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REGON HOOPS



The Oregon women's basketball team will need a solid team effort on defense to challenge No. 14 Stanford on Thursday. Guard Karen Healea (right) leads the Ducks in steals. Center Sara Wilson will match up against Anita Kaplan, one of Stanford's leading scorers.

## Women fighting numbers, Cardinal

By Scott Simonson

When Oregon plays Stanford Thursday night in Palo Alto, Calif., it will be trying to forget about the numbers

0-12: Oregon's record against Stanford in its last

1987: The last time the Ducks beat the Cardinal. 27: The average margin of victory for Stanford in the last six years

Oregon head coach Jody Runge and her team would like to think that those numbers belong to the past. Oregon, 11-5 overall, is tied for second in the Pacific-10 Conference with a 5-2 record. No. 14 Stanford, also 11-5, is a half game back at 5-3.

'I think they (Oregon's players) feel like this isn't the same Stanford team as in the past, and I think they feel empowered by their own performance,' Runge said.

'It's a huge game. There's no way to get around it ... they're expected to win because they've always won. We're expected to have a good chance to win.

Oregon is coming off a sweep of the Arizona schools last weekend, while Stanford lost to UCLA and USC on the road. Runge expects to face a team that is hungry for a victory

The thing that's really not in our favor right now is that they lost two down in LA. That makes them really anxious to get a win," she said.

Having won four consecutive games and finding themselves in the midst of the conference race, Runge said the players are encountering high expectations as well as expecting more from themselves.

"I think our kids feel a lot of pressure right now,

that they can play.

headaches for the Duck defense. Something that isn't necessarily our biggest strength is keeping the ball out in front of us and then giving help and not giving up an easy basket

but what we're doing right now is something that nobody expected us to do," she said. "It just boils down to them seizing the day and playing the best

Stanford has lost at home once in the last three

years, and that loss came at the hands of No. 1 Tennessee earlier this season. Runge said Stanford will try to push the ball up the court and create off the

dribble on offense, tendencies that may cause

when we don't get a rotation," she said.
Two keys for the Ducks will be keeping Stanford out of an open-court game and limiting the Cardinal to one shot per possession, Runge said. "I think we can go down on offense and score with Stanford. If we aren't giving them easy baskets, I think it will be a really good basketball game.

Oregon plays California Saturday before returning home to play Oregon State next Friday. The Golden Bears are 7-10 overall and 1-6 in the con-

Cal has been hurt by the loss of center Ingrid Dixson, who was averaging 15.1 points and 12.9 rebounds per game before sustaining a knee injury.

"They're playing at home, and you know that in the Pac-10, you just can't afford to lose at home to have a successful season," Runge said." They've played a lot of teams tough for about 30 minutes then have run out of steam. They're going to play a good ballgame. We certainly can't look past them."