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## Men's

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Just ask the Ducks. Earlier this season, they took a supposedly easy road trip to Washington and came back with a split instead of a sweep, though Oregon lost at Washington, not Washington State.

Part of the reason the Washington schools fought the Ducks so hard is because of the recently reinstated conference tournament at the end of the season. Only eight teams advance to the Pac-10 Tournament, so the conference bottom-feeders have that eighth place to fight for.

"Even if they were out of it, they'd play hard," Oregon senior guard Freddie Jones said.

And Washington State is virtually out of the great race for eighth. With four games left, the Cougars are 2.5 games behind Oregon State, the current leader for eighth place.

The Ducks, meanwhile, are in the center of another race — the race for the Pac-10 championship.

Oregon is tied with Stanford and USC for the top spot in the conference, but the Trojans will face the Cardinal on Thursday. With the Ducks heading to Southern California next weekend, Washington State and Washington become almost must-win games if the Ducks want to win the conference.

"The thing we've done a good job of is taking care of ourselves," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said. "That's all we've been doing all year long, and that's all we're doing this week."

The Ducks won't be able to control the five other teams bunched up at the top of the Pac-10, but those teams should take care of themselves. Behind the three leaders, three other teams — Arizona, UCLA and Oregon — are within a game of first place. UCLA will face Cal tonight and Stanford on Saturday, while Arizona played Arizona State on Wednesday.

Six of Oregon's senior players will be honored in pregame ceremonies before Saturday's contest with Washington.

"These are my last games here, so

it's not going to be hard to get up," Jones said with a smile Tuesday.

Along with Jones, the Ducks will honor seniors Chris Christofersen, Anthony Lever, Ben Lindquist, Mark Michaelis and Kristian Christensen. Senior student manager Greg Lawrence will also be honored.

After the ceremonies, Oregon will face Washington, the team that forced the Ducks' split in the Evergreen state. The Huskies toppled the Ducks, 97-92, in January, mostly because of a career-high 30-point performance from forward Doug Wrenn.

"We've got to be a little more intense than we were up there," Kent said of guarding Wrenn. "We need to be a little more conscious of where he's at on the floor."

The Ducks will take on the Huskies at 7 p.m. Saturday. That game will be televised on the Oregon Sports Network. Tonight's game will not be televised.

E-mail sports reporter Peter Hockaday at [peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com](mailto:peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com).

## Women's

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Przekwas said. "I do believe if you're one of the top four teams in the conference, you're NCAA (Tournament) worthy."

Washington State, though, may not represent much of a game for the Ducks. The Cougars are the bottom of the barrel in the conference and last won against Gonzaga on Nov. 29. That equals a 20-game losing streak.

Washington State's last win against a conference opponent came last season when they defeated California 74-59 on Feb. 24.

Of Washington State's six conference wins last season, five came in Pullman (including one against the Ducks). In addition, the

Cougars' only two wins this season have been at Friel Court.

The way the Ducks have been playing on the road this season, an upset could be in the works.

But it's not that likely.

"We've struggled a little but on the road," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said about the team's 4-6 record away from McArthur Court. "We haven't found a groove on the road, and I think that comes with experience. But we have been practicing a lot better, we've been practicing with intensity ... and that's helped us out a lot."

The Ducks dominated in the first game against Washington State this season, 76-47. However, the Cougars have been a thorn in Oregon's side recently. Last season, Washington State swept Oregon, including a 77-76 barnburner at Mac Court.

"We very much respect Oregon and its coaching staff. It seems to me it's not a mystique (about them) as it is a great basketball game," Przekwas said.

And what about the last time Oregon visited the Palouse? The Ducks led 33-26 at the half but failed to hold off the Cougars and lost 67-64 for their first Pac-10 loss of the season.

Oregon cannot afford to have a similar breakdown.

"We want to go into that game not playing to not lose, but playing to win," Smith said. "We go in not necessarily focusing only on Washington State, but on the standards that we have to perform to."

E-mail sports reporter Hank Hager at [hankhager@dailyemerald.com](mailto:hankhager@dailyemerald.com).

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**Wednesday, February 27, 2002**

**10:00AM-3:00PM - EMU Ballroom**