



**Sports Editor:**  
Adam Jude  
adamjude@dailymerald.com  
**Assistant Sports Editor:**  
Jeff Smith  
jeffsmith@dailymerald.com

Tuesday, February 26, 2002

## Jones becomes men's first Pac-10 Player of Week

■ The senior guard scores 51 points over the weekend to gain attention from the Pac-10

By Jeff Smith  
Oregon Daily Emerald

It took awhile, but the Oregon men's basketball team finally had a player honored by the Pacific-10 Conference.

Freddie Jones was named the Pac-10 Player of the Week on Monday for the first time in his career following his dominating performances against the Washington schools.

Every Pac-10 team besides Oregon

had a player recognized by the league entering the weekend, a fact that never escaped the attention of head coach Ernie Kent. In recent weeks, Kent would lament the fact that none of his players had received the award despite "being on their 'A game' for so long."

The Ducks' three-game win streak has propelled them to the No. 13 spot in both the USA Today/ESPN coaches' poll and the Associated Press writers' poll released Monday.

A big reason Oregon is the highest ranked Pac-10 team and is in sole



JONES

possession of first place has been the play of Jones. The senior has now scored in double figures in 21 straight games and has become a favorite of ESPN's SportsCenter, which featured a selection of Jones' best dunks during its Monday afternoon program.

Jones contributed 18 points in a

115-77 win over Washington State on Thursday, and then capped the weekend in style against the Huskies. His barrage of three-pointers, powerful dunks and leaning jumpers accounted for a game-high 33 points in the Ducks' 90-84 victory.

"Fred's game was just real emotional for him," Oregon sophomore Luke Jackson said Saturday. "He's been here so long and given these fans so much to appreciate. He was just showing them one last time how good he is and how much he loves to play here."

What made Saturday even more

special for Jones was that he was able to end his senior season at home with a perfect 16-0 record and do so with many family and friends in attendance.

"That's special," he said of the undefeated home mark. "Can't nobody take that from us now. This is a great place. The fans are unbelievable. They come out and support you win or lose."

"I just wanted to play my best." And for his efforts, he was rewarded.

E-mail assistant sports editor Jeff Smith at jeffsmith@dailymerald.com.

## Title still in doubt before final games

■ The Oregon men have the best shot at the Pac-10 title, but several other teams are within striking range

By Peter Hockaday  
Oregon Daily Emerald

With the men's basketball regular season drawing to a close and March fast approaching, it's tournament season.

And with the Pacific-10 Conference Tournament just around the corner, it might be easy to get caught in the tourney fever.

But there's still a regular season to finish and a conference champion to crown. Despite the controversy over who will be crowned official league champion — the regular-season champion or the tournament champion — the conference office confirmed Monday that the regular-season champ will get the crown.

That's good news for Oregon, which can clinch the top spot in the Pac-10 with a win over USC on Thursday or a victory over UCLA on Saturday. The Ducks can assure themselves sole possession of the championship with a sweep in Los Angeles.

Other teams have a harder road to the championship. Five teams are bunched behind the Ducks, all separated by a single game. California, USC and Arizona, all one game behind Oregon, have the best shots at the conference championship if the Ducks get swept.

All of the season-ending posturing will have a direct impact on next week's Pac-10 Tournament. The top seed will play a team with a losing record, either 12-15 Oregon State or 10-17 Washington. The second seed will play Arizona State in the opening round, and the Sun Devils have had a penchant for killing giants this season. ASU has knocked off Oregon, Arizona and UCLA on its way to a 14-11 overall record this year.

The winner of the conference tournament, while not the official Pac-10 champion, will receive an automatic berth in the NCAA Tournament.

### Oh! You're Back!

When Jimmie Haywood and Brian Jackson left the Oregon State men's basketball team last week, the future looked dim for the Beavers.

A key stretch of the season. Two starters leave. To top it off, the Beavers lost their seventh home conference game of the season, to Washington, in the great Battle For Eighth — the final spot in the Pac-10 Tournament.

But then Jackson rejoined the team after a reported late-night tête-à-tête with coach Ritchie McKay. Then the Beavers creamed Washington State in a game that kept Oregon State one half-step in front of Washington in the Great Battle for Eighth.

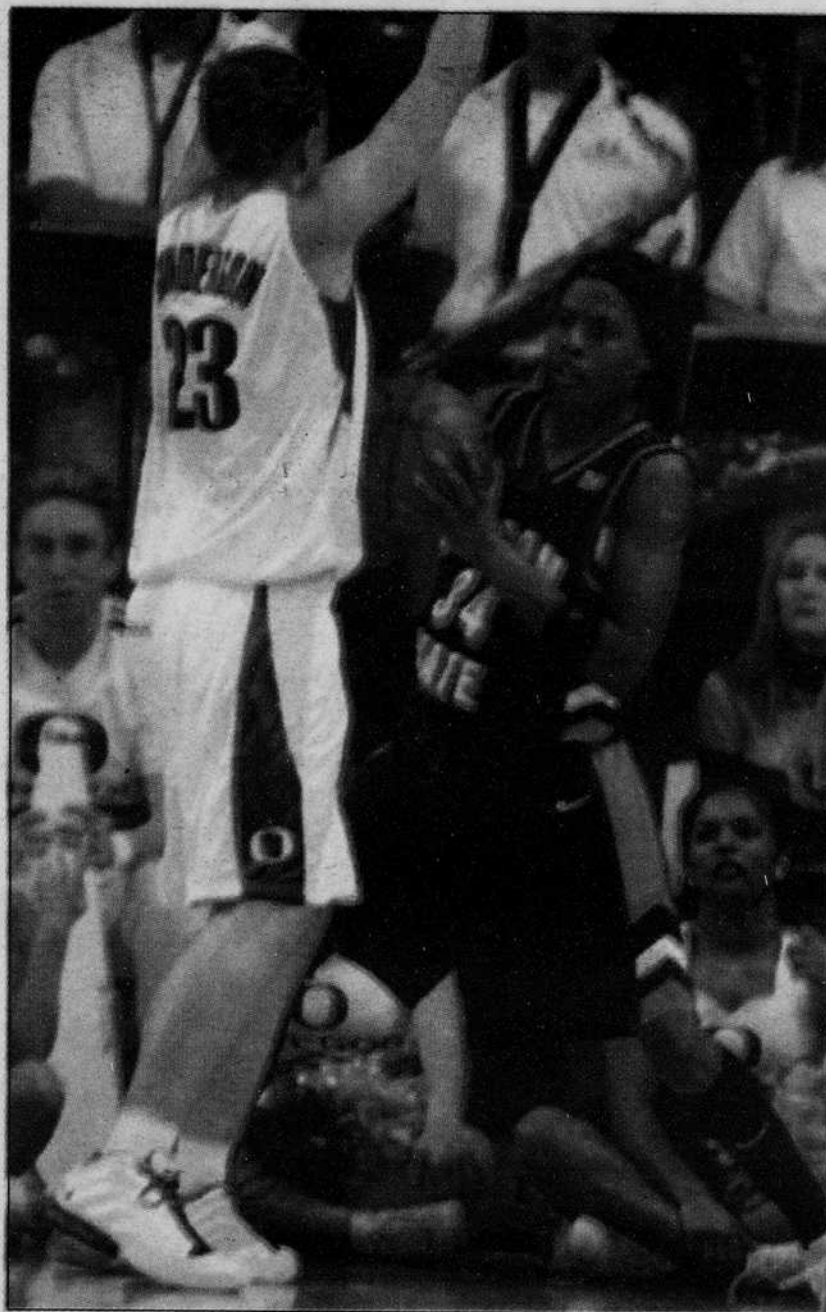
Then there was much joy in Corvallis.

### Poll-sitting

California finally got some national recognition this week, entering the Associated Press top 25 for the first time this season at No. 21. The Golden Bears squeezed out UCLA, which dropped out of both the AP and USA Today/ESPN Coaches' polls after splitting with Cal and Stanford.

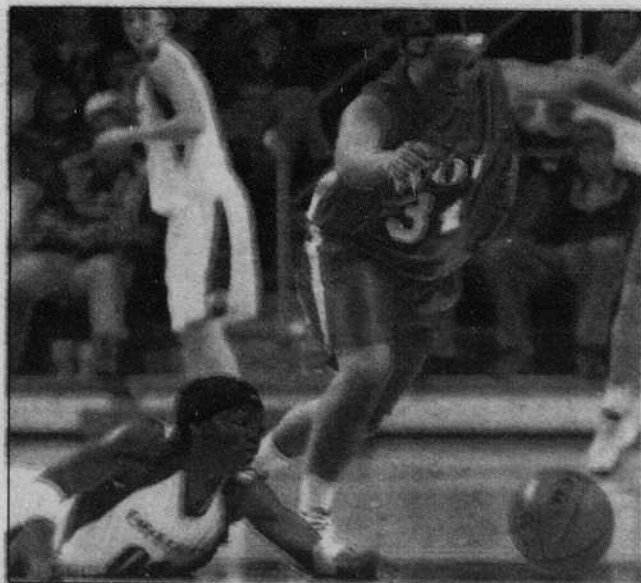
The Pac-10 still has five ranked teams, the most of any single conference. In the AP poll, Oregon is the highest-ranked Pac-10 team at No. 13, Arizona is 14th, Stanford is 17th and USC is 19th.

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Photos by Adam Amato Emerald

Oregon State's Felicia Ragland (top), guarded by Oregon's Kedzie Gunderson, was named the Pac-10 Player of the Week. Oregon guard Edniesha Curry (right), seen diving for a loose ball earlier this season, and the Ducks host Washington State at 6:30 p.m. Friday to kick off the Pac-10 Tournament.



## Oregon says tournament may draw 7,000 fans

■ The Ducks play in the Pac-10 Tournament's first game at Mac Court, and support should be high

By Adam Jude  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Say goodbye to Jamie Craighead and Freddie Jones. The Pacific-10 Conference now owns McArthur Court.

Billboards of Craighead, the sharpshooter for the Oregon women's team, and Jones, the highlight machine from the men's team, were replaced Monday by signs welcoming fans to the inaugural Pac-10 women's basketball tournament, which begins Friday at Mac Court.

As the conference's biggest supporter of women's basketball for the last three years, Eugene was the obvious choice to host the tournament.

"I can't think of a more exciting place to kick off the women's basketball Pacific-10 Conference Tournament than in Eugene," said Pac-10 assistant commissioner Christine Hoyles, the tournament coordinator. "The Eugene community has supported women's basketball in an outstanding manner, and that's one of the things that attracted the Pac-10 to this venue."

Oregon Associate Athletic Director Renee Baumgartner said more than 5,000 ticket booklets, at \$60 each, for all of the tournament games have been sold.

And with the Ducks, a seventh-seed, playing in the tournament's first game, a 6:30 p.m. bout Friday against 10th-seed Washington State, fans support should increase.

"I think it will enhance ticket sales tremendously," Baumgartner said of the Ducks playing in the first game. "When the Ducks play, there will probably close to 7,000 people in that arena."

In a one-and-done situation, the Ducks need to win four games in four nights to claim the tournament's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

Next year, however, the Pac-10 is trying to eliminate the home-court advantage for the conference tournament.

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