to the Cowboys' loss to the Dolphins Thanksgiving Day, he should be praised as one of the greatest physical comedians to ever live.

Lett's bonus — A star on the Hollywood walk of fame, right next to Laurel and Hardy and The Marx Brothers.

Dave Charbonneau is a sports reporter for the Emerald.

Green getting look at new guys

By Dave Charbonneau
Oregon Daily Emerald

During the past week, Oregon head coach Jerry Green has finally had a chance to look at his six new faces in game situations.

Two exhibition games and a counting game against a Division II foe have been the stages for Green to examine just what kind of talent he has recruited to turn Oregon's basketball program around.

The results so far? Two wins, one loss and a lot of inconsistency. "I don't think we're consistent," Green said. "A lot of that has to do with feeling comfortable."

And it hasn't just been the new guys. Veterans Orlando Williams, Aaron Johnson, Jordy Lyden and Damon Runyon have played well at times, but Green has not been pleased overall with their leadership so far.

"I can't tell too much difference between the veterans and the guys who just walked through the door," Green said. "The veterans are throwing the ball away as much as the new guys and missing as many free throws. I'd like the veterans to show the way a little more."

Inconsistency, sloppy play and, at times, confusion have become commonplace for the Ducks in this young season. But that's nothing new for a team that went 10-20 last season and is picked to finish ninth or 10th in the Pacific-10 Conference.

Despite all that, there is hope. Although none of the six new players has played consistently well over the first three games, they have shown the potential to at least give Oregon fans something to occasionally get excited about.

"The first games have been most beneficial for the new players," Williams said. "They've gotten

playing time and seeing what it's like to play college ball."

Here are the new players and a summary of how they've looked so far: • **Kenya Wilkins**, 5-foot-10-inches, point guard. Wilkins, a freshman, has become an instant fan favorite in only three games. The lightning-quick guard has shown his ability to penetrate to the hoop, make nifty passes, create steals and score points. Wilkins had eight assists and four steals in the Ducks' exhibition opener against Bamberg, and scored 12 points and made three steals against Athletes in Action Sunday.

• **Henry Madden**, 6-foot-6-inches, forward. Madden caught the eye of Oregon fans in the second half of the Bamberg game when he scored 11 points, made two steals and blocked a shot in less than two minutes. Madden, also a freshman, finished with 21 points that night and also played well against Humboldt State. He started against Athletes in Action, but scored only two points and grabbed four rebounds.

Madden is able to shoot from outside and loves to crash the boards, even though he may lack the size necessary to be a presence on the boards.

• **Zach Sellers**, 6-foot-9 inches, center. Sellers came from junior college with Green hoping he would be an instant force underneath. After the first two games, he was more like an instant farce. However, Sellers came out against Athletes in Action and played very well. He pulled down nine rebounds, and showed a soft touch inside, finishing with 12 points in 23 minutes.

• **Jamar Curry**, 6-foot-3-inches, guard. Curry wowed Oregon fans in the opener with a monstrous dunk and a huge block shot that turned out to be goaltending. Besides that Curry hasn't done that much, but his athletic talents are obvious.



JEFF PASLAY/Emerald

Oregon head coach Jerry Green got a look at his new team and freshman point guard Kenya Wilkins (10) last week.

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