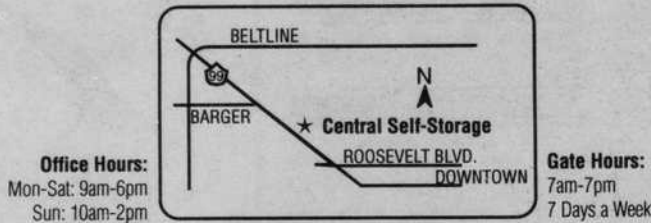


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## Upset loss gets Ducks rolling

■ After losing to Cal State-Northridge on Dec. 11, Oregon wins five of its next six during the winter break

By Tim Pyle  
*Oregon Daily Emerald*

On Dec. 11, the Oregon men's basketball team got a wakeup call.

Cal State-Northridge, with former Duck player Andre Larry and coach Bobby Braswell leading the way, shocked Oregon 79-77 at McArthur Court to hand the lethargic Ducks their first loss.

Larry's rebound basket with nine seconds left gave the Matadors a 78-77 lead. Oregon quickly inbounded to point guard Darius Wright, who drove the length of the court but missed a layup attempt.

Cal State-Northridge rebounded and added a free throw to seal the upset and drop the Ducks to 3-1. Larry, who played at Oregon for two seasons before transferring prior to the 1997-98 season, scored 23 points on nine-of-12 shooting and added eight rebounds to pace the Matadors. Senior forward Alex Scales led the

Ducks with 23 points, including five three-pointers.

Oregon looked like a different team in routing Denver 101-53 at McArthur Court. The Ducks shot a season-high 60 percent and were topped by sophomore guard Anthony Norwood, a junior-college transfer who scored 19.

In the Portland Jam on Dec. 18 at Portland's Rose Garden, Oregon played its best game of the young season in defeating previously unbeaten Minnesota 82-75. Senior forward A.D. Smith led seven Ducks in double figures with 14 points.

Junior-college transfers Julius Hicks and Bryan Bracey steadied the Duck inside game with 11 and 10 points, respectively.

Sophomore guard Ben Lindquist, another junior-college

transfer, contributed 13 points and four assists and was named the game's MVP.

After trouncing severely out-matched Northern Arizona 91-54 on Dec. 22 at McArthur Court, the Ducks headed to Hawaii for the Rainbow Classic from Dec. 28-30.

Oregon met then-No. 19 Wake Forest. Scales came through against the Ducks' first nationally ranked opponent with a season- and career-high-tying 26 points, including an off-balance jump shot with 4.7 seconds left that gave Oregon a 67-66 upset win.

The Ducks recorded a second straight impressive performance a night later by defeating Gonzaga, which advanced to the NCAA Tournament's Elite Eight last season, 70-64 behind Smith's 22 points and seven rebounds.

But Oregon was denied the tournament championship and a possible national ranking when it fell to host Hawaii 66-63 on Dec. 30. The Ducks shot a season-low 39 percent in falling to 8-2.



## Tough road takes toll on UO women

■ Oregon drops to No. 24 from No. 9 after losing three times during a road trip that doesn't end until Jan. 20

By Mirjam Swanson  
*Oregon Daily Emerald*

What doesn't kill them should only make them stronger — or so hope the road warriors on the Oregon women's basketball team.

When the holiday break started Dec. 9, the Ducks were ranked No. 9, having cracked the top 10 for the first time since the 1981-82 season. After demolishing Colorado in a 90-58 win at McArthur Court, they were undefeated and seemingly primed for the brutal 10-game road trip ahead.

Oregon, now 9-3, has traveled from Missouri to Illinois and California. It's dropped from No. 9 to No. 24 in the polls. And it won't be home until Jan. 20, when Washington comes to town.

The excursion began with a 79-69 win against Kansas State on Dec. 10 in the first game of the Women's Sports Foundation Classic in Springfield, Mo.

But Oregon suffered its first set-

back of the season the next day, with a 70-69 loss against Southwest Missouri State.

Oregon still could have won as time expired, despite the Lady Bears' Jackie Stiles' 38 points.

Forward Brienne Meharry managed to draw a foul while converting a lay-in as the buzzer sounded. With no time left, Meharry had a chance to send the game into overtime.

But she missed, and the Ducks went on to face then-No. 23 Santa Barbara on Dec. 13 with a blemished record and at less than full strength, as three Oregon starters suffered injuries in the Southwest Missouri State loss, though none extraordinarily serious.

Center Jenny Mowe was thought to have a broken nose, guard Lindsey Dion tore cartilage in her right knee and Angelina Wolvert stretched her patella tendon, head coach Jody Runge said.

The Ducks couldn't hang with the athletic Guachos, losing de-

spite an overwhelming defensive performance by Mowe, who blocked five shots in eight minutes. The 74-61 defeat dropped the Ducks to 6-2.

Five days later, Oregon took the floor at the Rose Garden in Portland, for its part in the Portland Jam. Although then-No. 15 Oregon beat the Vikings by 37 points, 79-42, the Ducks weren't pleased.

"We won by 40, but we still have a lot to work on," sophomore point guard Shaquala Williams said. "[This was] flat out lack of effort."

Then-No. 19 Oregon headed to Chicago, and beat Depaul 86-82 on Dec. 22, as Williams matched her career high with 31 points. Then the Ducks hung on to beat Santa Clara 66-60 on Dec. 30.

The three-game win streak was halted on Jan. 2 against San Francisco, as then-No. 22 Oregon suffered its third loss, 66-60.



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