



Homegrown attitude

■ Freshman Luke Jackson has made an immediate impact, mostly because of his confidence and no-holds-barred mentality

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Luke Jackson plays like a freshman.

But the Creswell native embodies only the good qualities that word entails, without the sloppy play and bad attitude that many college players his age display.

After all, Jackson exudes a confidence not warped by years of basketball frustration and he plays with a reckless abandon akin to Bugs Bunny in "Space Jam." That's exactly why head coach Ernie Kent has started Jackson twice in the last three games.

"My hope for the rest of the season is to win out the rest of our games," Jackson said. "I think we can do that."

Sure, Luke. Don't worry about Pacific-10 Conference games against No. 7 Arizona tonight and top-ranked Stanford next Thursday.

"I want to win a Pac-10 Championship [while at Oregon]," he said. "I want to win a national championship."

Uh-huh.

Despite the long-shot statements, don't underestimate the power of Luke. The two-time Oregon 3A high school player of the year is "one of the team's smartest players," according to big man Chris Christoffersen, and has "a high basketball

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On Tap

Who: Oregon men vs. No. 7 Arizona

When: 7:30 tonight

Where: McArthur Court

Broadcast: Fox Sports Net, 7:30 p.m.

“I want to win a national championship.”

Luke Jackson
freshman forward



Emerald

Luke Jackson, hailed as "one of the team's smartest players," has certainly made a positive impression on his teammates, Coach Kent and fans in his first year with Oregon.

UO basketball faces tough tasks against Arizona

■ The women's team heads to the desert with its sights set on sole possession of first place

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

It's a weekend of major implications for every Pacific-10 Conference women's basketball team. But for Oregon in particular, it's almost a do-or-die mentality in terms of staying within reach of a third straight Pac-10 crown.

A couple of wins this weekend would propel the No. 22 Ducks (12-5 overall, 5-2 Pac-10) into sole possession of first place at the mid-point of the season. Even one loss, though, would likely drop the Ducks down in the middle of the pack, where the race has never been more competitive (just two games separates the top seven teams).

Oh, by the way, the Ducks will have to do it in the desert, where both Arizona (14-5, 4-

3) and Arizona State (13-6, 5-2) have surprised many teams this season.

"We really need these two wins," senior forward Lindsey Dion said. "It's a difficult situation, but I think we can make it happen."

"This is a very important road trip for us," sophomore point guard Kourtney Shreve said. "We need a couple wins... and we can't take anyone lightly."

Returning to McKale Center for tonight's 6 p.m. matchup brings to mind the Ducks' historical come-from-behind victory last season on national television. After trailing by 22 points with less than 17 minutes to play, the Ducks conquered the deficit for the biggest comeback win in school history. Shaquala Williams, out for the season with a torn anterior cruciate ligament, led the Ducks on that March 4 game with 24 points.

"Our confidence is really good going down there, knowing we had that huge comeback last year," said head coach Jody Runge, who is 9-7 against Arizona in her eight-year career.

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■ No. 7 Arizona is not overlooking the Oregon men, who upset them at home last season

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

Arizona head coach Lute Olson remembers all too well what happened to his Wildcats the last time they visited Oregon.

Arizona entered the state on the first weekend of March last season in a heated battle with Stanford for the top spot in the Pacific-10 Conference. The then-No. 3 Wildcats knew they couldn't afford to slip in either of

the two road games.

They did. Oregon State upset Arizona 70-69 on a last-second three-pointer in overtime from Beavers guard Deandra Tanner and then blew a 17-point lead in a road loss in Eugene two days later.

"We stubbed our toes on the Oregon road trip last year," Olson said.

The Wildcats held a seemingly commanding 17-point lead against the Ducks with only 12 minutes remaining. But with the help of an ear-splitting McArthur Court crowd, Oregon stormed back and outscored Arizona 35-12 to close the game for an amazing 86-81 victory that propelled the Ducks into the NCAA Tournament.

With that game still fresh in his mind, Olson is preparing his seventh-ranked Wildcats (14-5 overall, 6-1 Pac-10) for an intense battle with the Ducks (11-6, 2-5) at 7:30 tonight at Mac Court.

"It is a very difficult place to play," said Olson, who returned to the sidelines after a five-game absence following the death of his wife, Bobbi. "They have a great crowd, and they really get into it. At home, they are very much a momentum type team."

The Ducks also are a team that has won seven of their eight home games this year, but five of those wins came against weaker non-conference foes. Oregon has yet to get

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