



## OREGON PREVIEW

# Early wins only a taste of things to come

*Athleticism and enthusiasm will be key to Oregon's success on the court this season*

By Rob Moseley  
Oregon Daily Emerald

The excitement is back at McArthur Court.

In the 1970s, a Dick Harter-coached men's basketball team nicknamed the Kamikaze Kids brought an unheard-of measure of hustle, enthusiasm and success to Mac Court. One of that group's top players, and the Ducks' second-leading scorer in his senior season of 1977, was a former high school All-American named Ernie Kent.

Now, 20 years later, Kent is in his second season as head coach of his alma mater, but for the first time he has a group of players who can recall the level of excitement from Kent's playing days.

By bringing in junior-college transfers like Alex Scales and freshmen like Gresham's Freddie Jones, Kent has brought a level of athleticism to Oregon that hasn't been seen in some time.

"It's going to help fan interest, I think particularly with the students. They like the excitement of the dunks and three-pointers and things like that," said Kent, who guided the Ducks to a 13-14 mark last season. "And you're going to see that, because we have some guys in Alex and Freddie who can put on some spectacular shows."

"But at the same time it's going to give you the opportunity to run more, press [on defense], have more depth and score more. It should equate in more success on the floor in terms of wins."

Oregon began its regular season with a 77-62 defeat of Coppin State on Sunday that allowed the Ducks to show off their five new additions to the roster and provided a measuring stick for the effectiveness of their first few weeks of practice.

"We've got to go back and look at tape now, and find out how things went," Scales said. "Coppin State, that was a good win for us, we've just got to take it day by day now."

Scales joined A.D. Smith in leading the Ducks with 19 points against the Eagles,

Turn to **BASKETBALL**, Page 12



Nick Medley/Emerald

The Ducks need senior center Mike Carson to come through with improved inside play this season.

## Men headed in exciting direction under Ernie Kent

In just his second season at the helm, head coach Ernie Kent is already putting his personal stamp on the Oregon men's basketball team.

After Kent's arrival in the spring of 1997, the whimpers about the inadequacies of McArthur Court and the Ducks' inability to lure top basketball recruits vanished. Kent made sure everybody understood he loved The Pit and everything about Oregon right off the tip. He said he did not need drastic changes to turn the Ducks into consistent winners.

Kent's promise seemed valid after his first season as he overachieved by all accounts with a team chock full of former head coach Jerry Green's recruits. Oregon finished 13-14 overall and had a legitimate chance at a winning record and a National Invitation Tournament bid until the final buzzer of its season-ending loss at California.

Now that Kent has had a chance to bring in his first recruiting class, it is paying immediate dividends. Even after just two games — a victory over an Australian club team and the regular-season opening defeat of Coppin State on Sunday — it is clear that these Ducks are different from last season's edition.

The most obvious difference is also the most entertaining: athleticism. The two most prominent members of Kent's squad, junior college transfer Alex Scales and heralded freshman Freddie Jones, have shown flashes of athletic brilliance unprecedented at Oregon.

Against the Eagles, Scales took all of one-and-a-half minutes to endear himself to Duck fans. After grabbing a defensive rebound, the former San Jacinto (Texas) Community College star took off. As he zig-zagged through Coppin State's transition defense, dribbled behind his

### Opinion



Tim Pyle

Turn to **PYLE**, Page 12

# Cardinal poses no problem as Oregon skates to victory

*The Ducks ice hockey team easily puts Stanford away and is now looking toward its upcoming challenge:*

UCLA

By Brett Williams  
for the Emerald

In the Ducks' most crucial doubleheader so far this season, the Oregon Club Sports ice hockey team avenged last season's loss to Stanford with an impressive Cardinal sweep over the weekend at Lane County Ice.

Stanford could do little to stop the Ducks over the weekend as it watched Oregon tally a 4-0 lead early in the first game on Friday and a 6-0 lead in the second game on Saturday.

"This weekend did a lot for our confidence," Oregon goalie Josh Hardin said. "We knew our chances to make the [Pacific-8 Conference] tournament would be greatly reduced if we did not win these games."

Instead, the Ducks' chances were enhanced because they have only three con-

ference games remaining and two games against teams that they've already swept this season.



Oregon's biggest test before the February's Pac-8 Tournament will likely come on Jan. 8 and 9, when Oregon plays at Los Angeles against a tough UCLA team.

"UCLA is definitely the team to beat this year," second-year Oregon head coach Geoff Norman said. "But, we definitely feel like we can accomplish our goal we set at the beginning of the season, which is to win the conference."

Oregon looked very much like a championship-caliber team against Stanford. After having its 4-0 lead cut to just 4-3 on Friday, the Ducks didn't self-destruct and instead

added a goal in the second and third periods to halt the Cardinal comeback.

Stanford wasn't given the same chance on Saturday, as Oregon mounted a 6-0 early lead and cruised to a 6-2 final. The two-game sweep of the Cardinal reaffirmed that the Ducks are now a team to be reckoned with as the Pac-8 Championships approach.

Forward Ari Friedman got the Ducks started on Friday with two goals that gave Oregon momentum that seemed to carry the team all weekend.

However, Friedman was just one key player for the Ducks during the important two-game stretch.

"We beat a very good team, and that has made our team that much stronger. Since I have been here, I have never seen our players this happy after our first couple of games," Hardin said.

*"We knew our chance to make the tournament would be greatly reduced if we did not win these games."*

Josh Hardin  
Oregon goalkeeper