



Known for her defensive prowess, Strange has filled in for injured guard Lisa Bowyer this season and has helped Oregon hold its Pac-10 opponents to about 55 points a game.

Strange

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Jody Runge said. "She has worked very hard and has done a good job of defending and making plays."

Perhaps the only thing Strange won't mimic is Bowyer's ability to hit three-pointers. Strange says she never practiced them in high school, and her only attempt in college came last Friday against Washington. Strange is now 0-1 from the three-point line.

"She's got an awesome jump shot," Bowyer said. "But you put her one foot behind the three point line and her whole shot changes. She'll try to do it, but she always looks down at the line. It's an ugly shot."

It's a problem that even ketchup can't cure, but if it could, Strange would try it. There are two things she can't live without — ketchup, which she is known to apply to almost any food source, and people.

"I don't know why I have to be around people," Strange said. "Lisa is the opposite, and I always tell her, 'Come on, just talk to me.' I can't just sit around and think about things, I have to go talk to someone."

Perhaps growing up a twin in

Fountain Valley, Calif., is what drives Strange's desire to seek out a willing listener. She regularly talks to her family and sees them at almost every game.

"She's a person that always needs someone around," Bowyer said. "Sometimes she just wants to come in and talk, but when I'm not in the mood, I'm not in the mood."

But because Strange's family can't talk to her during games, Bowyer will.

"Against Washington, Lisa said from the bench, 'play defense,'" said senior Natasha O'Brien, Bowyer and Strange's roommate. "And then she steals the ball straight out of Jamie Redd's hands. She's pretty aggressive. You only have to say something to her once and then she'll go out and try to do it."

And when Strange nails a shot or steals the ball, she transforms into a child who is on top of the world. She doesn't mask her joy.

"Nicole is a lot like she is at home when she's on the court," O'Brien said. "She jokes around a lot and she'll hit a jump shot and she'll run back with a big beaming

smile on her face."

Sometimes, though, Strange does things that she would rather not remember. During Sunday's matchup with Washington State, Strange called a timeout with just over three minutes remaining in the game. The Ducks had no timeouts remaining. Strange was assessed a technical foul, thus giving the Cougars a chance to continue their comeback.

The mistake wasn't fatal, but Strange can say only one thing about the incident: "It was a nightmare."

"The Pac-10 is tough," Strange said. "If you mess up, there is always someone that's going to come in for you. There is no room for error."

Tough or not, Strange is right where she always wanted to be — playing on the West Coast, not too far from her family. It's a place where everybody knows her name, but they ignore it.

"Basketball is my life right now," Strange said. "I can't possibly think of not playing after college. In high school my goal was to get a Division I scholarship, and I don't know why, but I knew I was going to get one. I just love this sport."

Rodman declares retirement

Despite lucrative offers, the Chicago Bull chooses to call it quits

By Rick Gano
The Associated Press

CHICAGO—The Worm took an unexpected turn. In another curious lifestyle choice, Dennis Rodman has retired.

Rodman, whose multicolored hair, body piercings and tattoos made an outlandish fashion statement across the NBA and beyond, has become the latest star to leave Chicago as the Bulls rebuild after the retirement of Michael Jordan.

The seven-time rebounding leader who once donned a wedding gown, kicked a cameraman, head-butted a referee, dated Madonna and married Carmen Electra is leaving the game, Rod-

man's agent said Tuesday.

"He doesn't want to play," Dwight Manley said, although Rodman has considered retiring in each of the last five years.

"He wants to go into the sports and entertainment field. Some people have convinced him that he wants to become a movie star."

Manley got the news from Rodman in a phone conversation Tuesday and said there are several teams still interested in signing the wacky 37-year-old Rodman, known for his ferocious workouts and frequent forays to Las Vegas.

Manley, who said he is severing his relationship with Rodman, declined to identify the teams that are interested in him.

One team not interested is the Chicago Bulls, who are housecleaning this week following the retirement of Jordan. Scottie Pip-

pen, Luc Longley and Steve Kerr are all headed to new teams.

Rodman won three championships with the Bulls in 1996, 1997 and 1998, and two titles with the Detroit Pistons in 1989 and 1990.

But off the court is where Rodman marketed himself and became a marked man for his antics and ventures into poor taste.

He once announced his marriage, only to show up at a New York book signing in a wedding gown and blond wig — sans groom; he offended Mormons and was fined \$50,000 for making derogatory comments during the 1997 finals in Salt Lake City; he skipped practice during the NBA Finals last summer to attend a wrestling match in Detroit, and later as "Rodzilla" teamed with Hulk Hogan to beat Karl Malone and Diamond Dallas Page.

Women

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ington State was able to get back into its game with Oregon last Sunday at McArthur Court hasn't really done the math.

The Cougars (7-7, 1-4) rank third in the Pac-10 in scoring with 75 points a game and rank first in three-point accuracy, hitting 35 percent of their shots from behind the arc.

Washington State's Tricia Lamb and Alke Dietel currently rank first and third, respectively, in the Pac-10 in scoring.

Lamb, a sophomore from Endicott, Wash., averages just more than 18 points a game

from her guard position, while Dietel, a 6-foot-4 sophomore forward from Halle, Germany, scores about 17 a game.

Another spark for the Cougars is sophomore forward Victoria Harrod, who scored 10 points during Washington State's 21-0 second-half run against the Ducks.

Look for the Cougars — who have been in every conference game this season despite their notching just one victory — to be a force in the Pac-10 in the years to come.

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