

Undefeated hockey team takes show on road

■ After a successful opening weekend at home, the Oregon hockey team travels to L.A. to face the Trojans and the Bruins

By Inge Scheve
For the Emerald

The Oregon club hockey team is facing defending Pac-8 champion USC tonight, then moving on to UCLA — last year's No. 2 team — for its Friday and Saturday night showdowns.

The Trojans lost only one senior player after last season. Oregon

team captain Tyler Shaffar pointed out that USC has a terrific home-ice advantage. USC may bring their band out and their crowds are consistently large.

"We have so many new guys. It will be intimidating to them," Shaffar said. "[USC] is a good program that has been around for a long time."

Tonight's outcome will depend on Oregon's ability to match its lines against USC's. That will be a change from the Stanford games last weekend because the Ducks could contain the one star player

for the Cardinal and be successful. The Trojans, however, have several solid lines.

"They're pretty deep, so you can't match it all the time," Shaffar said.

Goalie Josh Hardin is instrumental in the Oregon weekend strategy.

"He'll be a deciding factor on whether we come out successful," Shaffar said. "We'll have to keep the game close early on."

Shaffar is concerned about traveling the day of the game. The team used to travel the day before the

game so it could have time to rest and practice before playing. The change in plans is part of the new club travel rules for the hockey team.

"It will take us a while to get our legs into the game," Shaffar said.

The team will be using any spare time today to catch some much-needed Zs rather than ice time before facing the Trojans.

Although the team enjoyed a winning season opener with its roll over Stanford last weekend, there's no time to rest.

"Those games didn't mean too much as far as what's coming up for us," he said.

Shaffar hopes the team hasn't become too confident or too complacent.

"We have to get used to more physical play these next couple of weeks," he said. "Stanford is really pretty weak. They had only one good player, and USC, especially, has a whole bunch of them. And both L.A. teams will hit a lot more. Some of the new guys don't really understand the quality of these programs."

The Ducks are hoping to return from Southern California with all wins and all grins, of course, but Shaffar said he would consider taking two-out-of-three a success.

Three games in three nights is tough and could result in road burnout for the team, Shaffar said. Additionally, the team skated in only two decent practices this week, as Shaffar labeled Tuesday's practice "pathetic."

The Ducks will bring their games back to Eugene next weekend when they take on Montana State Friday and Saturday.

Ultimate Frisbee fundraiser

The Club Sports men's and women's Ultimate Frisbee teams are hosting an all-comers' hat tournament Sunday.

For only five dollars, students can play a whole day of Ultimate Frisbee. Sign-up starts at 9:30 a.m., with the games beginning at 10 a.m. All of the action will take place on the south bank fields next to the Autzen Foot Bridge by the Willamette River.

For more information, contact Joshua Greenough by telephone at 346-9663 or by e-mail at jgreenou@gladstone.uoregon.edu.

Preseason motions tie up Blazers

PORTLAND — The Portland Trailblazers can't wait to get the preseason over with, and their boredom has shown in their two losses.

The latest was a 90-83 defeat to the Los Angeles Clippers Tuesday night at Staples Center, the Blazers' first visit to the building since they blew a 15-point lead in the fourth quarter, losing Game 7 to the L.A. Lakers in the Western Conference finals last June.

"You're never going to totally forget what happened," said Blazer forward Scottie Pippen. "But every year is different."

Pippen, ready to begin his 14th NBA season, was essentially furloughed from the first week of practices and sat out the first two exhibition games — a close win over the Clippers and an overtime loss at Golden State. He played 13 minutes and scored two points in a 101-83 defeat of the Warriors Sunday night. On Wednesday night, Pippen got his first start of the preseason, playing 21 minutes but missing all five of his field-goal attempts and remaining scoreless.

The Blazers are 2-2 and face the prospect of playing the first few weeks of the regular season without center Arvydas Sabonis.

"We have to turn it up and start playing better and smarter," Pippen said. "We were dragging and coasting through [Wednesday's] game, and we gave a young team something to get excited about."

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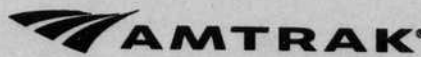
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