



Laura Smit Emerald

Sophomore point guard Alissa Edwards (12), who scored eight points in the win against Washington, will start against UCLA.

## Women seek to win in L.A.

■ Oregon must find a way to win on the road to preserve its NCAA tournament hopes

By Scott Pesznecker  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Watching this weekend's televised games between the Oregon women's basketball team and the Los Angeles schools might feel like watching "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," followed by "Jeopardy."

Because in the first show, you can almost go answer-to-answer with Regis Philbin. But you just can't seem to flow with Alex Trebek.

So it goes when the Ducks play against UCLA and Southern California.

The first of the two matchups — at 7 p.m. today on the Oregon Sports Network and ESPN — pits the Ducks (13-10 overall, 6-7 Pacific-10 Conference) against the Bruins (3-20, 2-10) at UCLA. Or, as guard Jamie Craighead calls it, "Greco-U."

"Contain Greco and you win the game," Craighead said, referring to Michelle Greco, the Pac-10's second-leading scorer at 20.7 points per game. "She got 29 shots here, and that was with hand-in-your-face, off-balance shots. If we can contain her, maybe keep her under 15, I don't think they can beat us."

Sounds easy enough to figure out, doesn't it?

Then, at 1 p.m. Sunday, there's USC (9-13, 4-8). If Oregon beats the Bruins,

the war with the Trojans will have NCAA implications, and it will be nationally televised on Fox Sports Net.

And unlike UCLA, which the Ducks have bested four straight times, Oregon has failed to topple Southern California in its last three attempts.

"We hate USC. You want to beat them every time you play them, and we've struggled with that in the past couple years," Craighead said. "So I think this is our chance. They've beaten us three times in a row, and a fourth time would be really tough."

"The Trojans are second; we've got the Bruins first," said forward Lindsey Dion, who is playing despite a high ankle sprain. "We're excited to play again after the big win on Saturday, and so far things look good."

That "big win" Dion talked about came against Washington and snapped a five-game losing streak, the longest such streak in head coach Jody Runge's eight-year career at Oregon.

However, enough damage was done to the Ducks' season to possibly prevent them from earning an eighth straight invitation to the NCAA Tournament. For Oregon to have any chance at the Big Dance, winning out the remaining schedule is a must.

Easier said than done, considering that Oregon has lost five straight on the road.

"Yeah, I guess there's kind of a

monkey still there," Dion said. "With USC, we haven't beat them since my sophomore year. So there still are a couple lingering monkeys, but I have every confidence we'll take care of business down in L.A."

The Trojans edged the Ducks 55-53 at McArthur Court on Jan. 25. In that game, USC freshman forward Ebony Hoffman scored 19 points and grabbed 17 rebounds.

Two days later, Oregon took out its frustrations on the Bruins, beating them 54-43. UCLA had little chance to beat the Ducks, because Greco — UCLA's lone offensive threat — hit just six of her 29 field-goal attempts.

Runge expects Greco to come out shooting against the Ducks, and thinks her team is up to the task of containing her.

"She's definitely going to take 'em," Runge said. "Hopefully they'll be pressured shots by us. I think that was certainly the case in the last game. I think we can defend her one-on-one."

Backup point guard Alissa Edwards will start against UCLA, replacing Kourtney Shreve, who is shooting just 26 percent from the field this season. Against the Huskies, Edwards and Craighead shot a combined 11-21 from the floor.

Runge said she is confident that her team can win on the road.

"I think their spirits are up," she said. "They're starting to put things together."

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