



Men's NCAA Basketball
Arizona at USC
FSNW (23), 7:30 p.m.

SPORTS

Oregon Daily
Emerald



VS.
Mac Court
7 p.m.



Natalie Hughes is averaging more than three steals a game in the Ducks' last four contests, including five against Oregon State last Friday.

"It was her getting used to defending. She finally did figure out that to play 35 minutes she was going to have to defend."

Jody Runge
UO head coach

NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

ALL-AROUND PLAYER

By Ryan Frank
Sports Editor

When Natalie Hughes transferred to Oregon before last season, offense was her specialty.

She came to the Ducks from a community college in Arizona and could light up the scoreboard with anybody in the Pacific-10 Conference or hit the three-point shot like no other Oregon player.

As a point guard, she could drive to the basket and create a shot or pass the ball into a waiting teammate's hands.

With the ball in her hands, there was little Hughes couldn't do.

The problem was, without the ball, Hughes

Senior Natalie Hughes has improved her defense and made herself one of the conference's top all-around point guards

couldn't do the job head coach Jody Runge needed.

"I wasn't very interested in defense before, and didn't think I could play it," Hughes says.

Not only that, but Hughes, then a junior, was playing behind senior point guard Cindie Edamura, a defensive specialist, and hadn't embraced some of the necessities that come with playing at the Division I level, such as lifting weights.

The result was Hughes' lack of playing time early last season.

"It was her getting used to defending," says Runge, whose team welcomes No. 5 Stanford to

McArthur Court tonight for a 7 p.m. contest. "She finally did figure out that to play for 35 minutes she was going to have to defend, too."

Almost two seasons later, Hughes has not only discovered the importance of defense, but has become a consistent perimeter defender.

"She is playing tremendously defensively," Runge says. "She's staying in front of the ball and keeping people off the boards."

Hughes agrees with Runge, saying her biggest improvements have been made on the defensive side of the court.

In the past three weeks, Hughes has put together one of her best four-game stretches defensively

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Men look to upset Cardinal

Stanford lost to Arizona five days ago, which may make tonight's game more of a challenge

By Chris Hansen
Assistant Sports Editor

The first time Stanford lost to Arizona this season, Arizona State was able to sneak in two days later and steal a rare road win against the Cardinal.

Facing similar circumstances, Oregon will meet No. 11 Stanford at 7:30 tonight in Maples Pavilion, five days after the Cardinal lost for the second time to the Wildcats.

Will the Ducks (13-12 overall, 8-8 Pacific-10 Conference) have the same luck as the Sun Devils?

"It's never good to play a team

after they've been blown out because they want to prove themselves, particularly when they can do it at home," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent surmised.

"That just adds to the hype of the game and how tough it is going to be for us to be locked in mentally."

For both teams, the outcome of the game will hold major



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On tap

■ **WHAT:**
Pacific-10
Conference
men's basketball

■ **WHO:**
Oregon (13-12,
8-8) at Stanford
(24-4, 13-3)

■ **WHERE:**
Maples Pavilion,
Palo Alto, Calif.

■ **RADIO:**
KUGN (590 AM)
at 7:30 p.m.

Princeton taking the back door to NCAAs

Every year around this time the fans emerge.

There is no point in trying to hide from them. Some of them come from caves and remote dwellings outside Portland. Others come from the villages and shanty towns of Southern Oregon. But they'll all come. And sooner or later, they'll find you.

Fans of the Princeton men's basketball team always seem to gather in Eugene about this time of year. You'll see them at Doc's

OPINION



Joel Hood

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