

OREGON 73

	Min	FG	FT	R	A	P
Dion	26	1-4	5-6	1	1	7
Meharry	29	4-9	2-3	4	2	10
Mowe	14	0-2	0-2	2	0	0
Williams	37	5-14	6-7	5	3	16
Strange	36	9-13	3-4	1	2	21
Piers	2	0-1	0-0	1	1	0
Shreve	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Craighead	18	1-6	0-0	0	1	3
Wolvert	34	6-8	4-6	11	2	16
Unaka	3	0-1	0-0	3	0	0
Totals	200	26-58	20-28	28	12	73

Shooting: 44.8 3-point: 1-7 (Craighead 1-3, Williams 0-2, Dion 0-1, Meharry 0-1)
*includes 3 team rebounds

OREGON DUCKS VS. VIRGINIA TECH HOKIES

Player of the Game

Senior guard Nicole Strange connects on her first five shots and finishes with a career-high 21 points to lead the Ducks to the 20-point victory over the Hokies.



Quote of the Game

"It was really weird — I swear they didn't know I was on the court. I don't think anyone was guarding me, but I liked it."

— Nicole Strange, UO guard

VIRGINIA TECH 53

	Min	FG	FT	R	A	P
Hicks	36	7-18	1-2	9	1	20
Williams	37	6-11	4-5	14	0	16
Jones	36	4-6	1-2	9	3	9
Lipton	18	0-1	1-2	0	0	1
Wetzel	39	1-6	3-6	3	5	5
Starling	27	0-5	1-2	1	2	1
Seaver	7	0-0	1-2	1	0	1
Totals	200	18-47	12-21	40	11	53

Shooting: 38.3 3-point: 5-14 (Hicks 5-12, Wetzel 0-2)

*includes 3 team rebounds

Sports

Best Bet

NBA Basketball

Indiana vs. Portland

7 p.m., FoxSports Northwest



Editor in chief: Laura Cadiz
Sports Editor: Tim Pyle

Ducks stomp No. 21 Hokies for title

■ No. 16 Oregon beats No. 21 Virginia Tech by 20 points to win the Pepsi Shootout at home

By Mirjam Swanson
Oregon Daily Emerald

So much for making it easier to attract quality teams to McArthur Court.

The No. 16 Oregon women's basketball team (3-0 overall) proved most inhospitable as it stormed through its own Pepsi Shootout during Thanksgiving weekend. The Ducks demolished Howard (0-3) 77-42 on Friday and then kept No. 21 Virginia Tech (2-2) at bay, winning 73-53 in front of a spirited 4,686 in Saturday's championship game.

"This is a hard place to play," Hokies guard Sarah Hicks said. "I didn't realize it until we walked in, and I saw 'The Pit.' I'm like, 'The Pit? What's the Pit?' I found out tonight."

Jody Runge knows exactly what Hicks was talking about.

"If it's a neutral court, things could have been different," the Ducks' head coach said. "Our home-court advantage is huge."

"We've been finding it difficult to get people to come and play us for a long time. More than being a good basketball team, I think it's that we're a long ways away. [Virginia Tech and season-opening opponent Western Kentucky] traveled a tremendous distance to come here."

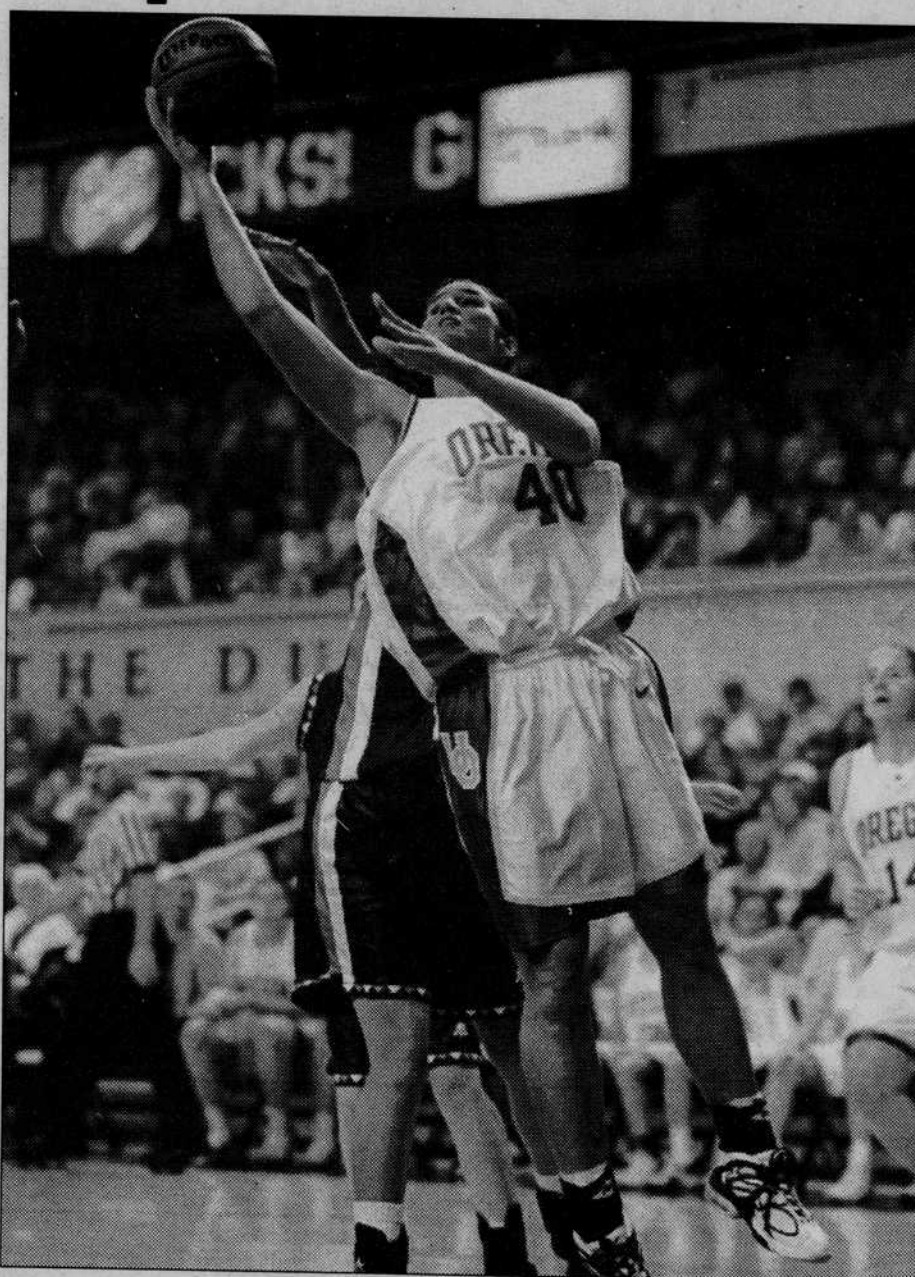
Of course, the "good basketball team" part of it has a lot to do with it too, even for other ranked teams.

It's far from easy, facing a team that goes at least nine players deep — all of whom represent legitimate weapons.

Oregon's biggest weapon against the Hokies: Nicole Strange.

The senior guard shot the lights out, finishing with a career-high 21 points on nine-of-13 shooting in claiming tournament MVP honors.

Turn to **Women**, Page 9



Angelina Wolvert spins around a Hokie for two of her 16 points to go along with 11 rebounds Saturday.

John Stoops for the Emerald

Strange ensures that Hokies pay for their strategy

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

Virginia Tech walked onto McArthur Court with a plan to beat unbeaten Oregon — drop a player from the wing, then double team the Ducks' skilled post players.

On a different night, the plan may have worked. But on Saturday night, something Strange happened.

And her name was Nicole.

The Oregon senior guard, who had two points in 17 minutes against Howard on Friday night, torched the Hokies and finished with 21 points on nine-of-13 shooting. Her 21 points is a career high, eclipsing the 13 points she scored against Nevada-Las Vegas in December of 1996.

"It was really weird — I swear they didn't think I was on the court," Strange said. "I don't think anyone was guarding me, but I liked it."

For much of Strange's 36 minutes on the floor, she wasn't guarded. Strange was apparently the player chosen by Virginia Tech to leave open, enabling the double teams down low.

In the second half, Strange delivered an assist to Lindsey Dion on the Ducks' opening possession. Soon after, she sank two more jumpers in less than a minute, putting Oregon up 44-27 with 15 minutes, 55 seconds remaining.

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STRANGE

Ducks to meet No. 13 Minnesota

The Ducks' Dec. 31 Sun Bowl opponent is the 8-3 Golden Gophers, who are enjoying their first winning season since 1990

By Tim Pyle
Oregon Daily Emerald

Preparation for the Sun Bowl went from one extreme to the other for the Oregon football team Wednesday when it was announced that the Ducks will face No. 13 Minnesota, not No. 20 Purdue, in the Dec. 31 game.

The Golden Gophers (8-3 overall, 5-3 Big 10 Conference) feature a punishing defense and a conservative, run-driven offense — styles that are a far cry from the Boilermakers' spread attack.

Purdue (7-4, 4-4) was expected to be Oregon's opponent, but the Outback Bowl selected the Boilermakers as its Big 10 representative, and the Alamo Bowl chose Penn State. That left Minnesota or Illinois, and Sun Bowl officials promptly extended an invitation to a surprising Golden Gopher team that will be making its first bowl appearance

in 13 seasons.

Ducks head coach Mike Bellotti admitted Wednesday his lack of immediate knowledge about Minnesota.

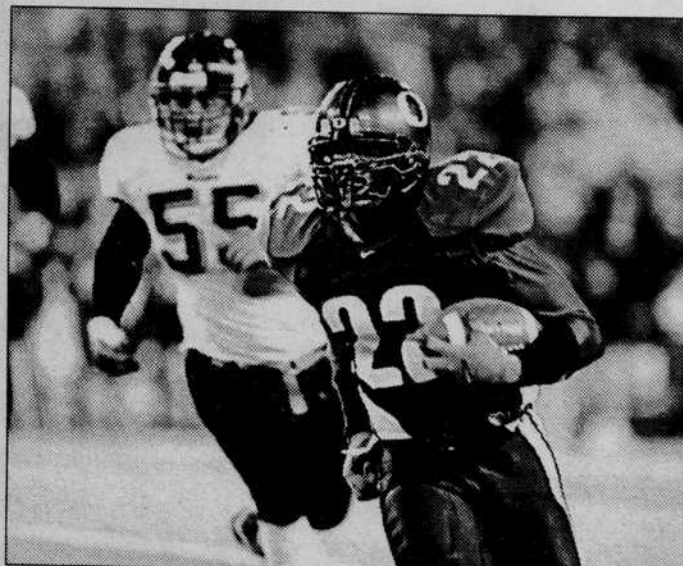
"I do think I caught a couple of not full games, but I did watch Minnesota play a little bit," said Bellotti, who has earned his fourth bowl game in five seasons as head coach.

Golden Gophers' head coach Glen Mason was equally in the dark about the Ducks.

"We're ecstatic about being involved in the Sun Bowl," said Mason, who is a finalist for college football coach of the year. "I'm somewhat familiar with Mike Bellotti and the Oregon program and anticipate a very good football team."

The Golden Gophers are led offensively by running back Thomas Hamner and quarterback Billy Cockerham. That senior duo ig-

Turn to **Bowl game**, Page 9



Reuben Droughns and the Ducks will face No. 13 Minnesota in the Sun Bowl.

Scott Barnett Emerald