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Duck: Kent's new style fits McShane

■ Continued from Page 7

McShane chalks up his first season as being an invaluable learning experience while playing behind one of the best point guards in the country.

Now with Wilkins, the most prolific point guard in Oregon history, lost to graduation and a new up-tempo, running offense instituted by first-year head coach Ernie Kent, McShane looks to be the man who will run the show.

"It's an up-tempo style of play," McShane says. "If there is somebody up court, coach Kent wants the ball in their hands. That's something that I've always been pretty good at, keeping my head up, seeing the court and getting the ball to people that are open up court."

A fact that hasn't gone unnoticed by others.

"I think that this offense is Mike McShane's type of offense, where he can see the floor and pick the man he wants to throw it to," says Terik Brown, a player who expects to be on the receiving end of quite a few McShane passes.

There was a point last season, especially early in Pacific-10 Conference play when he was visibly struggling on court, that the idea of McShane as the Ducks' future point guard was met with despair.

Mike McShane File



■ **YEAR:**
 Sophomore

■ **HEIGHT:**
 6-foot-4

■ **STATS:**
 Averaged
 1.7 points
 and one as-

sist per game as true freshman last season while playing behind Kenya Wilkins at point guard... Led Salem's South High School to the State 4A Championship in 1996.

In fact, McShane averaged only 1.7 points, 1.1 rebounds and one assist per game. Not exactly the numbers of an up-and-comer.

But over the summer McShane hit the weight room. He also took a trip to Europe with the team in late August in which he started at point guard. That may have helped boost the sophomore's confidence, as well as his game.

"Mike's ability to do what we need him to do in our system will make him a more successful basketball player this year," Kent says. "The difference is our system... is more suited to his style of play. In turn, that will enhance his confidence in his ability to

play at this level."

There is little question that as the season progresses there will be a steady flow of comparisons between McShane and his predecessor. In fact, they have already started. One college basketball preview magazine noted that McShane wouldn't make anyone forget Wilkins any time soon.

"I try not to listen to those comments," McShane said. "I didn't put up great numbers last year, so maybe they have a right to say those things. But my role was to come in and give Kenya a rest and try and do some good things. At times I thought I did and at others I didn't do as well as I could have done."

"But I take it a lot more personally when those magazines pick us to finish ninth in the Pac-10. I know what I can do and I know what this team can do. We're going to surprise some people."

Especially with what McShane claims to be a deep and talented pool of players.

"Our strength will completely be in our numbers," he predicts. "We have 10 or 11 people who can play, but we aren't going to have one go-to guy who is going to score all the points. Everyone is going to contribute in one way or another."

Including McShane, who, if ever lacking motivation, need only look in the mirror to find inspiration.

Civil War: Injury may keep White sidelined

■ Continued from Page 7

need to play better volleyball."

One aspect of the Beavers' attack that Nelson did note as deserving of extra attention is its left-side hitters, Heather Lowe and Pia Ahlengard.

Lowe leads the team in kills with 373, while Ahlengard is second with 268. Lowe's 4.55 kills per game are fourth in the Pac-10, and Ahlengard is eighth at 3.88.

Ahlengard is also second in the conference with 3.26 digs per game.

"Also, their middle blocker Magan Prieto is very quick and has been difficult for us to defend in the past," Nelson said.

Prieto is third on the team in kills with 245 and recorded Oregon State's only triple-double of the season Oct. 17 against Arizona State, when she had 11 kills, 10 digs and 10 blocks.

Also notable is Beavers' setter Miya Malauulu, who is the Pac-10's active leader in assists with 5,100 and is one of only three women ever to record more than 5,000 assists in the Pac-10.

Oregon State has won two of its last three, defeating Arizona State and California before losing to Stanford on Sunday.

Oregon might be without the services of middle

blocker Alli White for the second week in a row. White sat out Friday's loss to Stanford with a shoulder injury, then played sparingly Saturday against Cal.

The injury prevented her from hitting at full strength and limited her to just three kills and a .067 hitting percentage against the Bears. She did, however, add four digs and three blocks.

Nelson is having White refrain from hitting this week in practice with the hope that four days of rest will be enough recovery time to allow her ample playing time against Oregon State.

One player who did shine in the two losses last weekend was Madeline Ernst, who recorded 31 kills and 21 digs in seven games to garner a nomination for Pac-10 player of the week.

Her 3.74 kills per game rank 10th in the Pac-10, and her total of 254 kills leads the team, with Alison Pepe's 174 second and Tia Stewart in third with 170. Stewart leads the team in blocks with 80, or 1.01 per game.

Freshman Michelle Graham is expected to start against the Beavers at setter. Her first collegiate start came against Portland last week, and she has started the last two Pac-10 matches. Graham had 53 assists in her last three matches.

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