

DeYoung: Oregon needs strong athletic recruits

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name schools.

When a high school athlete watches television, Ducks highlights are far more rare than those of big schools. It is difficult to choose a school if you have never seen them play. The coaches have to do some extensive recruiting to get that top player from another state.

Even when Oregon does get the big recruits, it doesn't mean the sport will necessarily improve. It takes more than one star to make a powerhouse. Unfortunately, recruiting is a cycle. If a team doesn't do well one year, its recruiting suffers in the off-season. Without strong recruits, a team can't do well. If a team doesn't

do well, it means another year of weak recruiting. Once a team gets into this cycle, it is hard to get out.

It is difficult for all schools that are not the size of UCLA or Notre Dame to attract the best athletes in the nation. But because of Oregon's recent success in several sports, the Ducks are slowly making a name for themselves.

Unfortunately, it may be a long time before Oregon attains the status of a sports powerhouse.

Even worse, that day may never come.

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NBA: Jordan a near-unanimous MVP pick

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playing.

"You grow up and see it as a game, something you'd play [for free] at the YMCA or Boys Club," he said. "But now we've learned this is a business, with a lot of money to be made."

And Jordan certainly should make a lot of money, Phil Jackson said.

"I don't know what worth is in this game," the Bulls' coach said. "But I do know this: If anybody gets paid money in this league, Michael Jordan deserves it. And with the kind of salaries I've heard bandied about, Michael Jordan is the best player, and has been for the last eight, 10 years."

"If Sylvester Stallone is worth \$20 million for a movie, I can't imagine why Michael won't get \$20 million for a season."

Jordan's latest MVP award comes just 14 months after he came out of retirement. He quit on Oct. 6, 1993, saying he no longer felt the desire to prove he

was the best, night after night. He played minor league baseball for most of his 17 months away before returning in March 1995.

Asked to compare this award with his other MVPs, Jordan said: "I think it's more meaningful because I learned a lesson: No matter how great you were before you left, you can't just think you can take up where you left off."

"The game taught me a lesson in that disappointing series I experienced last year, and it pushed me and forced me to go back into the gym and learn it all over again."

Jordan struggled in last year's playoffs against Orlando, and the Bulls lost in six games. He's been on a mission ever since.

In addition to averaging 30.4 points this season, Jordan had 6.6 rebounds, 4.3 assists and 2.2 steals per game in leading Chicago to a 72-10 record. The Bulls then beat Miami and New York in the first two playoff rounds before routing Orlando

in Sunday's opener of the Eastern Conference finals.

Jordan joins Wilt Chamberlain as a four-time MVP. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar won the most MVPs with six, and Bill Russell won five.

The other first-place votes went to Hardaway (two), Houston's Hakeem Olajuwon (one) and Utah's Karl Malone (one). Olajuwon finished fourth in the balloting, followed by Chicago's Scottie Pippen, Seattle's Gary Payton, Malone, Seattle's Shawn Kemp, Detroit's Grant Hill and O'Neal of Orlando.

Each media panelist picked five MVP candidates in order of preference; points were awarded on a 10-7-5-3-1 basis. Before 1981, players voted for the award.

Other Bulls honored this post-season include Jackson, coach of the year; Toni Kukoc, top sixth man; Jordan, Pippen and Dennis Rodman, all-defensive team; and general manager Jerry Krause, executive of the year.

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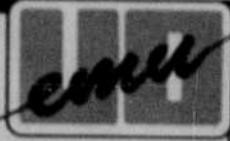
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