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Women: Mowe, Curtis must step up

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that we need them to score," she said. "Teams have started to focus on our inside game, and they are going to have to realize that they have to concentrate on five people."

Another key for the Ducks will be the play of Mowe and forward Sonja Curtis. Runge said if Oregon is to be successful in the Pac-10 season, Mowe and Curtis will have to step up their play.

Mowe had her best game against Idaho State in November, but has struggled with her confidence for much of the season, Runge said. Eventually, Runge would like to have Mowe on the

court for a majority of the game. "In 10 minutes [against Oregon State] she had seven points and several rebounds. If we can get that same kind of production out of her for 30 minutes, that is a big boost for us," Runge said.

Curtis also has shown signs of brilliance this season, including an 18-point performance against Portland in November. But she will have to find that same form if Oregon is going to make a serious run at Stanford for the conference crown.

In a poll taken before the start of the conference season this year, members of the media chose the Ducks as the most likely candidate to challenge the Cardinal for

the conference title. But Stanford's Naismith Player of the Year Award candidate Kate Starbird said she doesn't see it that way.

Starbird said she doesn't consider Oregon one of the top eight teams in the Pac-10 this season, which is fine and dandy for Boyer.

"It just gives you an advantage going into the game if other teams don't respect you," Boyer said. "You have to respect every other team because anybody can beat you."

With three of starting five being seniors in 1997, this could be the Ducks' last chance to advance deep into the tournament.

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Men: Increase in playing time could improve bench

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Brown," Green said. "But he has not shot the basketball as well as he can. Andre Larry does some fabulous things, but he also does some things that drive you a little insane. And I had hoped that Mike Carson would be further along."

"I think they just need some more experience," Milling advised. "The guys that are playing are all seniors and the guys coming off the bench are all sophomores and freshmen. The more playing time they get the better they will be."

And even without the benefits of an overly productive bench,

Oregon is still without a loss and beating opponents by an average of 14 points a game. Not exactly nail-biters.

"I am pleased with where we are," Green said. "I think it's going to be a very good race. I certainly think the way we worked in the preseason we put ourselves in some limelight. We are only one of [three] undefeated teams left in college basketball."

"We're not going to sneak up on anybody now," Wilkins admits. "With a record like ours and being a top 25 team, everybody in the Pac-10 is going to be ready for us, so we have to be ready for them."

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