

BEST BETS

College Volleyball
Oregon State at Oregon
McArthur Court, 7 p.m.

SPORTS

Oregon Daily
Emerald

NBA needs new superstars to take over

Runners to your marks. Get set ... Go! The long, grueling 82-game marathon called the NBA regular season is about to get underway, starting with a full slate of games Friday night. But don't check back for results from this marathon any time soon. Don't expect to know much early in the race, either.

The NBA season is about endurance and stamina. It's not about who sprints out to a fast start, pulling away from the pack early. A fast start doesn't hurt, but it doesn't do much good in the long run. It's all about who's standing at the end of the race. Not just alive, but accelerating through the finish line ready for the second season.

There will be many peaks and valleys for all the participants, but in the end there is no doubt about which teams deserve to be in the playoffs and which should be taking an early summer vacation.

Perhaps that is what is so intriguing about the NBA. Many observers find the games boring until the playoffs come around. They say they'd rather watch regular season college basketball games because they're more exciting and the games mean more.

To a point, that is true. College teams can only lose six or seven games if they expect to be a sure bet for the NCAA Tournament. So there is a major emphasis on each and every game.

It is exactly the opposite reason that makes the NBA so interesting. Teams can lose games. There is time to recover from slumps, devastating injuries or even mid-season coaching changes. There is time for teams to make major trades in the middle of the season and gel with the new players. There is time for teams to adjust to off-season moves.

Teams don't have to be at top form at the beginning of the season. A team like Phoenix last season, for example, can lose its first 13 games, make a coaching change, overhaul the roster with major trades in midseason, recover in time to have a decent season, make the playoffs and cause some

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"I think this offense is Mike McShane's type of offense... he can see the floor and pick the man he wants to throw it to."

Terik Brown
UO guard

Point guard Mike McShane hopes to replace the departed Kenya Wilkins and make a name for himself in the process.

EMERALD

Oregon's Point of Attack

After a freshman season of learning the ropes, Oregon point guard Mike McShane looks to be the leader

By Chris Hansen
Assistant Sports Editor

The three-inch-long scar that curls its way down from the hairline at the top of Mike McShane's forehead and toward his right eye is a constant reminder of the

sophomore point guard's first-season battles on the Oregon men's basketball team.

The scar — the result of an accidental collision with teammate Jonathan Nelson while scrambling after a loose ball against Stanford last season that took 18 stitches to close — is also symbolic of the way McShane performed in his first season.

At various times last season McShane's play was error-prone, inconsistent and clumsy (like knocking heads

with your own teammate), all the things expected of a true freshman. At other times, though, McShane looked brilliant, needling half-court passes between defenders to an open man under the basket.

But no matter how much he struggled backing up Kenya Wilkins, McShane always brought energy and hustle (like diving after a loose ball and colliding with a teammate) onto the court.

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Win-hungry ducks ready for Beavers

Oregon will concentrate on left-side bitters Heather Lowe and Pia Ahlengard in Thursday's Civil War

Rob Moseley
Sports Reporter

If ever there was a perfect time for Oregon State to come to town, this is it.

The Beavers (12-11 overall, 4-7 Pacific-10 Conference) enter McArthur Court on Thursday to face an Oregon team still looking for its first win in the Pac-10 volleyball season.

The Ducks (8-15, 0-11) are stuck in a 13-match conference losing streak. The good news is that their last win came Oct. 18 of last year at home against Oregon State, when Oregon won in five games in front of a Mac Court record 3,716 fans.

However, in a match earlier this season in Corvallis, the Beavers took a four-game win. Oregon State's .265 team hitting percentage in that match is still its Pac-10 high this season.

"Last time out we didn't play very well," head coach Cathy Nelson said. "There's not something tactically or strategically that we need to do. We just

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Jenny Mowe will be asked to carry the Ducks' load at center. She is the only true center on the roster.

WENDY FULLER/Emerald

CENTERS

Mowe does double duty for Oregon

With the loss of Sandie Edwards, sophomore center Jenny Mowe will play up to 38 minutes a game

By Ryan Frank
Sports Editor

And now there is one.

Gone is center Renae Fegent to graduation. Gone is center Sandie Edwards, who decided not to play this season.

So who's left?

One player remains to fill the void left by two experienced centers on the Oregon women's basketball team.

But this is not just any one player.

Jenny Mowe returns for her sophomore season to do what she came to Oregon to do.

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