

Oregon Daily
Emerald
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Sports

Best Bet
NBA Basketball
Minnesota vs. Sacramento
7:30 p.m., TNT



Ducks aim to run and gun

■ The women's basketball team gets the ball rolling with a Sunday exhibition game against Lokomotiva Kosice

By Mirjam Swanson
Oregon Daily Emerald

After 18 practices and a few public scrimmage exhibitions, the Oregon women's basketball team is set to mix it up with a group of traveling Slovaks.

Lokomotiva Kosice takes on the Ducks, co-defending Pacific-10 Conference champs, for an exhibition game Sunday at 2 p.m. at McArthur Court.

"We're kind of sick of playing each other," Oregon point guard Shaquala Williams said. "It's gonna give us an opportunity to play against some different people. In practice when we run our offense, half the time we cheat, so I think playing against somebody else is going to help us get that rust off and really see where we're at."

Last season's 99-65 exhibition blowout of Alvik of Sweden proved to be a fitting prelude to the season for the Ducks and for Williams, who had

nine points and six assists in her first McArthur Court appearance.

Sunday's game might give Oregon's newcomers a similar opportunity.

"They're gonna get their opportunity to play," Williams said. "Hopefully, they'll use that to kind of springboard themselves in and to introduce themselves to the fans."

In addition to the five new faces on the floor, the Ducks' offense will also have a slightly different look. Oregon has designed a faster-paced, more guard-oriented attack.

"We're doing a few new things," assistant coach Fred Litzenger said. "So it's taken us awhile to pick that up. Everybody's working real hard, and it seems like we're all on the same page."

And that page, according to Williams, reads like this: Move, move, move.

"I run the plays," she said. "So as far as I'm concerned, we're gonna

run what I want to run. Our offense is going to be more wide open — there won't be as much standing on the wing and passing it in to the post.

On tap

What: Women's basketball exhibition

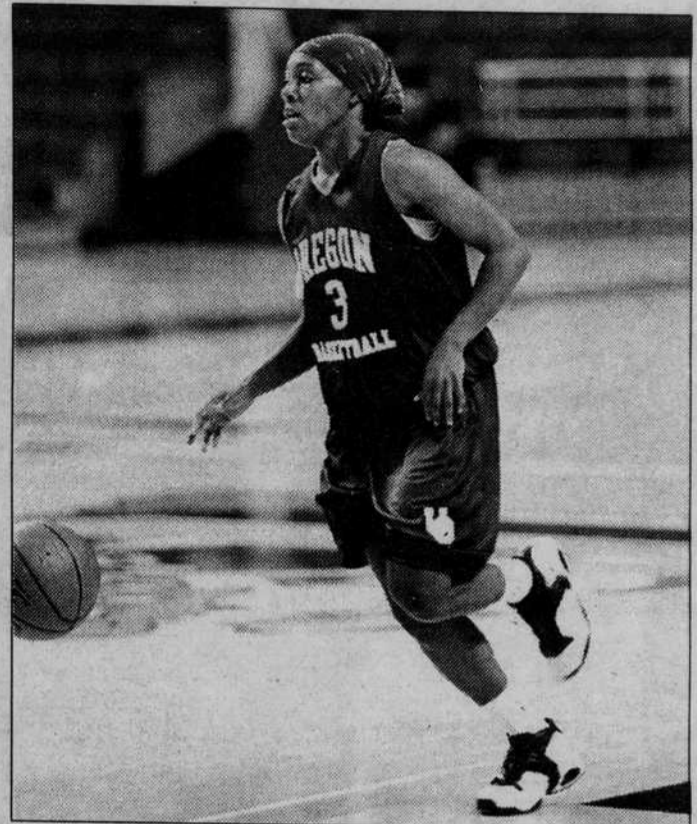
Who: Oregon vs. Lokomotiva Kosice

Where: McArthur Court

When: Sunday, 2 p.m.

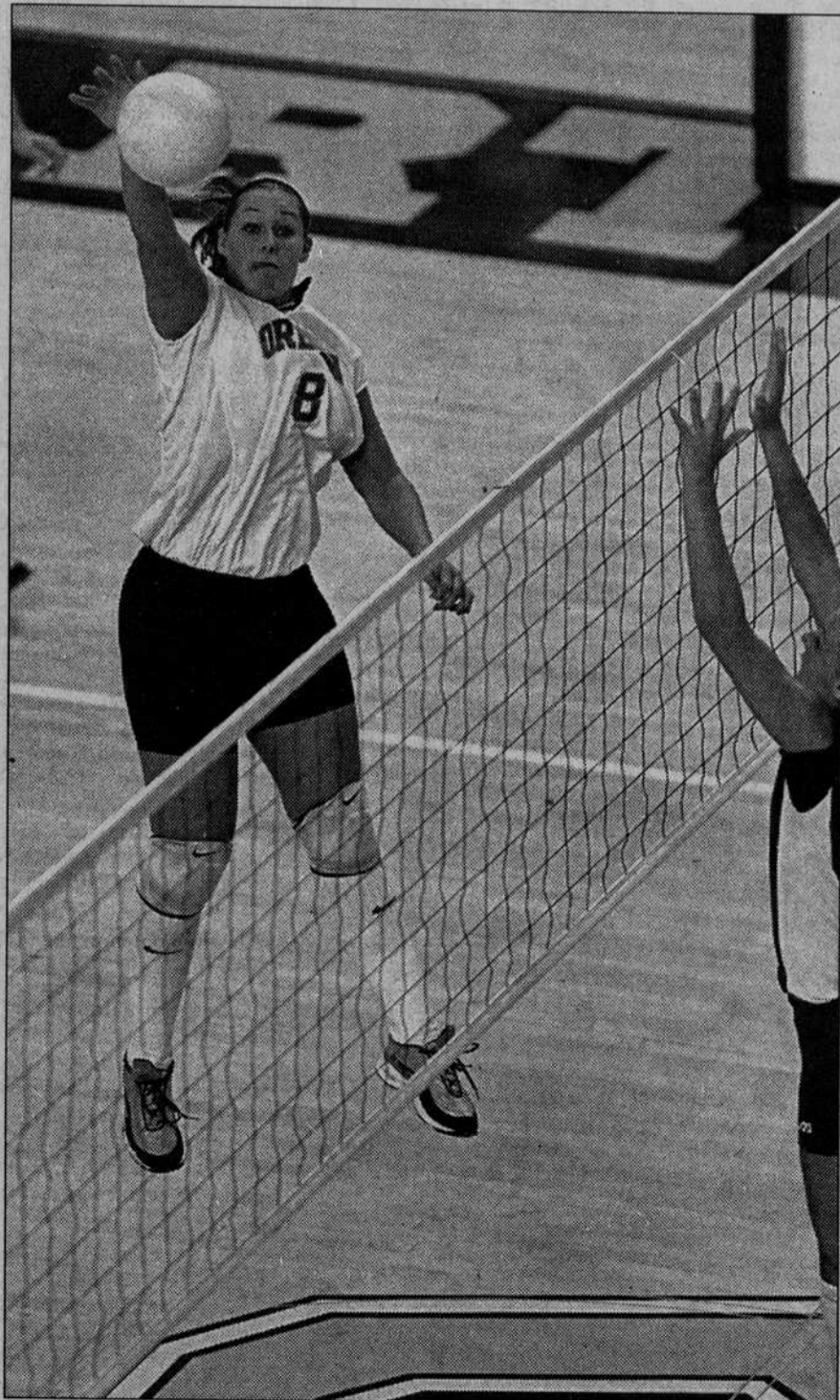
where you find out where players are in terms of playing the game," Litzenger said. "You find out who can make adjustments and who can't. That's one of the good things about having an exhibition game early."

Eugene is the second stop on Lokomotiva Kosice's tour of the Pac-10. It plays at Washington on Saturday and has rendezvous with Stanford and California later next week.



Shaquala Williams and her teammates are hoping to get it right Sunday.

Jeffrey Stockton Emerald



The Ducks and Nicole Allen hope they're able to knock down Oregon State tonight at McArthur Court.

Jeffrey Stockton Emerald

UO wants Civil War win, hopes to end losing streak

■ The Beavers come to McArthur Court with two players gone and bring a six-match losing streak

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

A civil war win is always sweet — but for the Oregon volleyball team, it would taste even better.

The Ducks (6-16 overall, 0-9 Pacific-10 Conference) have been marred by errors, inconsistency and injuries to key players. The result is a seemingly endless 16-match losing streak. Most of those matches were three-game sweeps, including Oregon's road loss to Oregon State on Oct. 8.

But things have changed since then. The Beavers (8-13, 2-11) come to McArthur Court at 7 p.m. without starting setter Brandi Bonnarens, who is out indefinitely with a knee injury. More importantly, an unhappy Sarah Bjeldanes quit the team last week, eliminating the key element of Oregon State's offense.

And like Oregon, the Beavers are struggling. They are on a six-match losing streak and five of those were in three games.

"They probably feel a lot like we felt when we didn't have a lot of our players," junior Amy Banducci said. "It's a pretty helpless feeling when you're doing something new, something out of swing. We're going to try to jump on it and take advantage of their weaknesses."

The Ducks are not without setbacks of their own. Outside hitters Monique Tobbagi and Heather Gilmore are in the midst of battling injuries.

Tobbagi sat out of the Ducks' loss to Portland on Oct. 5 with a stress fracture in her fibula and did not re-enter the lineup until the rematch with Washington State on Oct. 22.

The sophomore has been on the court since then but is now experiencing stress-fracture symptoms in her other leg. Tobbagi was prohibited from jumping in practice this week and her status

for tonight is questionable.

"It's going to come down to her health," Oregon head coach Cathy Nelson said. "It's a good break because we only play one match this weekend, but the biggest factor is her health."

On tap

What: Women's volleyball

Who: Oregon (6-16, 0-9) vs. Oregon State (8-13, 2-11)

Where: McArthur Court

When: Tonight, 7 p.m.

Gilmore, meanwhile, is nursing pain in her shoulder that has limited her hitting strength. She is expected to play.

Nelson said that the Ducks' lack of confidence, not injuries, must be overcome if they are to capitalize on the Beavers' situation.

"Confidence is going to be our biggest issue for the rest of the year," Nelson said.

"We've got to be having fun in practice and enjoying the game of volleyball. It's hard for some — we're not getting the rewards of winning — so it's hard to stay motivated."

In the first Civil War match in Corvallis on Oct. 8, Bjeldanes led Oregon State to a dominating three-game win. The Ducks, without Tobbagi, showed some spark in game three but couldn't find a way to score down the stretch.

Since the first matchup with the Beavers, the Ducks have shown signs of improvements in several occasions but have failed to win a single game. The last time Oregon won a game was in its four-game loss to Portland.

"We talked about goals today, a lot of which was going all out, 100 percent, and holding nothing back — no regrets," Banducci said. "Obviously we have nothing else to lose so just give it all we have."

"Here at Mac Court, we're dying for a win right now. We're going to go out there and take advantage of what we have and go and win."