

Adam Amato Emerald

The stone-cold stare and hot hand of junior Shaquala Williams has helped lead the Ducks to their ninth straight winning season. The guard has averaged more than 18 points per game in Pac-10 play and is currently ninth on Oregon's all-time scoring list.

Shaquala Williams Junior Guard



Hometown: Portland
Height: 5-foot-6
Season stats: 17.4 points, 4.15 assists, 1.37 steals per game

On the Oregon backcourt: "I think when teams scout us, they talk about our guards — that we have to be stopped to beat this team. Not to undermine our posts, but I think we're definitely going to have to come out and play solid to win this tournament."

Edniesha Curry Senior Guard



Hometown: Palmdale, Calif.
Height: 5-foot-6
Season stats: 10.7 points, 3.3 assists, 1.79 steals per game

On her paring with Shaquala Williams: "You can see the chemistry on the court now, the things we weren't doing for each other at the beginning of the season, and I think that's helping the team out, seeing us together as one. It takes time and I'm glad we're coming together at the right time."

Guards

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particularly in the last few games."

Curry, on the other hand, was a wild card, and to Pac-10 opponents, still is.

No one really knows what she's going to do next, and neither does she. The one thing Curry does know is that it will be with a ton of energy.

Upon her return to the lineup in early January after missing three games because of a foot injury, Curry brought the McArthur Court fans to their feet.

The only thing was, it wasn't with her precision shooting or sweet passing. It was with her defensive intensity.

"It's a great feeling, and that's why I'm so happy that the conference tournament is here," she said, smiling when discussing the mystique of Mac Court. "I love it. It's great to be out there."

What happens when the tournament starts?

"I'll be so hyped for us," Curry said. "You'll see it on Friday when I get out there and play. I think our

whole team has the sense of a new energy, but for me, my energy is always high. When I'm high, our team is a different team, and I know that."

If the Ducks are to win the conference tournament — and they will most likely have to do so to earn an NCAA Tournament berth — Williams and Curry will have to play at the top of their game.

Stanford, the No. 2 team in the country, is the undisputed favorite to win the conference tournament. Stanford's bigger guards give the Ducks some matchup problems, but Oregon can give everyone problems when Williams is knocking down her jump shots and Curry is full of energy.

Of course, the two have to be up to it.

"I don't think any teams really match up well against us, because I don't think there's any team that can match our speed," Williams said. "The only reason Stanford can match up is because they are bigger than we are. Beyond them, I don't think there is anyone that can match up with us."

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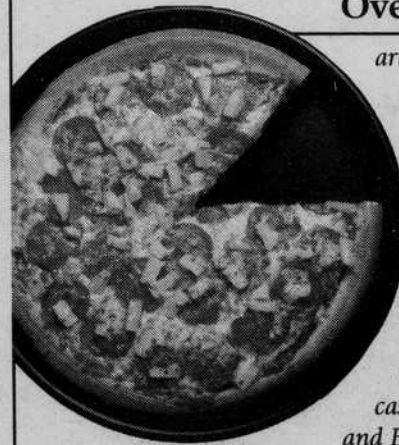
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