



Rutgers: Excited just to be in NCAA Tournament

Oregon's first-round opponent has not been to the NCAA tournament since 1994

By Alex Pond
Sports Reporter

When Rutgers and Oregon meet in the first round of the NCAA Tournament on Saturday it will be a story of the veterans vs. the newcomers.

The Ducks are tournament experts, making their fifth straight appearance, while it will be foreign territory to this bunch of Scarlet Knights.

Making an appearance in the big dance for the first time since 1994, the Scarlet Knights are taking a sort of just-happy-to-be-there attitude in head coach Vivian Stringer's third season with the team.

"Our team is just so excited at the opportunity to play this game and to be in this tournament," said Stringer, who spent 13 years at Iowa before taking the job at Rutgers in 1995. "The players have been real hot since being named to participate. It didn't

matter if we were a 16 or a 5 seed."

The reaction of Stringer's players to the announcement that they were selected varied drastically from the reactions of some of Stringer's great Iowa teams in the past, the coach said.



"Some of my other teams' reactions were like 'Why are we playing here or there, or against this team or why do we have this seed?' Our team doesn't care, they are just glad to be going to the tournament playing somebody."

Stringer left Iowa following the 1994 season for personal reasons and landed on her feet at Rutgers, taking over a team that failed to make the NCAA Tournament for the first time in nine seasons.

Getting back to the tournament took longer than expected, she said.

"Probably in my own timetable we're a little behind schedule," she said, "but I think that's just me and having such high expectations. I am real proud of this team and what they've accomplished."

Just because the Scarlet Knights are happy to be in the tournament doesn't mean they'll be satisfied with a first-round-and-out performance.

"We're going there with the attitude of 'let's go to the Sweet 16.' Our goal right now is just to get to the Sweet 16, but it's going to be a tough, tough job."

Stringer said she is a bit concerned about the fact that this is the current players' first trip to the tournament and that it all could be a bit overwhelming.

"This is business," she said. "We could get fooled into thinking it's fun time. It's not."

Oregon women in excellent position with 12th seed



The women's basketball team runs drills during Tuesday night's practice at McArthur Court.

Waiting for the tournament parings to be announced on ESPN Sunday afternoon, I started thinking what the ideal seed for the Ducks would be.

I figured they would fall in the third 16 of the 64-team bracket, meaning they would be between an eight and 12 seed, which is where they ended up.

A quick glance at the bracket will tell even the most casual observer that an eight or nine seed is not the best spot. A win in the first round for either one of those seeds and they would be facing the region's top seed.

A 10 or 11 seed-ing also pits a team against a potential second-round opponent that is either a two or three seed.

A 12 seed, however, is by far the best of those four possibilities. The Ducks don't have to play the host school, Iowa State, in the first round and would play the lowest possible seed in the second round, the fourth-seeded Cyclones.

"It's not a bad seed," head coach Jody Ruge said Tuesday. "I don't know if we were seeded higher it would have been any better."

Looking in from the outside, it is easy to say the Ducks could have gotten a higher seed, but in reality this is not a bad spot for them to be in.

Tournament history

By making its fifth straight NCAA

Turn to **WOMEN**, Page 8

BASKETBALL



Oregon Women's Notes

by Ryan Frank

'Green' team second at Duck Invite

By Joel Hood
Sports Reporter

Just as head coach Steve Nosler had hoped, there were two Oregon golf teams that finished in the top four of the Oregon Duck Invitational in Creswell on Tuesday.

The surprise came when he found out which Oregon team had taken second place.

The Ducks' "green" team, which includes mostly freshmen and first-year players, shot a combined one-over-par 289 in the final round at the Emerald Valley Golf Course on Tuesday to finish tied for second with Nevada-Reno. Sparked by Jason Mattaini's two-under-par 70, the green team finished five shots ahead of the more experienced Oregon "yellow" team, which finished fifth overall.

"That just goes to show how much depth we have on this year's team," Nosler said. "It makes my job a lot harder, but it's defi-

nately a positive. If I have a kid in a funk, there are a lot of other kids we can substitute with and have confidence in."

Nick Davey led both Oregon teams with scores of 67, 73 and 74 to finish tied for fourth at two under par. The redshirt freshman finished two shots ahead of Mattaini and Ryan Lavoie, who tied for sixth overall.



The Beavers were led by Anthony Arvidson, who captured the individual title at six under par. Arvidson shot rounds of 67, 69 and 74 to close out the championship.

Pre-tournament favorite Brigham Young finished sixth overall. The No. 17 Cougars finished nine shots behind the champion Beavers.

Stats

TEAM:

1. OSU 862
2. UO(green) 865
- UNR 865
4. UW 866
5. UO(yellow) 870
6. BYU 871

INDIVIDUAL:

1. Arvidson, OSU
2. Bingham, UNR
3. Rashell, UW
4. Johnson, OSU
- Davey, UO
6. Janson, OSU
- Lavoie, UO
- Watney, FSU
- Kral, UW
- Mattaini, UO

Oregon overcame lameduck prediction

I wouldn't have bet a wooden nickel in November that the last game of Oregon's season would determine whether or not it would go to the postseason.

No way, no how.

But hey, what do I know?

How was I to know that this team of only two seniors (after center Mike Carson's season ended in December with an ankle injury), seven unproven and untested players and two walk-ons could contend for anything more than an 18- or 19-loss season?

But like I said, what do I know?

Oregon finished the season at 13-14 and tied for fifth place in the Pacific-10 Conference with California and Arizona State at 8-

BASKETBALL



Oregon Men's Notes

by Chris Hansen

Turn to **MEN**, Page 8