

Fredrick

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But all of Pauley Pavilion noticed the redshirt sophomore after a quick steal and a coast-to-coast drive capped with a strong move to the hoop.

In nine minutes of play — not a big share of time in a 40-minute game — Fredrick managed to have a breakout effort. She scored 10 points, including six in Oregon's pivotal 8-2 run late in the game.

"I sat out all last year and didn't get a chance to play in any of the big games, or play in any of the games for that matter," Fredrick said. "That was motivation enough to go out and perform."

Fredrick's play not only earned the attention of UCLA, but it earned the respect of her teammates who have encouraged her since she came to Oregon.

"I hope she can continue what she did last weekend," Oregon point guard Shaquala Williams said.

"I hope that was a real confidence boost for her. It shows her what she can do if she comes out and plays as hard as she can."

"She kind of got a taste of the limelight and all the good things, so I think she'll want to continue to have that."

People who saw Fredrick play in the season's early going would not have guessed that she would have been so key in the Ducks' biggest game of the year. In Oregon's opening exhibition match with Lokomotiva Kosice, Fredrick was limited to two points in five minutes.

But Fredrick's control and calmness began to set in during the past couple weeks. Rather than rushing a bad shot against UCLA, Fredrick exercised quickness and patience.

"I never thought it would be



Hard work in practice is the source of Alyssa Fredrick's progress in the Pac-10.

this hard to play, and then when I got a chance to play, I was like, 'oh my gosh, this is scary,'" she said. "Now it's kind of comforting, instead of being scared out there to perform."

Fredrick was lured out of high school by Beth Burns, then head coach at San Diego State. But before the 1996 high school All-America honorable mention could ever dawn a uniform, Burns had accepted a coaching job and a bigger paycheck at Ohio State.

Her replacement, Barb Smith, brought in a new system. Not only did Fredrick realize she strongly disapproved of the new coaching system, but she also did not like the education she was receiving.

"Things were terrible," Fredrick said.

"I loved playing in front of my family, and all my friends got to see me all the time, but the situation was not what I wanted at all."

Fredrick thought about going to Oregon during her lone season at San Diego State. She'd seen the Ducks play on television, she'd checked into Oregon's academic catalogs and she also played in McArthur Court at the 1997 Pep-

si Shootout.

The rest, she says, is history.

The road has been long, but Fredrick welcomes her new role with the Ducks.

"It's not as frustrating to try to work hard in practice and then not really not get to get to play as much," Fredrick said.

"Even to go out and play nine minutes was exciting. It calmed me down and gave me a little confidence in myself."

Duck head coach Jody Runge said Fredrick won't sit down when Lindsey Dion, who is recovering with post-concussion syndrome, returns to the lineup.

"She brings a different dynamic for us," Runge said.

"She's very athletic, kind of wiry, not a banger, kind of a post player who's got great quickness and quickness to the ball when rebounding. [She has] a very different dynamic in her game versus some of the other post players that we have."

"She has shown glimmers of brilliance, and those are things she's going to need to do consistently to establish herself."

was encouraged with that performance and hopes it will give his team the belief that it can win this time around.

"Arizona is a good team, and even though they got roughed up a little bit last week, they have great talent," said Smith, who was named Pac-10 player of the week



SMITH

for the first time in his career. "We haven't won there in awhile, but last year was the first year where we really had a chance to pull it out."

"And we're better now, so we feel comfortable that we can go down there and have a shot to win."

The Wildcats have an athletic starting line-up that features three freshmen, a sophomore and a junior. In the backcourt, freshman point guard Jason Gardner has fit right in and averages 13 points and five assists per game. Fellow frosh guard Gilbert Arenas averages 13 points a game as well. The other freshman is forward Luke

Walton — son of NBA legend Bill Walton — whose strength is in his passing.

Sophomore forward Michael Wright should be a tough matchup for the Ducks with his near-14 point average and eight blocked shots per game.

And Oregon's big men have the unenviable task of defending 7-1 junior center Loren Woods, who transferred from Wake Forest and was forced to sit out last year.

But Olson knows that Oregon's deep roster will present just as many problems.

"Oregon is a very experienced team," Olson said. "They have great balance and athleticism. They have proved that they can win on the road and the key for us will be to control the open court game."

"Thursday is a big game."

Basketball

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"This loss isn't going to have that big of an effect on us," Olson said. "A nonconference loss is easy to get over. If it is a conference loss then it's a problem because it sticks with you."

The Ducks would like nothing more than to deliver Arizona a second-straight defeat, but history is not on their side. The Wildcats hold a commanding 18-3 advantage in games played at the McKale Center. In fact, the last time Oregon won in Tucson was in a 43-40 victory in 1985.

"Success is going to depend greatly on our ability to keep our composure," said Oregon head coach Ernie Kent, whose team is one of only three Pac-10 teams still undefeated on the road in league play.

"I think they will be on top of their game. Lute will certainly get them ready to play. We just need to be ready as well."

A year ago in Tucson, Oregon led by as many as seven points with nine minutes remaining, before eventually losing 92-86. Oregon senior forward A.D. Smith

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