

## UO Men

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has coached against.

What the Ducks need to do to fulfill their promise is rediscover that old McArthur Court magic, starting with games Thursday and Saturday against California and No. 3 Stanford, respectively.

A Pac-10 home start like last season's — which began with the infamous Adam Spanich-spurred one-point loss to Southern California and progressed into an 0-4 conference start — would be disastrous.

Already this season, the Ducks have allowed a less-talented opponent, Cal State-Northridge, to escape Mac Court with an unlikely victory. That loss, however, did come on Dec. 11, when many students had left for winter vacation and Oregon was still going through early-season struggles.

Ducks head coach Ernie Kent has often said during this season and last that he believes

his teams play better on the road, where they can escape the pressures of home and concentrate solely on the task at hand.

But for Oregon to become a consistent force in the Pac-10 and nationwide, as Kent hopes, the Ducks have to be dominant at home. And there is no better time to start than this week with sweeping the Bay Area schools, a feat that would probably get Oregon into the rankings and put them well on their way to the most successful season in recent history.

### Sensational Smith

Senior forward A.D. Smith has made a career out of surprising people, whether they be opponents, fans, the media or even his own teammates.

He has been called too slow.

He has been called too old-school.

And he has been called too small — at least by power forward standards.

But Smith nevertheless contin-

ues to produce.

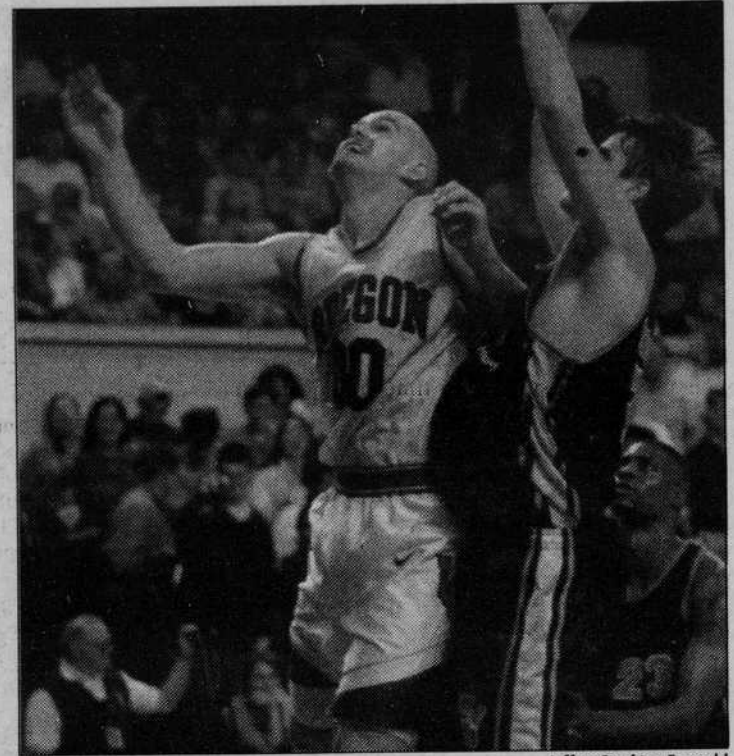
So far this season, the 6-foot-8, 233-pound graduate of Eugene's Churchill High School has been Oregon's best, most consistent player.

After Saturday night's 22-point performance at Oregon State, Smith is averaging a team-high 16.3 points per game, up from his average of 13 points last season.

More importantly, Smith is getting his points by taking good shots, as shown by his sparkling .566 shooting percentage.

Smith's rebounding numbers may be down from last season — from 7.9 to 5.7 per game — but that is more the result of new Ducks' big men Bryan Bracey and Julius Hicks helping out than of any shortcoming of Smith's own. Besides, he still leads the team in that category, as well.

If Smith continues to play at the level he has so far, he could end his Oregon career with his biggest surprise — first-team all-Pac-10 honors.



Jeffrey Stockton Emerald

A.D. Smith is making the most of his senior season, averaging 16.3 points per game.

## UO Women

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we're at right now."

Oregon head coach Jody Runge is not surprised by the unpredictable start of the Pac-10 season.

"There's a lot of parity between teams on their home courts like Arizona State, Cal and USC," Runge said. "Those are going to be tough places to play."

With two Pac-10 games completed for most the conference, UCLA has survived some rough, early season team-chemistry mishaps to find itself tied for first with Arizona State.

That's right — Arizona State. Southern California rounds out the three-way tie.

The combined scoring margin UCLA held over Washington and Washington State was 63 points. But in terms of playing tough against tough competition, Arizona State leads the way with its 74-68 upset of Stanford last Friday in Tempe, Ariz.

Stanford, by the way, was again left off of the elite top 25 ESPN/USA Today coaches' poll.

"[Stanford's ranking] is very deceiving," Runge said. "Stanford has been a pretty good team. Maybe they haven't played from time to time but they haven't had [Lindsey] Yamasaki either. So they get her back, she has 18 points, and that's a pretty good shot in the arm."

Williams echoed that sentiment.

"Stanford is a very good team," she said. "And they lost a few games early, but you have to keep in mind that early in the season they were up on Tennessee all game, and Tennessee's the No. 2-ranked team in the country. They're always solid, and when they're at home they're even tougher."

### Putting the Shaqles on Flores

Not many players in the Pac-10 are more agile, or as agile, as Williams. She knows it, and so do those who watch her.

But Williams also knows about an athlete named Milena Flores. She's a senior guard on the Cardinal — who led the conference in assists last season with 7.3 per game.

Although her team may be un-

ranked, Flores' production still makes her one of the best players in the conference. She had nine points and 12 assists in Stanford's upset of No. 18 Arizona last Saturday.

Williams is looking forward to her probable matchup with the 5-6 guard.

"She's always pretty tough offensively and defensively, just because she's one of the few people who are as fast or faster than I am," Williams said. "She really puts a lot of pressure on me both offensively and defensively."

"I kind of use her as a measuring stick. She's two years older, and she's one of the best players in the Pac-10. You always try to measure yourself against them."

### Get those boards

Oregon emerged from nonconference play with a respectable

**“If we want to be among the elite teams, we have to play like [an elite team] every game.**

**Shaquala Williams guard**

502-452 edge in rebounds over its opponents. Much of the Ducks' advantage, however, came from high-scoring home games.

Against Oregon State last Saturday, Oregon's struggles on the boards became clearer when the Beavers out rebounded the Ducks 43-31.

"We just need to block out," forward Angelina Wolvert said. "At the OSU game, they were generally a lot taller than we were. We just didn't get a butt on anybody to block them out so they got a lot of easy rebounds."

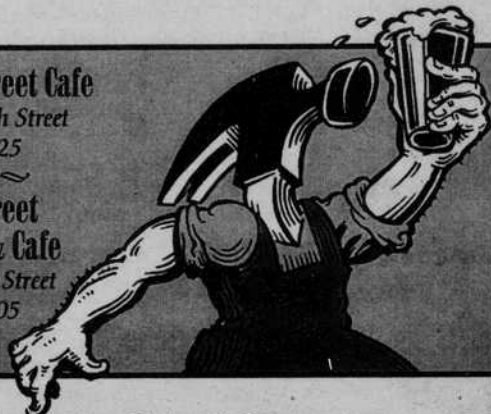
Rebounding is near the top of Runge's list of things to work on, especially going into Pac-10 play. California is averaging 37 rebounds per game and Stanford is averaging 37.8.

"That's really ridiculous for this team not to be a good rebounding team, but we aren't right now," Runge said. "We're not doing a good job at getting to people and blocking them out. It's just not a priority sometimes for us. We may have four doing it, but we don't have all five. It needs to become a priority."

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