



Oregon rejected by NIT, miss postseason play

■ The Ducks miss an opportunity to possibly host an NIT game, as the tournament doesn't even select a Pac-10 team

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

The bubble burst for the Oregon men's basketball team.

The NIT bubble, that is.

The Ducks were shut out of the NIT Sunday night, meaning Oregon's season ended Saturday night with its 69-60 victory over Oregon State.

The Ducks had given up hope for a trip to the NCAA Tournament a

long time ago, but became eligible for the NIT with the win over the Beavers Saturday.

When all five teams ahead of Oregon in the Pacific-10 Conference standings were given bids to March Madness, it looked like the Ducks were a lock to play in the NIT. It would have been Oregon's third straight trip to the postseason.

But the Ducks weren't tapped by

the NIT selection committee Sunday night, meaning the tournament will not feature a Pac-10 team. No other conference team was eligible for the NIT.

Oregon's players and coaches were unavailable for comment Sunday, but were confident that an NIT berth was in the cards after Saturday night's victory.

"I would welcome the opportunity to represent the Pac-10 in [the NIT]," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said. "We're definitely a good enough team."

"Hopefully [the Civil War win] will give us a chance to play some more," Ducks forward Bryan Bracey said. "I think we can get it going again."

Had they been selected, Oregon would have had the worst record of all the teams in the NIT field at 14-14. South Carolina (15-14) was selected, as were Seton Hall (16-14) and Pittsburgh (18-13).

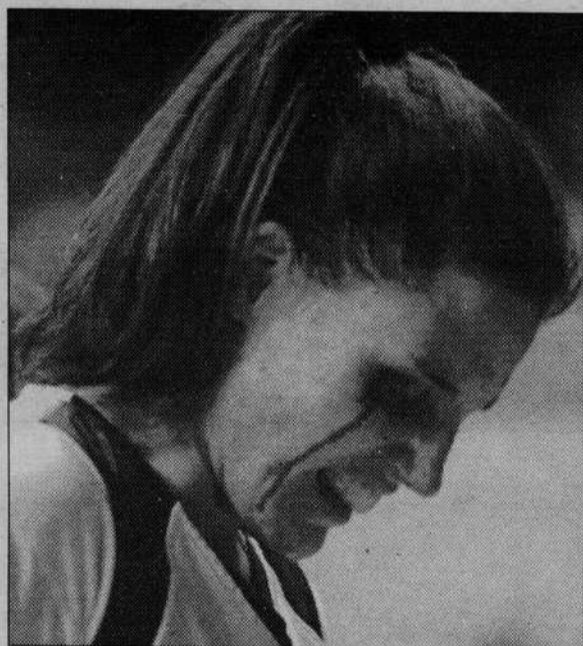
The Big East, which had five teams selected for the NCAA Tournament, sent six more to the NIT. Of the major conferences, the Pac-10 joined only

the Atlantic Coast Conference and the Big 12 Conference in not sending a representative to the NIT.

Saturday night, the Ducks were still oblivious of the fact that they would be spending March on their couches.

"We're hopeful right now," Oregon guard Freddie Jones said Saturday night. "Hopeful that we'll see another day."

Now, the Ducks know they will not see another basketball game until the 2001-02 preseason.



Laura Smit Emerald

The cut above senior Lindsey Dion's right eye, which required five stitches Saturday, is symbolic of her tenacious four years at Oregon.

Seniors pace UO to extend streak

■ It's so hard: Ducks say goodbye to fans in 10th-straight win over Oregon State on Saturday

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

Even an hour after the game ended, the Oregon seniors couldn't get out of the spotlight.

They already received their flowers, hugs and standing ovations during their final appearance at McArthur Court, but the fans — the people who have supported this team through it all in the last four years — just couldn't say goodbye.

The 1,000 or so of the 8,815 fans (the third largest crowd ever for a women's game) who remained after the 72-60 Civil War victory applauded, laughed and cheered as the five seniors — Angelina Wolvert, Jenny Mowe, Lindsey Dion, Brianna Meharry and Camber Ellingson — conducted post-game radio interviews, which were broadcast over

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Duck women crash the Big Dance

■ Oregon's five senior players finish off Oregon State and earn a tournament berth

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

Thirty-nine minutes past Saturday's Civil War tip-off, there wasn't a trace of turmoil to be seen as Oregon's five seniors fought to defend their eight-point lead.

Yes, that's right — all five seniors.

Walk-on guard Camber Ellingson hit a clutch free-throw. Forward Angelina Wolvert nailed her third three-pointer of the season, then sank two more from the charity stripe.

And, to put the finishing touch on the Ducks' 72-60 win over Oregon State, Ellingson threaded a long, bouncing pass to forward Lindsey Dion, who skied for the uncontested layup and her last-ever points at McArthur Court.

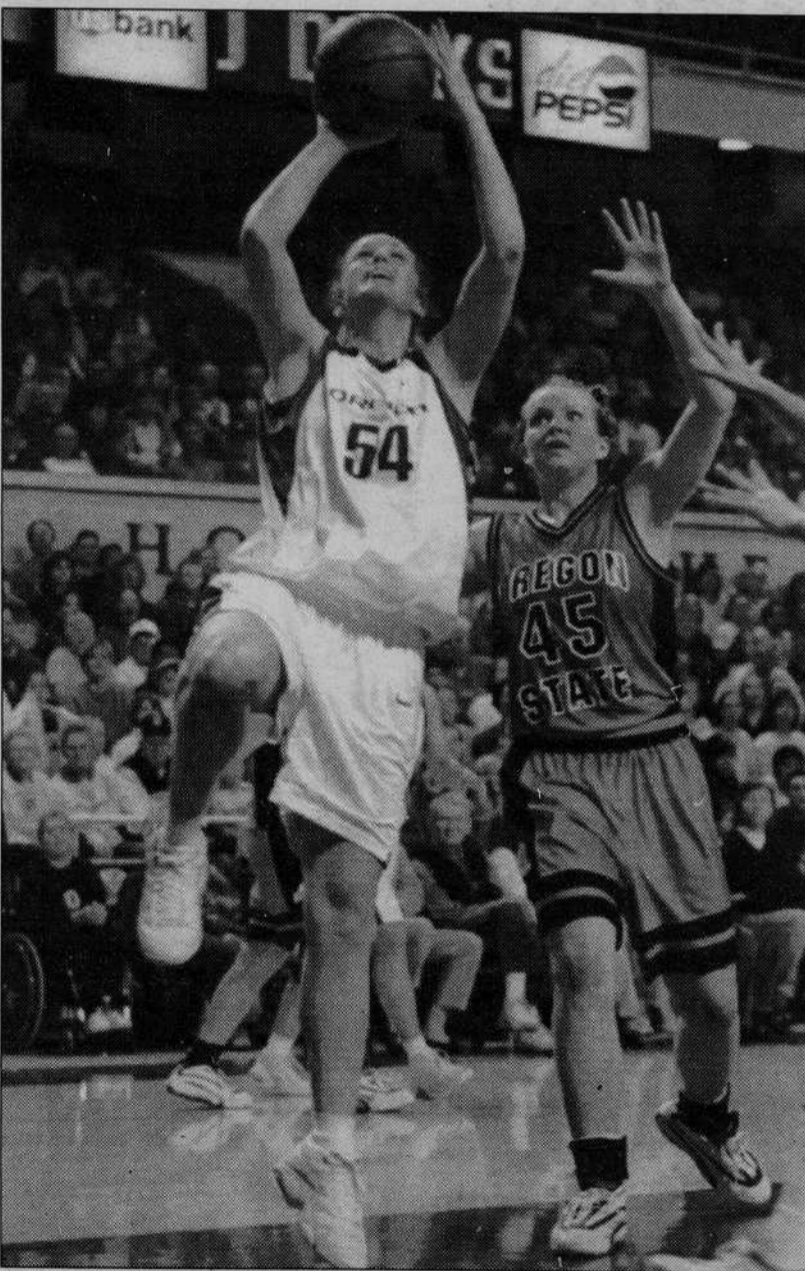
The win came in front of 8,815 fans, the third-largest crowd in school history to watch a women's basketball game.

Unlike last season, Oregon (17-11 overall, 10-8 Pac-10) players didn't celebrate their victory against the Beavers (16-12, 8-10) with a Pac-10 title. However, for seniors Brianna Meharry, Jenny Mowe, Wolvert, Dion and Ellingson, the win was just as sweet.

"This last [home] game for us was very emotional and we had a lot of fun out there," Mowe said. "It was a team game; everyone played for each other."

Less than 24 hours after beating

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Laura Smit Emerald

Senior Brianna Meharry scored 10 points and grabbed five rebounds in Oregon's win Saturday.

UO men finally come 'together' in last game of season

■ The Ducks end their season on a positive note with a victory against the Beavers, but are disappointingly shut out from postseason play

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

CORVALLIS — During their morning breakfast, the Oregon Ducks watched early season game tapes from their 10-1 start.

And then at night, they went out and secured the in-state bragging rights with a 69-60 Civil War victory over Oregon

State at Gill Coliseum.

"We showed them tapes and it touched my heart," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said. "That was a tournament team [on video]. It touched their hearts too."

The videos provided the spark and inspiration that Oregon had lacked for weeks, and helped the Ducks (14-14

overall, 5-13 Pacific-10 Conference) become NIT eligible.

Unfortunately for Oregon, however, the bubble burst as the Ducks' season officially ended with the news Sunday night that the NIT selection committee left Oregon out of its tournament.

It's certainly been a season that's had its fair share of downs and too few ups, but for Oregon, Saturday night's performance helped ease much of the pain that had built up from losing 13 of the

previous 16 games.

"We're a good team," said senior forward Bryan Bracey, who had a game-high 19 points and 11 rebounds. "We've just struggled a bit. We're just happy we got it all together. It's a big win."

As for Oregon State (10-20, 4-14), the 20th loss of the season didn't sit well with the Beavers, especially after playing solid basketball as of late. Beaver head coach Ritchie McKay was short and to the

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BRACEY