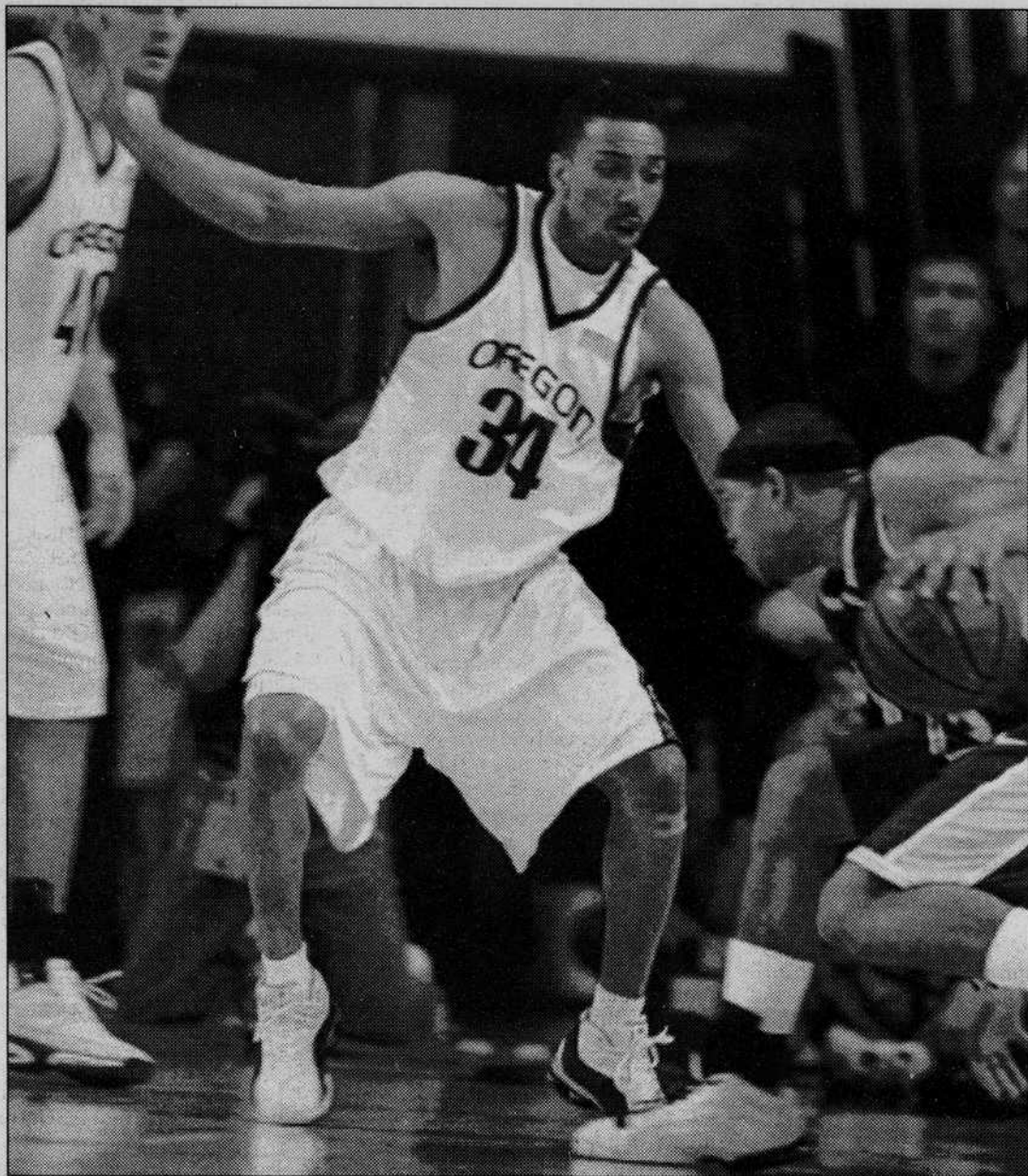


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Best Bet
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Adam Amato Emerald

Senior guard Anthony Lever is hitting 49 percent of his three-point attempts this season, second-best in the Pac-10.

Ducks rested, ready to face Beavers

■ The Ducks look to win their seventh straight against OSU and improve to 14-0 at home

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon men's basketball team is hoping that three days of rest and three days of practice this week will translate into three straight seasons of sweeping Oregon State.

The Ducks have refreshed their bodies after two hard-fought overtime defeats in the Bay Area. But their minds haven't completely erased the pain of those losses, and the first step to doing that begins this weekend.

When Oregon hosts Oregon State at 7 p.m. Sat-

urday, the Beavers will have the extra challenge of facing a Ducks team that will be ready to take out some frustration.

"They might get a little bit of it," Freddie Jones said with a smile.

Oregon (17-7, 9-4) has dominated the series with Oregon State (10-13, 3-10) by winning 16 of 17 dating back to the 1994-95 season.

As for that lone defeat? It serves as added motivation to Jones, who can vividly recall being a freshman and walking out of Gill Coliseum as a 48-45 loser on Jan. 30, 1999.

"I still remember that game. It was a tough one," Jones said. "You never want to lose to an in-state

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SENIOR LEVER-AGE

Senior guard Anthony Lever has faced much adversity, but remains one of the most consistent players on the Oregon team

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

You can't throw Anthony Lever a changeup.

He's like a veteran hitter who's seen far too many.

Change is nothing new to Lever, the elder statesman of the Oregon men's basketball team. Since high school, Lever has exchanged uniforms like a chameleon and seen his role on the Oregon team shift more times than a middle-schooler writing his first term paper.

Lever has been through perhaps more changes than anyone on the Oregon basketball team, but that doesn't keep him from being one of the most level-headed guys to roam McArthur Court.

"He has a different kind of maturity to him," Oregon guard Freddie Jones said of Lever. "Later on, I see him becoming a businessman type, because he loves that kind of stuff, being in charge."

Lever was always in charge at Canyon Del Oro High in Tucson, Ariz., where he broke Mike Bibby's single-season state high school scoring record his senior year. Lever averaged 29 points per game in 1996-97, a feat that earned him an honorable mention for the USA Today high school All-American team.

But that's when those changes started swirling around the shooter. During his senior season, Lever was recruited by an Arizona assistant coach who switched allegiances to Louisiana-Lafayette. Lever followed, but didn't stick with the Ragin' Cajuns.

"I went there and it was too small," Lever said. "I just didn't like the place. I sat out a semester and then after that I was out of school completely."

After a year at community college in Texas, Lever landed at Oregon with fellow junior-college recruits Bryan Bracey, Julius Hicks and Ben Lindquist. He played behind point guard Darius

Wright for that season, then earned a starting role his junior year.

But this year has been easily the most interesting of Lever's basketball career. The senior changed his last name from Norwood when he learned that his father

was NBA legend

Lafayette "Fat"

Lever. He broke his

hand before the season

started and watched as

five starters gelled on the

court in the preseason.

He came back from the injury

to find his minutes reduced

dramatically from last season.

And through it all, Lever remained a

leader and a teacher when he could have

turned into a moper and a whiner.

"To come off the bench and have that

kind of impact and be that kind of shooter,

I think that says a lot about his character,"

Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said. "Because he could have been a disgruntled player, unhappy, but he has not

done that at all."

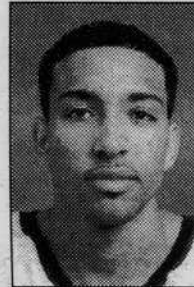
In fact, Lever's production has increased in certain areas this season. The senior is averaging 49 percent from beyond the arc, good enough for second in the Pacific-10 Conference and much

higher than his 35 percent clip last season. When he is able to come off the bench late in games, his insta-treys often spark the Oregon club.

"I still think he's going to step up and win some close games for us down the stretch with his ability to shoot the ball,"

Kent said. "He did it against Cal here at Mac Court. We were in kind of a slump, he went out and hit 2-of-3 three-pointers and got us going again. Same thing with the Stanford game as well."

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LEVER

Oregon expects game to be not so 'Civil' against OSU in Corvallis

■ Oregon women hope to reclaim their dominance over Oregon State after their recent loss to the Beavers

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

There's no love lost between the Ducks and the Beavers.

For eight years, Oregon State could not figure out the Ducks at McArthur Court.

Until recently.

Oregon State's 61-53 win at Mac Court in January ended an 11-game Oregon winning streak in the series, and the first time since 1993 the Beavers won in Eugene.

That's what will be weighing on the Ducks' mind when they visit Gill Coliseum Saturday at 1 p.m.

"Revenge, if anything," junior Shaquala Williams said of her motivation. "They came and beat us on our home court and broke that streak, and the way they celebrated and acted definitely got under our skin. It's pay-back and revenge."

In a game that was anything but civil, the Ducks (13-11 overall, 8-7 Pacific-10 Conference) had their chances but weren't able to convert. The

team shot just 27 percent from the field, its worst performance of the season.

"I think that even one more solid screen or offensive rebound would have made a difference that game," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "I just think it was out there for the taking, and when push came to shove, they just shoved a bit more and that was the difference."

"It's going to be a game of wills and whoever wants it most will win it again."

After their win, the Beavers (12-12, 9-6) celebrated with sparkling cider, invoking feelings of a championship celebration. They celebrated on the Oregon "O" at center

court, and after the game, were visibly stirred.

For the first time in their seniors' careers, the Beavers had beaten the Ducks. Oregon State senior center Ericka Cook was so emotional, tears streaked down her cheek at the post-game press conference.

This got Oregon's attention.

"I feel like you should have a certain amount of class when you beat a team, and you should shake their hands and then celebrate after that," Williams said. "If we win, we'll be happy, but I don't think we'll act as they did."

For the Ducks to win this time, most believe the team needs to play Oregon basketball. Intensity will be

key, especially on the road where the fans can be inhospitable.

"This game is going to be more intense than the first one," Williams said. "As long as it ends in good sportsmanship when the game is over, I'll be happy with it."

Gill Coliseum may be no different than Mac Court for the Ducks, except for the orange and black on the floor and triangular-shaped roof. With only 50 miles separating the two schools, the Ducks expect to have a rabid fan base.

The distance "benefits us because we usually have more fans than they do," Williams said. "I

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