

SPORTS

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Badicke's effort, sacrifice aid Oregon wrestlers

■ Despite a poor record, sophomore Michael Badicke has been an important member of the wrestling squad

By Chris Cabot
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon wrestling team has been close to cracking the top-25 in the coaches' poll for a few weeks and is primed for a stretch in its schedule where they face six Pacific-10 Conference opponents in the next seven dual meets.



Although much of the attention this year has gone to seniors Eugene Harris and Shaun Williams and junior Eric Webb, who are all ranked in the top-25 of their weight classes by Intermat, many younger, less-heralded athletes contribute to the squad in their own ways.

Injuries have plagued the Ducks and forced many wrestlers to step into starting roles earlier than expected. One of those athletes is Michael Badicke.

A look at Badicke's record, which is 0-6 overall (0-5 in dual meets), does not give a true interpretation his importance to the team. Head coach Chuck Kearney describes the sophomore from Beaverton as the team's "sacrifice utility player."

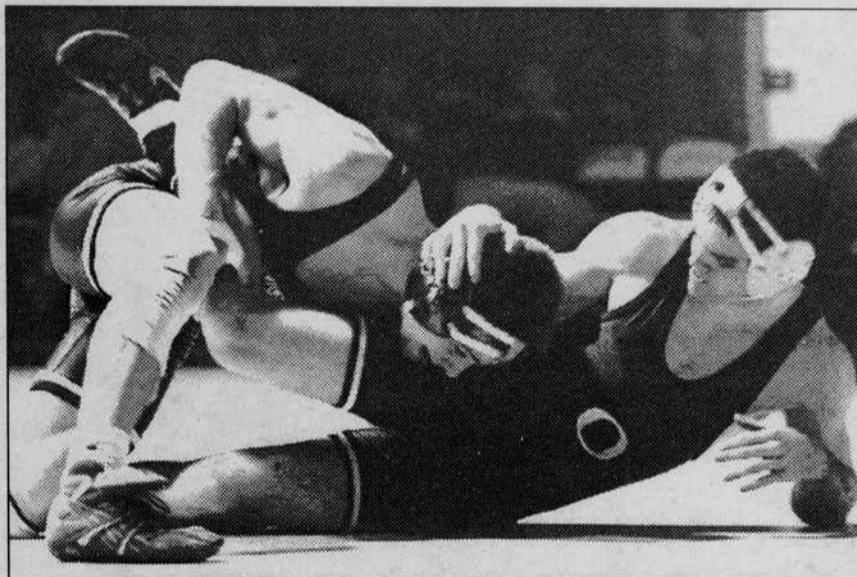
For much of the season, Badicke filled in at the 157-pound weight class for the injured Tony Overstake, but in the meets on Jan. 25, Badicke played multiple roles.

In the 157-pound class against Pacific, Badicke battled at Troy Hall, who has lead the Boxers of Pacific with a 27-3 overall and 19-0 dual meet record. In the match, Hall took the decision 9-2 over Badicke. Against Central Washington, Badicke wrestled at 165-pounds and lost a decision to Kyle Smith, 8-2.

Kearney said he has appreciated the effort Badicke has put in for the team.

"Michael been in the workout room every day busting his rear end," Kearney said. "He's

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Adam Amato Emerald

Michael Badicke (right) has been a workhorse in the weight room for Chuck Kearney's squad.

POSTING THE GRADES

■ With the men's team having a share of first place, it's hard not to give them some extra credit

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

If the Oregon men's basketball season was a football game, the Ducks would be charging out of the locker room ready to dominate the second half.

And they'd be leading the game, with the entire Pacific-10 Conference (except co-leader USC) on the other sideline.

The Ducks are leading the Pac-10, basketball style. And it's no fluke either. There aren't five teams bunched at the top, and the Ducks have beaten the big teams — Stanford, Cal, Arizona. They're a perfect 11-0 at home.

So, this Oregon team is good, right?

Like any team, the Ducks still see room for improvement. There are still hills to climb, still UCLAs and USCs to play.

But there is some time for reflection. Without further ado, here is a mid-point report card, as laid out by the Ducks themselves.

Overall — Grade: B+

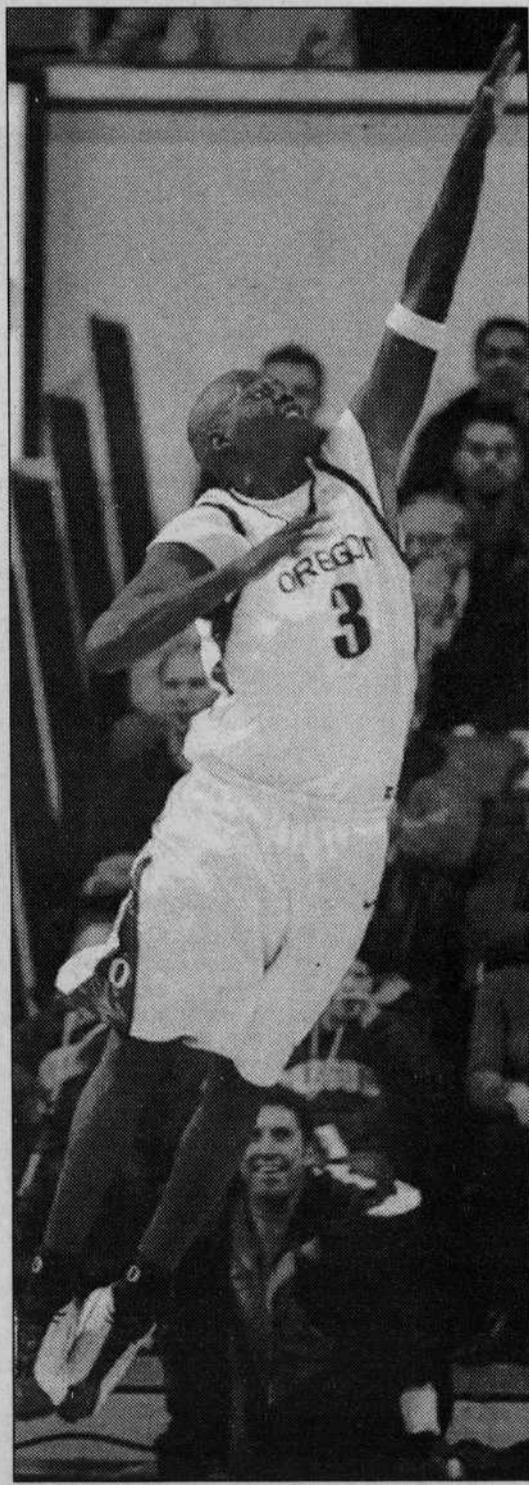
Oregon head coach Ernie Kent is rarely satisfied, and won't be until the Ducks are crowned national champions. But he is still able to look at the positives, including his explosive offense, the emergence of some key players off the bench and a vastly improved defense.

"For the fact that we're leading the conference after everybody picked us seventh or eighth, you've got to say that we've achieved beyond everyone's expectations," Kent said. "And it's not luck. We've played well."

Kent also noted one or two shortcomings, including defensive lapses in the last two games in Washington.

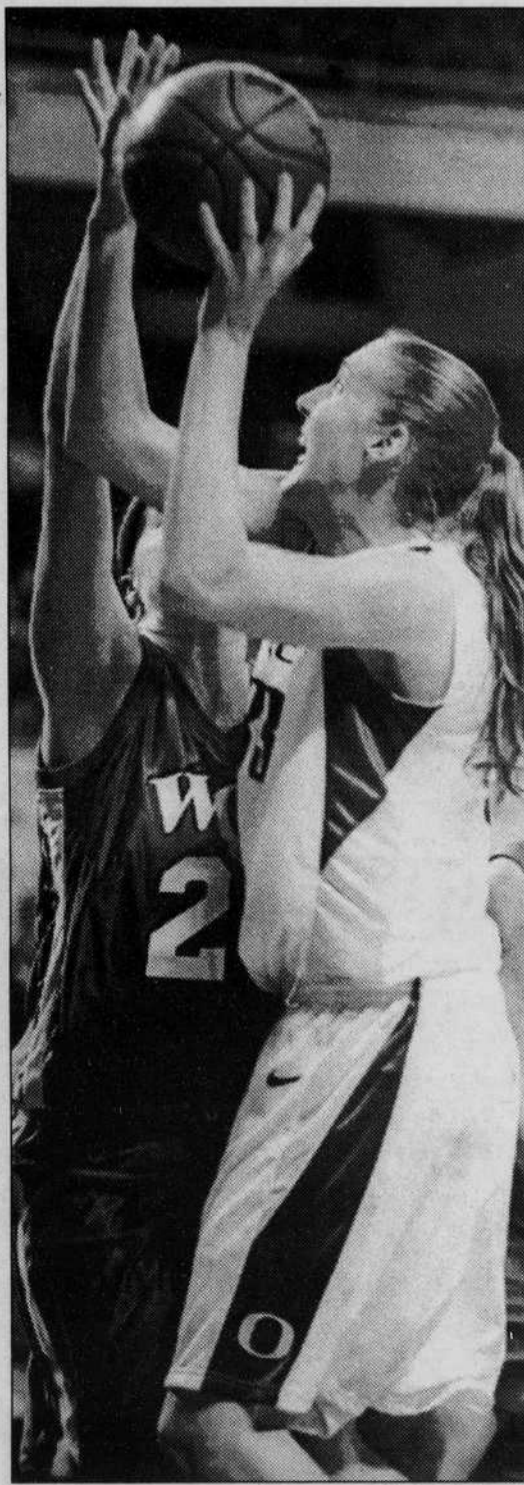
"If there's some slippage with us, it's just in the past couple games

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Adam Amato Emerald

Junior Robert Johnson has been a valuable inside presence for the Ducks, who gave themselves a B+ at the halfway point.



Adam Amato Emerald

Since Pac-10 play started, sophomore Cathrine Kraayeveld is averaging nearly a double-double for Oregon.

■ There were plenty of question marks in the beginning, but so far, the women are passing the test

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

On the surface, the Oregon Ducks are merely an average Pacific-10 Conference women's basketball team. For the most part, they have beat the teams they were supposed to beat, and lost to the teams they were supposed to lose to.

Struggling with the adjustment of a new coaching staff and the loss of four starters, Oregon's preseason was marred with inconsistencies. Head coach Bev Smith lost her debut, a 75-57 defeat to Wisconsin-Green Bay at McArthur Court. Three days later on Nov. 20, the Ducks fell to the Portland Pilots for just the second time in the rivalry's 17-year history.

Oregon rebounded and entered Pac-10 play with a winning record at 5-4. Six weeks later, the Ducks are now 12-8 overall and a 7-4 conference mark has them in the hunt for a strong seed in the inaugural conference tournament.

An embarrassing loss to Oregon State 10 days ago set the Ducks up for big wins against Southern California and UCLA last weekend, putting Oregon in a four-way tie for second place in the conference. One of those sharing the second spot is Arizona State, which Oregon will play on Thursday in Tempe.

The Ducks should take solace in the fact that as Pac-10 play has picked up, so has their game. And with seven games remaining in the regular season, Oregon must prove it's fit for a ninth-straight NCAA Tournament appearance.

Overall — Grade: B-

Time has been the Ducks' best remedy this season as they're finally starting to play like a team.

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