

## SPORTS

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## Coach Kent shows Oregon what its playing for

■ The men's team prepares for the road, where a rare Pac-10 championship is at stake

By Jeff Smith  
Oregon Daily Emerald

During his Monday team meeting, Ernie Kent displayed images to his men's basketball team of what it's playing for this week.

"Coach showed us pictures of the Pac-10 championship rings and it gave us more incentive to go out there and get it," senior Anthony Lever said.

So what prompted the Oregon head coach to do so?

"Sometimes you need a visual — especially men, we're very visual-oriented and we need to be able to look at what it is we're going after," Kent said Tuesday.

Oregon has the opportunity to grab a piece of its first league championship since the 1944-45 Ducks tied for the Pacific Coast Conference Northern Division title. With a victory at USC on Thursday night, the 13th-ranked Ducks would clinch at least a tie for first and get the No. 1 seed in the Pac-10 Tournament.

Should the Ducks beat the Trojans and then get past UCLA on Saturday, the championship crown would belong solely to Oregon.

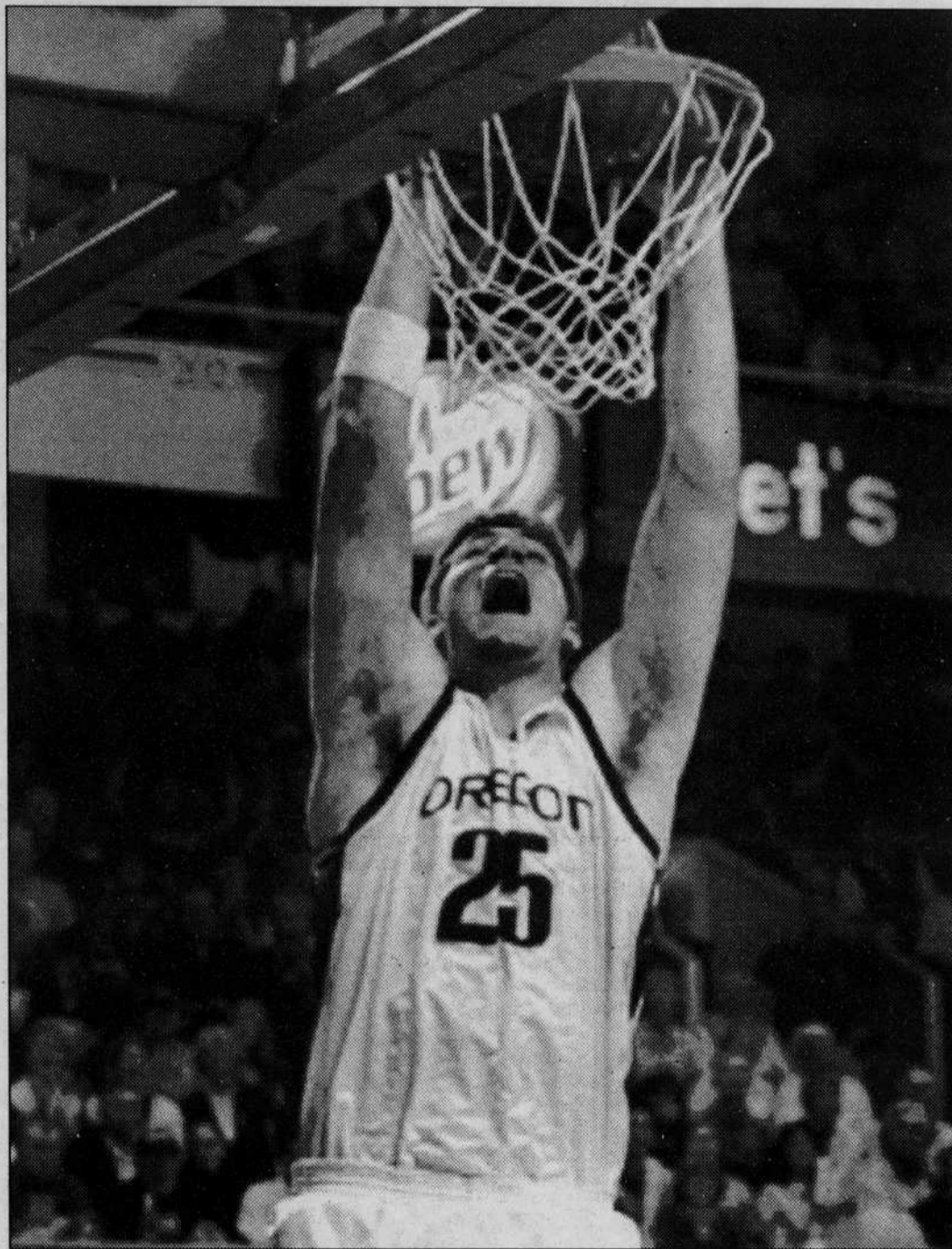
"Ever since our win over Washington and especially in our meetings yesterday, we've been really focused," center Chris Christoffersen said. "We got together and said, 'OK, it's up to us now. It's in our hands.'"

"It doesn't matter what anyone else does, it comes down to what we do."

And fortunately for Duck's fans, they'll have an opportunity to watch Thursday's game thanks to a late agreement by Fox Sports Net and the Pac-10 on Monday.

The Stanford-Arizona game was se-

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Adam Amato Emerald

Center Chris Christoffersen says he's 100 percent healthy for this week's games after battling through sickness.

## Wrestlers preparing for Pac-10 title run

■ The Duck wrestling team is gearing up for the Pac-10 Tournament by lightening the practice load to rest their bodies

By Chris Cabot  
Oregon Daily Emerald

With the Pacific-10 Conference Tournament on Saturday and Sunday in Corvallis, the Oregon wrestling team is making some final preparations.

Tuesday's practice began a stretch of four light workouts for Oregon, which should have the team rested and ready to battle for its first conference crown in 20 years.

"We want to be physically and mentally at our best," head coach Chuck Kearney said. "Today will be the first day that we kind of start lightening up on (the wrestlers) to let them bounce back and hopefully achieve a physical peak. When you feel good physically, there is a tendency that you will psychologically feel good as well."

The Ducks' 38-7 win over Portland State on Feb. 20 gave them a final regular season record of 9-7 overall and 5-4 in the Pac-10.

## National rankings

For the first time all season Oregon holds a spot in Intermat's top-25 rankings, debuting in the No. 23 slot. The Ducks have won four of their last five dual meets, including wins over No. 24

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## Acrobatic freshman not 'backpedalling'

■ Lately, Kedzie Gunderson is making a name for herself with outstanding play

By Hank Hager  
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Ducks entered this season with what was believed to be a problem.

For the first time in a long time, Oregon's roster was dominated by freshmen. Names like Amy Parish, Kedzie Gunderson and Andrea Bills are plastered inside of the 2001-02 media guide.

Besides junior Shaquala Williams and seniors Ednisha Curry and Jamie Craighead, Oregon head coach Bev Smith really didn't know who to turn to when a jump-start was needed.

The Ducks may have just found that player. And she's not your average freshman.

Gunderson has begun to step up and play an increasingly effective role for the Ducks. Her 12 points against Washington State last Thursday were a career

high, and it was just an example of the success she has enjoyed so far.

"It feels good to know that I'm improving as time goes on instead of backpedalling," she said. "It felt good to get in there (against Washington State), and that I can put up numbers. It was a good confidence booster and it will be interesting to see how things go on."

For the Ducks, Curry is the "wacky" senior who shows all kind of emotion on the court. Williams is the serious junior who has a stare unrivaled in the conference.

And as a freshman, Gunderson has started to carve a niche of her own.

She is the acrobat who can make a shot from any angle or elevation. If a team has found a way to stop her, it hasn't shown it yet.

"I've always been like that, but I don't even see myself like that," Gunderson said. "People are always like, 'How'd you make that?' Just knowing that I can twist and move put up shots that you wouldn't call normal and be able to make them adds a little flair."

The games in Washington last week afforded Gunderson, a 6-foot guard from Bellevue, Wash., the chance to go

home for the first time. Although she wasn't much of a Husky fan when she grew up — instead she "just liked watching college basketball," — the games up north were a pleasant experience.

"It was nice to go up to Washington and put on a decent game for myself and my team," she said.

And what about her old school, Bellevue High?

"I stayed up (after Saturday's game) and actually watched my high school win the district championship," she said. "It was good to see them keep going."

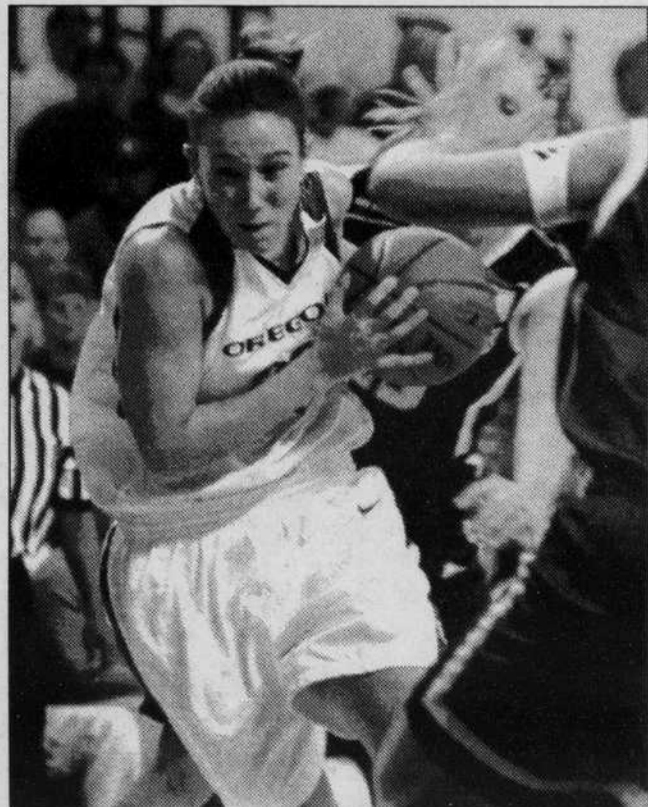
## Offensive dynamos

The Ducks may have finished seventh in the Pacific-10 Conference, but several Oregon players enjoyed impressive statistical season.

It should come as no surprise to Duck and Pac-10 fans that Williams finished near the top in three categories. Williams was No. 1 in conference play with 18.4 points per game.

Williams was the best in the conference in free throw percentage at 90.1.

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Thomas Patterson Emerald

In her freshman season, guard Kedzie Gunderson has provided a spark off the bench for the Ducks, who play WSU on Friday.