

# Nerves come out in first Duck scrimmage Friday

Oregon's shooting Friday at its first scrimmage was not on the mark, but the Ducks aren't concerned

## Women's basketball

**Hank Hager**  
Sports Reporter

It has been almost eight months since the Oregon women's basketball team stepped on the court for the WNIT.

Saturday's exhibition game — set to start at 5 p.m. at McArthur Court — represents the first test for the Ducks, but each player had an examination of her own on Friday. The squad's first public scrimmage drew a large crowd — approximately 300 people — but not high-percentage shooting.

As a team, the Ducks attempted 35 3-pointers, but connected on just

eight. Overall, Oregon shot 35 percent (39-for-111) from the field.

"I think that we executed well, and therefore produced a lot of open shots, and I think perhaps some nerves about the crowd we had, which was large for a scrimmage, af-

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**Kedzie Gunderson**  
sophomore

fects them and how they play," head coach Bev Smith said. "We don't want to be perfect right now with that offensive shooting. It would be nice if it was up there but I think what we're focusing on right now is

defensive intensity, playing hard and playing together."

Sophomore Andrea Bills led the team with 16 points on 5-of-13 shooting, while junior Cathrine Kraayeveld pitched in with 15 points. Newcomer Carolyn Ganes had 12 points and five rebounds, while sophomore Brandi Davis — who missed last season due to academic reasons — scored eight points.

"We're so used to playing in practice against each other, we're beginning to get a little tired of it," sophomore Kedzie Gunderson said. "Overall, we moved well and worked well as a team."

## Getting exclusive

Senior Shaquala Williams earned national recognition this week when ESPN.com named her one of the top five point guards in the nation.

According to analyst Nancy Lieberman, Williams is "very dynamic and hard to guard. She can handle the ball and score, and has stretched her game."

"It's a great compliment, especially coming from somebody like Nancy Lieberman, who is considered one of the all-time greats, but it's just a humbling thing," Williams said. "I'm just happy they recognized me, but I think right now I'd rather have them recognizing our team, saying that we're one of the better teams in the country."

Last season, Williams averaged 16.3 points and 3.9 assists per game as Oregon's shooting guard. This season, she has moved to the point — her natural position — after vacating it because of Ednisha Curry's presence last season.

Stanford's Susan King made the "also considered" list as the only other player from the Pacific-10 Conference mentioned.

## Top of the heap

Oregon's non-conference schedule was ranked sixth-toughest in the nation Wednesday by the Women's Basketball Coaches Association and Richie Summerville, a producer for ESPN Radio in Virginia Beach, Va.

The Ducks' nine non-conference opponents combined to go 179-91 (.663) last season. Six of those teams made the NCAA Tournament.

Oregon's overall strength of schedule, which includes Pac-10 games, is ranked 47th.

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## Robi Thayer file

**Born:** Robi Anngene Thayer on Feb. 10, 1980, in Des Moines, Wash.

**High School:** Lettered four times in soccer at Auburn High ... was selected MVP and Best Defensive Player her final three years ... member of the 1998 Washington State club champions, the FC Royals.

**Oregon:** Transferred to Oregon in 2001 and had an immediate impact on defense. Has been a co-captain for the Ducks this season and will play her final game in an Oregon uniform tomorrow night against Oregon State.

## Thayer

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choice for Thayer since she was five years old. She was told she was too big to be a ballerina and the team aspect of the game is what drives her to play, as individual sports are not her style.

Thayer has learned a lot in 17 years of playing soccer. And her days in El Paso have helped to shape her into the defender she is today for Oregon. The aggressive, in-your-face, I'll-take-you-out-if-I-get-the-chance style has made her who she is.

"She is a very intelligent player and uses her abilities really well,"

Steffen said. "She doesn't get caught in difficult situations because she is smart enough to prevent them beforehand."

Soccer has brought Thayer through her entire adolescence, and she is now figuring out where she will go from here. Thayer is a fifth-year senior and plans to continue her schooling to earn a double major in sociology and business.

The soccer mom will be gone soon enough, and when she is, hopefully her troops can find a way to fill in the gap, as Thayer had a large impact on her little Ducks.

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## Blowout

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for 50 points, and Ridnour chipped in with 13 assists.

Ridnour hit the ground hard on one play in the second half, a block on a fast break. Ridnour elevated for the block, but fell on his rear next to the hoop as the crowd went silent. But he got up a short while later, and said he will be sore for a few days.

Almost everybody on the team got playing time Wednesday night.

Kent's son, Jordan, and Adam Zahn sat out the game for possible redshirt reasons, but Kent played everybody else on the team — in the first half. The only player on the squad who didn't score in the first period was Brandon Lincoln, but Lincoln got his first points on a three-pointer with 9:18 left in the second. He ended the game with six points.

The Ducks' next exhibition game is set for next Thursday at 7 p.m., when the Ducks will take on the EA Sports Allstars at McArthur Court.

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## Speed

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transfer Andre Joseph, and red-shirt freshman center Ian Crosswhite, playing against his former mates from Australia, combined to hit 10-of-11 three-pointers in the first half. Overall, the Ducks connected on 15-of-24 (.625) shots from beyond the arc.

"It has not been a surprise to me for us to shoot that well," Kent said.

Celebrating his 21st birthday Wednesday, Jackson said the win was especially pleasing. But he said that he didn't have any wild plans for a birthday celebration.

"I'm just going to go the family's house (in Creswell), eat a little cake and call it a night," Jackson said.

Indeed, a slow start for a 21er — about the only slow aspect of Oregon's start to the 2002-03 season.

Contact the senior sports reporter at [adamjude@dailymerald.com](mailto:adamjude@dailymerald.com).

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