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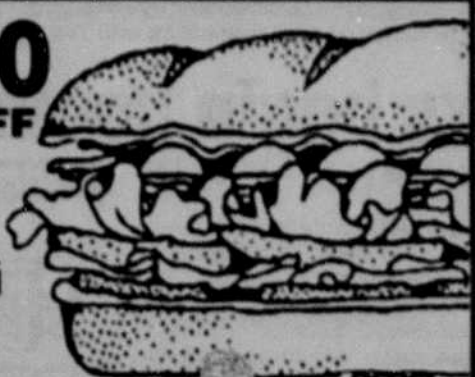
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Consistency: Fegent and basketball are much better than chalk and cheese

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glimpse of Eugene and the University when her Australian touring team, the Canberra Capitals, faced the Ducks in an exhibition match in 1990. When her career with the Capitals ended, she left Australia with "only a backpack and a one-way plane ticket," intending just to travel and see the United States.

In her travels, Fegent met a friend of Oregon head coach Jody Runge who persuaded her to talk to University officials and think about playing basketball again. Fegent joined the team last season as a junior and the rest is history.

Fegent has paid dividends for the women's program with more than just her on-court play. She has worked as a recruiter for the Ducks, getting players like last year's scoring leader, Sally Crowe, to commit to Oregon.

"I'd known her [Crowe] for years," she said. "So I called her and told her to come over and play. She was just a girl that I'd played with for years and when

they asked me if I knew anyone else who could come over and play, she was the first one I thought of."

Fegent also played a substantial role in attracting freshman guard Lisa Bowyer from the Australian continent to play for the Ducks. Fegent contacted Bowyer through a mutual friend and got her to commit to Oregon.

"It's nice to have another Australian over here, someone who can understand everything you say," she said. "Everyone laughs all the time at what we say so it's nice to get together and laugh at what the Americans say."

Adjusting to the different variations of the English language is one of the biggest hurdles for Australians living in the United States. Fegent and Bowyer act like interpreters for each other, with Fegent translating American sayings and phrases because she has been in the U.S. longer.

For example, Fegent recalled a story of when she and Bowyer were talking about the differ-

ences between two Oregon opponents.

"We said that they were like chalk and cheese," Fegent said. "That is our way of saying that something is as different as night and day. At training table, everyone on the team thought that was really funny."

"It's like saying you're comparing apples and oranges," Bowyer said. "That confused me even more because we say 'apples and bananas.' Sometimes we just get fed up and say, 'Those damn Americans!'"

Any way you slice it, playing basketball in the United States is like chalk and cheese for Fegent. The biggest difference, she says, is that in Australia, she played against older women and in the United States, her competition is college-age opponents.

"The basics are there, and if you have the basics, you can play anywhere," Fegent said. "It's like the way we've been winning lately, if you work hard with good fundamentals, you win ballgames."

Women: Defense has been key for Ducks

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was a big accomplishment, especially [since] Arizona had beaten Oregon State on the Wednesday before they played us. That had them fired up and feeling really confident about themselves. I think it was a big win."

The Bruins promise to test the Ducks' confidence, however, as UCLA boasts four starters that average in double-digits in scoring.

Led by guard Nickey Hilbert's 18 points-per-game average, the Bruins are 9-7 overall and 4-3 in the Pac-10. Center Kisa Hughes averages 12.9 points per game, while forward Zrinka Kristich averages 12.4 points and guard Erika Gomez averages 11.3 points.

UCLA is on a streak of its own, as the Bruins have won three of their last four games, dropping only to intrastate rival USC.

"They are a much-improved team from the team they put on the floor last year," Runge said. "Players that played for them last year have improved their individual games."

The Bruins score a lot of points in and just outside of the paint. The team averages 37.9 rebounds per game, and Runge feels that the Ducks' defense, which has been a key in several games, will have

to stop the Bruins from getting inside.

"They key is that we have got to keep them away from the basket on penetration," Runge said. "That is where they are getting a lot of their points, driving to the basket and on offensive rebounds. If we can just give them one shot every time down and keep them away from the basket on the drive, I think — with the exception of Gomez at the point guard position — they are not shooting the ball that well unless they put the ball on the floor first."

Led by senior center Renae Fegent and junior forward Arianne Boyer, the Ducks have clamped down their defense on opponents as of late. According to Runge, that has made up for a dip in the offense and kept the Ducks in several close ballgames.

"It has been our strength. We have probably leaned on it more than we ever have in the past because our offense has been struggling," Runge said. "It is something that we are doing pretty well right now."

"We're making people shoot over a hand and not giving them easy baskets on transition. If we can keep doing those things, I think we have a chance of being in a lot of our ballgames."

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