

Oregon guard Darius Wright, a member of the Pac-10's All-Newcomer team, lays up two of his 10 points against Cal on Saturday. *Nick Medley/Emerald*

## Men

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started, when talk of an NCAA bid was realistic, it is indeed a great reward considering Oregon's trials and tribulations in 1999.

After an 8-1 preseason that had Oregonians dreaming of a top-25 season, the Ducks suffered one of the most disheartening tailspins of any team in the nation.

The Ducks won just twice in the first half of the Pacific-10 Conference season, both in overtime. Oregon lost seven times, six of those by four or less points.

But after a last-second loss to UCLA to start the second half of the conference schedule, Oregon finished as one of the hottest teams in the Pac-10, justifying its late mention as a possible NCAA

participant.

The Ducks won six of their last eight games, losing to two top-10 teams, Stanford and Arizona.

The Yellow Jackets, on the other hand, have taken a nearly opposite road to Eugene.

Georgia Tech began the season 10-3 but stumbled to a 15-15 final record, including a first-round loss to North Carolina in the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament.

"Lately we've been getting beaten up," Yellow Jackets head coach Bobby Cremins said. "We won at Florida State, and then our schedule kind of bit us in the butt."

Georgia Tech beat the Seminoles 111-108 in overtime in Tallahassee on Feb. 11 but won just

once more in their last six games, all but two on the road.

The Yellow Jackets fell 78-58 and 67-58 to Louisville and Wake Forest, respectively. They then returned home for two games, the first a 91-60 loss to nationally ranked Maryland. They managed to win once more, 74-68 over Virginia, then lost 92-64 to Clemson and 78-49 to the Tar Heels.

"We're young and inexperienced, but we're capable of being a good team," Cremins said. "We have yet to show that we're a good team, though."

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## Sports Brief

### Hornets announce interim coach

FORT MILL, S.C. — Paul Silas was appointed interim head coach of the Charlotte Hornets today, one day after Dave Cowens quit because he felt he was not being paid enough.


Silas, the only one of Cowens' three assistants with previous NBA head coaching experience, takes over a team struggling on and off the court.

"Where this thing is going, who the heck knows?" said Silas, a friend and former Celtics' teammate of

Cowens. "Hopefully, miracles do happen."

Cowens, dissatisfied with his salary, walked into the office of general manager Bob Bass before the team's practice Sunday at its training center and quit.


Cowens, the only coach to lead the Hornets to consecutive 50-win seasons (54-28 in 1996-97, 51-31 in 1997-98), signed a three-year, \$1.89 million contract in May 1996. The contract called for him to get \$575,000 his first year, \$625,000 last year and \$675,000 this season.


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