

The twelve days of UO basketball

Although you returned to school this week with Bing Crosby and holiday carols still stuck in your head, let me offer you a rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" that accurately reflects the holiday season of an Oregon women's basketball player.

On the last day of Christmas my coaches gave to me twelve turbulent plane flights, eleven packs of pretzels, ten sets of sprints, nine days of snow, eight scrapes and scratches, seven raging referees, six days of travel, five golden games, four days at home, three TV appearances, two Christmas parties, and one Pacific-10 victory!

After returning from icy-cold conditions in Spokane, Washington; Anchorage, Alaska; and Ames, Iowa, our team seems to be in tune with the Pac-10 season that is heating up before us. Our preseason schedule is an essential part of our preparation for conference play. While on the road we learn more about the game of basketball, but also more about each other.

The musicians on our team, Cindie Edamura, Renae Fegent, Kirsten McKnight and Shannon Thorne, who make up the band "Celery," entertain us in airports with their guitars. Games of hacky-sack and frisbee enjoyed

by myself, Mendy Benson, Arienne Boyer and Nicole Strange encourage us to spontaneously meet other travelers as our game toys accidentally fall into their

laps. Sonja Curtis is the queen of crosswords and Jenny Mowe always has a glamour magazine in hand.

Constant interaction 24 hours a day develops team dynamics that coincide with our ability

to cooperate and understand each other on the court. That is not to say there are not moments of frustration when your plane is delayed, or your luggage doesn't arrive, or you discover that your roommate snores. Nevertheless, these trials teach us about what defines us as individuals, and are part of a maturation process that silently takes shape over the college years and extends far beyond the walls of McArthur Court.

But inside those same walls, we now face our biggest and most

immediate challenge. We must draw upon what we have learned in the off-season and in practice since Nov. 1 to establish ourselves as one of the teams to beat in the Pac-10 title race.

Our team has been one of the hunters in the past, a team that would pull off surprising upsets with a confidence that promised future success. That time is now upon us, and we are one of the teams being hunted.

Our role has changed and so have our hopes, dreams and expectations. We are surrounded by a field of talented teams that have their own sets of aspirations. Each week we study game films, learn the opponents' plays and condition ourselves in preparation to play each weekend. There is no team in the conference that can be overlooked in the pursuit of our goal.

As we enter winter term with a 2-0 record in the Pac-10, we are also bombarded with a schedule of four unfamiliar classes five days a week and six days of basketball practice and games. This time around it may not be a Christmas carol, but it's sure the experience of a lifetime.

Betty Ann Boeving is a member of the Oregon women's basketball team. This article is an exclusive to the Emerald.

Player's NOTEBOOK



Women: Oregon excited for weekend match-up against Washington Huskies

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team (9-2, 2-0) more than it needed to win.

For the second straight game the Ducks used a balanced offense combined with a strong defensive effort to cruise to victory. Oregon had 11 players see 10 or more minutes of action while the team tied a season-high rebounding mark with 50. Forward Arienne Boyer scored 16 points, center Renae Fegent had 15, and forward Sonja Curtis added 13.

"We have some kids that are very dissimilar to each other playing at different positions," said Oregon head coach Jody Runge, "so it's really interesting to put a lot of different looks out there on the floor and to be to look for different things with those line-ups. The most positive thing is that our legs are fresh and that we're probably shooting better because we're not having to rest on defense."

Being able to have "fresh" players on the court at all times enabled Oregon to execute its game plan.

"Part of our plan was to run the floor and try to get some fastbreak baskets because they didn't have a lot

of depth — especially inside," said Oregon head coach Jody Runge.

Oregon attacked the inside early, using Boyer, Fegent, Curtis and center Jenny Mowe down at the posts, feeding them the ball on nearly every offensive possession. With nine minutes gone by in the first half, the Ducks held a 19-10 advantage and began a 21-8 scoring run before the first half came to a close.

In the second half, the Ducks added to their 18-point lead by stretching the Cougars' defense with outside shooting. After attempting only four three-point shots in the first half, Oregon hit 3-of-11 triples in the second. Oregon finished 4-of-15 on the night.

Next up for the Ducks is Washington, a rivalry game that should live up to the billing.

"It's always such a great game," Fegent said. "We're two very good teams and that alone will make it a rival game."

The Huskies and Ducks will play on Saturday at Mac Court. Game time is set for 12:30 p.m. with live television coverage on the Fox Sports Network.

Rebounds: Washington State's Kunze held to only one rebound in 24 minutes of play

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Against the Cougars, Oregon got its share of second shots. Of the Ducks' 50 rebounds, 20 came on the offensive end where Benson and Boyer combined for nine offensive rebounds.

Oregon's dominance of the glass drove Washington State to tie its season-low of just 30-team rebounds. And Washington State center Yvonne Kunze, who was averaging six rebounds per game before Thursday night, finished with only one rebound against Oregon; however, Kunze did get herself into foul trouble, which limited her to 24 minutes.

The Cougars' loss to Oregon moves them to 0-6 on the season

when having less rebounds than their opponent.

"They were pretty strong on the inside and we were getting pushed out," Cougars' guard Jade Hyett said. "We boxed out, but we let them push us underneath the basket."

Oregon center Renae Fegent, who finished with five rebounds, was one of the Ducks doing the pushing.

"That's something I personally have been trying to concentrate on," Fegent said of her rebounding. "It is something that we need to improve, especially [against] the team tonight."

"They had a couple of big players, and we knew we had to get

some offensive boards and make them work hard."

Runge said the key to the Ducks' rebounding was keeping Washington State's centers out of the key.

"As long as you can catch those girls out of the lane and keep them out of there, you're OK," Runge said. "It is real hard when you let them get in the lane to push [Kunze] and [center Amy Saneholtz] away from the basket because those are some big gals."

Saneholtz and forwards Jennifer Ludwicki and Doreen Evans each finished with three rebounds, tying them for second on the team.

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