

Maryland star expected to enter draft

BALTIMORE (AP) — Maryland All-American Joe Smith will announce at a news conference Friday that he is making himself available for the NBA draft, a team source said today.

The source, confirming earlier reports in The Washington Post and The Diamondback, the Maryland student paper, told The Associated Press that the 19-year-old center would pass up his final two seasons of eligibility.

His mother, Letha Smith, told the student newspaper that her son would hold the news conference Friday in Norfolk, Va., his hometown.

Smith, who attended the team's awards banquet Wednesday night, would not comment.

The 6-foot-10 sophomore center averaged 20.8 points, 10.4 rebounds and 2.9 blocked shots while helping Maryland to a 26-8 record. He was the AP Player of the Year and Naismith College Basketball Player of the Year.

"He's in a no-lose situation," Terrapins coach Gary Williams said. "He either returns to a team with four other starters, or he goes to the NBA and makes a lot of money. It's a good situation to be in."

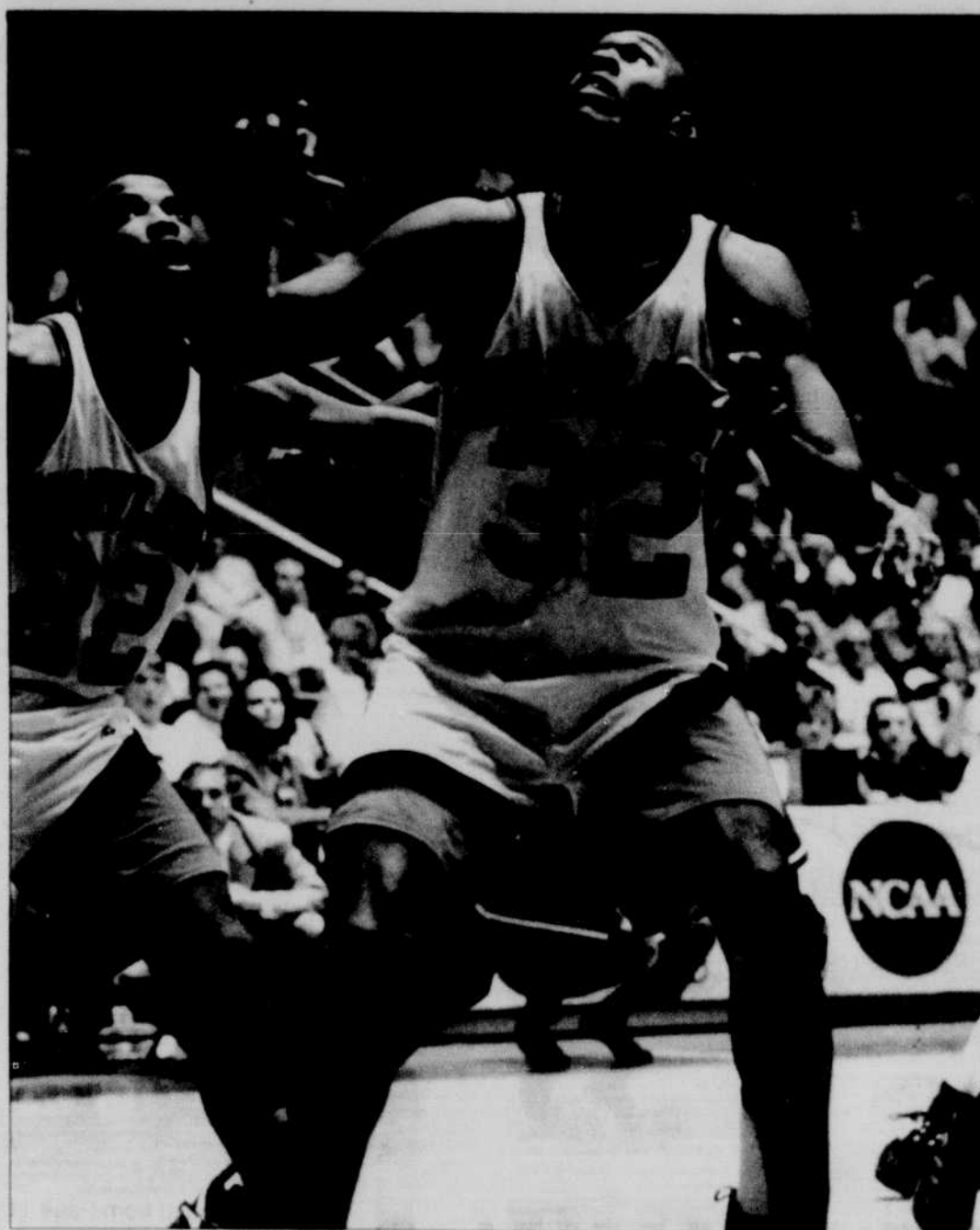
Williams said he has talked to Smith frequently during the past several weeks and that Smith has carefully considered all of his options.

"I think he's done a good job of looking at every side of the issue," Williams said. "My role is to answer any questions he may have and make sure that he looks at everything on every side."

If Smith turns pro, Maryland still will have a strong program, Williams said.

"You'll miss a player like Joe," he said. "But if he goes, you won't fold up your tent and go home."

Smith has until May 15 to declare himself eligible for the draft. If he goes pro, he likely would be among the first five players chosen, depending on which team is selecting first and which other non-seniors leave school.



Maryland's Joe Smith will likely forgo his final two years of eligibility to take his talents to the NBA.



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Continued from Page 11

sprinting idol. "It was so mental for me."

O'Brien, the Klamath Falls native best known for his Reebok commercial campaign along with Dave Johnson during the 1992 Summer Olympic Games, holds the current world record in the decathlon at 8,891 points, though he has never competed in the Olympics.

O'Brien, who has a personal best 100-meter dash time of 10.41 seconds, will give Oregon freshman Pat Johnson his first real competition in the event. Johnson's personal best is 10.37 seconds as a senior at Redlands High School last year, though he is not a usual Oregon entry in the event this year.

Oregon will round out the sprinting events with its usual contingent, with Johnson, senior Dino Philyaw and junior LaMont Woods competing in the 100- and 200-meter dash.

Daniel Das Neves, who sat out last weekend's meet at Stanford with a slight

leg strain, is penciled in at the 800, where former Oregon star Gordon Johnson will compete. The Ducks will be led in the distance races by junior Scott Nicholas, who is scheduled to run in the 1500-meter race, and junior Karl Keska, who is penciled in for the 5000-meter race.

In addition, former Boise State runner Richard Lee will compete in the steeplechase along with Lopez, who was third at the 1992 Olympic Trials and has the sixth best performance by an American (8:16.88).

Dan Zorich, still affected by a pre-season knee injury, will get to compete against Deal, the American record holder in the hammer. Deal will most likely compete in his third straight Olympics in 1996. Jim Driscoll, the Eugene native currently ranked No. 2 in the hammer, and ninth-ranked Steve Dering will also compete in the hammer throw.

While the meet will give the Ducks a strong practice, it also provides the team with a bit of break before hosting the Pepsi Invitational next weekend.

SOFTBALL

Continued from Page 11

contests.

"It would be an incredible feat if we won," Brown said. "If you beat [UCLA] you're the talk of the town."

To beat their foes the Ducks will have to be flawless defensively as and at the plate. UCLA is batting .350 as a team with third baseman Jennifer Brundage, a first-team All-America selection last year, leading the league with a .494 batting average. On the mound the Bruins are even better possessing a league-leading staff ERA of 1.18.

"It's going to be tough — they're a very good softball team," Brown said. "Were going to have to play our best — were going to have to play flawless. Were going to have to take it one game, one inning, one at-bat at a time."

The Ducks play UCLA today at 2 p.m. and Washington at 1 p.m. on Saturday at Howe Field.

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