



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

Further development of Flo Hartenstein's offensive game could help ease an offensive void left by A.D. Smith's departure.

Basketball

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Oregon faces a tough challenge in getting back to the Tournament. Not only does it lose three valuable seniors in Wright, A.D. Smith and Alex Scales, but it faces competition from a league where the majority of the teams return intact.

Pac-10 co-champion Arizona will field practically an identical roster, unless somebody decides to leave early and test their game on the NBA level.

The other Pac-10 champion, Stanford, does lose the inside presence of Mark "Mad Dog" Madsen and the outside shooting of David Moseley. But everybody else returns and will be set to avenge their premature exit in the NCAA Tournament at the hands of North Carolina.

California and Southern California both will bring back all of their young talent and should contend in the upper-half of the division. And although Arizona State will miss sharpshooter Ed-

die House, the Sun Devils most likely will improve with their returning players.

All of this doesn't phase Kent. He knows what he has in his own returnees, and expects that their brief NCAA appearance will only further their resolve to get back to the "promised land."

"This is why we're in it," Kent said. "To compete in the atmosphere of center stage. We can really get a lot of mileage out of our experience to get this team back to the Big Dance."

One of the key components of doing so will come down to who decides to take on the leadership roles left by Scales, Smith and Wright.

"There's a void there now that's going to have to be rebuilt," Kent said. "I'm not going to appoint that leadership, it's going to have to develop. We don't know who's going to emerge through the spring and summer with the ability to lead like those three guys."

Likely candidates include inconsistent sophomore guard

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