

"We've really built a solid situation and a solid program as Coach Green left, so we are really going to need a coach that knows our system to come back in."

— Jamar Curry, UO Guard

Looking into the future — without Green

Don't look far for new coach

Well, Jerry Green finally did it. He sold out for the big bucks. A chance to go back to his southern roots and the opportunity to take advantage of a situation where he feels he can be competitive at the national level by taking the head coaching position at Tennessee on Tuesday.

So, where does the Oregon basketball program go from here?

First of all, it must only look forward. There's no use in looking at the past or reminiscing about Green.

Sure, he did a good job rebuilding Oregon from a sorry state just six years ago to a program that is now competitive on the Pacific-10 Conference level year in and year out.

During his tenure, he created a new excitement about Oregon basketball and had several memorable moments along the way. For that, he must be commended.

But that is now history. We must now focus on the future of the program.

Next season is pivotal to the future success of Oregon basketball. And was even before Green departed.

The program is at a crossroads right now. Will it build on the success of three straight winning seasons and continue to grow from a team that is now simply competitive in the conference to one that is a contender and perennial NCAA Tournament team?

Or will it be content with its progress under Green and settle in at the middle of the pack every season?

Some of those questions will be answered by the players. With the "big three" of Kenya Wilkins, Jamal Lawrence and Kyle Milling leaving, a number of young, unproven players such as A.D. Smith, Andre Larry and Mike McShane will need to step up.

Not to mention veterans Henry Madden and Jamar Curry, who will be needed to



Henry Madden is one of 10 returning Ducks who will be playing for a new head coach in their 1997-98 season.

PLAYERS: At least two of the returning Ducks are ready to start looking forward to the future and a new coach

By Ryan Frank
Sports Editor

Jamar Curry smiled at the thought.

A future matchup in the NCAA Tournament with former Oregon men's basketball head coach, and new Tennessee head coach, Jerry Green appealed to Curry.

While Jerry Green led the Oregon program to respectability in his five seasons at the Ducks' helm, and his departure to Tennessee left the Ducks' 10 returning players in "shock" at first, it obviously didn't take long for them to look toward the future.

According to Oregon's Henry Madden, the Ducks' vision of the future came with the thought of a possible promotion for Oregon's top assistant coach.

"After the initial shock worn off, we were all excited because we thought we had a great chance of getting [assistant coach Mark] Turgeon as the head basketball coach," Madden said at a press conference Tuesday afternoon.

Turgeon joined the Oregon coaching staff in 1992, Green's first season with the Ducks, after coaching Kansas' junior varsity squad to a 22-1 mark.

With the Ducks, Turgeon, who is just 32-years-old, has played a part in all aspects of the program, including running the Ducks' offense on game nights and much of the recruiting responsibility.

This intricate knowledge of the Oregon program has the players backing Turgeon as the team's next leader.



WHO: The Ducks' 10 returning players from their 1996-97 roster

WHAT: Many of the players were shocked with Green's decision Tuesday

PLAYERS CHOICE: Assistant coach Mark Turgeon appears to be the players' pick to succeed Green

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New and inexperienced Ducks start spring football practice

FOOTBALL:

Filling positions will be the major task for the Ducks

By Ryan Halvorsen
Sports Reporter

Testing the waters, or in this case all the new and up-and-coming players, will be just one of the things that Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti and the Ducks' coaching staff will be doing this spring with the opening of spring practice Tuesday.

With 12 starters lost to graduation and the early departure of cornerback Kenny Wheaton there will be a lot of holes to fill in the Duck's lineup and not a tremendous amount of experience to fill the void, but the arrival of seven newcomers with junior college experience should ease the task.

"We're starting out and we have a lot of things to teach and a lot of players to evaluate, probably more so than any other time in my career," Bellotti said. "I think that we have a lot of athleticism, but a lot of un-

proven, inexperienced players."

Hardest hit areas in the Oregon lineup by graduation are in the offensive and defensive lines. David Weber is the only returning offensive lineman who started last season, and Desmond Byrd is the only returning defensive lineman who started more than one game. On the offensive line, transfers Marco Aguirre and Scott Fergus will step in to compete with Stefan deVries and Michael Klews for starting positions.

Other positions the Ducks will have to fill on defense will be at the corners. The coaching staff will test Brandon McLemore and Michael Fletcher, both played safety



Two members of the Oregon football team work out the kinks during the opening day of spring football drills.

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