



Ducks emerge from holidays ranked No. 10

A tough holiday schedule puts the Oregon wrestling team on the map

By Robbie McCallum
Oregon Daily Emerald

They entered the holidays as an unknown team with a few standout wrestlers. They emerged as the No. 10 team in the nation with six wrestlers ranked nationally.

The month of December may go down as one of the most successful in Oregon wrestling history. What is deceiving about the holiday break, however, is that the Ducks picked up their first three losses of the season in that time.

On Dec. 13, Oregon began the break by defeating in-state rival Oregon State for the first time since 1997.

Sophomore heavyweight Eric Webb provided inspiration and a key six points with his pin over the Beavers' Jason Cooley to begin the match. Webb tangled with No. 2 Cooley for three

rounds before earning a pin with only eight seconds remaining.

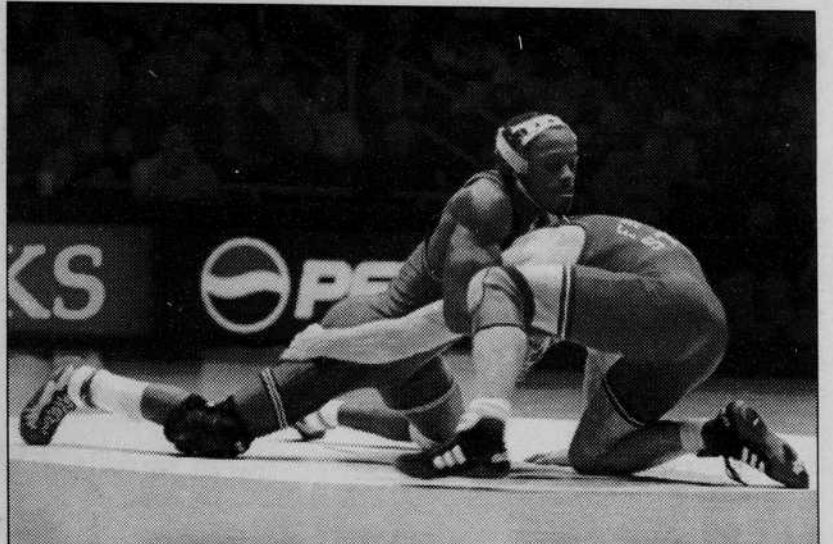
"It was exciting," Webb said. "I finally wrestled my match. It was me controlling the match and I was mentally prepared."

Oregon State stormed back, taking a 16-15 lead with two matches remaining. Seniors Doug Lee and Chael Sonnen came through for Oregon, each earning decisions to seal the upset.

"On paper we had five solid weight classes that we knew we could win," Oregon head coach Chuck Kearney said. "We got the extra win at heavy-weight and that really gave us momentum."

The Ducks also participated in two prestigious tournaments where they

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Oregon junior Eugene Harris (left) is one of six ranked Duck wrestlers in the nation.

Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

Runge's kids bounce back after a tough December



Tom Patterson Emerald

Junior guard Jamie Craighead gives the Ducks' offense a much needed boost in the arm, shooting 43.8 percent from three-point territory.

■ Oregon dropped three straight during the holiday break, but regained its poise to win the next four games

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

It was a December to remember for the Oregon women's basketball team — but for all the wrong reasons.

After a remarkable 4-0 start, which included wins over then-No. 16 Wisconsin and 18th-ranked North Carolina State, the Ducks (8-3 overall, 1-0 Pacific-10 Conference) were propelled to a No. 10 ranking in the Associated Press poll.

With the second toughest schedule in the country, though, head coach Jody Runge's early success didn't last. Oregon dropped three straight games on the road to ranked opponents, all in the span of one week.

The first loss of the season came at the hands of the Texas Longhorns on Dec. 9 — and it wasn't a pretty sight for the Ducks, who suffered a 82-58 thrashing. The loss was the team's worst since 1994.

"Texas just ran us through the floor," said Angelina Wolverter, who is leading

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On Tap:

Oregon Women vs. California
January 11
7pm at
McArthur Court

Men's basketball 'tested,' enjoys four winter break wins

The Ducks found a way to win every game except Auburn, and took positives from their four wins over the school's winter break

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

While most Oregon students nestled snug in their beds with visions of sugary plums this break, a small band of Ducks — the men's basketball team — set out to complete an undefeated pre-season.

After defeating Massachusetts in the Papé Jam just before finals, Oregon was 5-0 and off to its best start under fourth-year head coach Ernie Kent.

The Ducks would continue their streak one more game into December, beating Illinois-Chicago 110-87 at McArthur Court Dec. 12. The streak would end, though, with a 101-97 overtime loss to Auburn at the Las Vegas Showdown.

Oregon then rattled off three wins against Northern Arizona, South Car-

olina State and Louisville to cap a 5-1 December. The Ducks' victory over Oregon State last week moved their overall record to 10-1.

"This team has tremendous character," Kent said. "We've been tested with the altitude, with the third game in seven days, we've been tested at Louisville on the road in front of 16,000."

"The one thing we have yet to conquer is understanding what it takes to win at the Pac-10 level. We've conquered the pre-season."

Each of Oregon's wins in December highlighted one of the team's individual strengths. Against Illinois-Chicago, forward Bryan Bracey and guard Freddie Jones poured in 20 points each to lead the Ducks to the 23-point victory.

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Adam Amato Emerald

Oregon freshman guard Luke Ridnour ranks fifth in the Pacific-10 Conference in assists per game.

