

Women ready for final preseason test

After a 57-point win, the Ducks look to dominate again tonight against Southern Oregon

Women's basketball

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's basketball team hosts Southern Oregon at McArthur court in its final exhibition game at 7 p.m.

The Ducks are off to a great start after gliding through their first exhibition game, 100-43, over Horsholm BBC last weekend.

Oregon held nothing back and jumped to a 20-0 lead to start the first half. Horsholm's first basket didn't come until the 14:37 mark, but by that time it was too late.

Junior forward Cathrine Kraayeveld picked up a double-double with 14 points and 12 rebounds on the night, and senior All-America guard Shaquala Williams went 7-of-12 from

the field for a team-high 20 points.

Oregon will look to have the same dominance again, but overall, the Ducks are just enjoying the opportunity to compete.

"Anytime we can play another team with another uniform, regardless of who it is, they are excited, because it is a measuring stick to see where we're at," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "Southern Oregon is going to be a good opponent for us. They play an up-tempo game. They press, they trap and they look to run,

and that's what we're trying to do, so it will be a good game for us."

Even in an exhibition game, Oregon takes nothing lightly.

"You have to go into every game knowing you have to play hard and not worry about the other team," Kraayeveld said.

All 12 Oregon players saw time last weekend and the Ducks say they are liking the way they look as a team right now.

It is early in the season for Oregon, but not too early for the Ducks to be

dreaming of the postseason. Oregon dominated in winning the WNIT tournament last season but want to see the NCAA tournament this time around.

"The important part of the season right now is what we improve every day," Williams said. "We are learning from our mistakes the day before, and our exhibition game is a tremendous opportunity for us to be able to show that to people."

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Ducks get ready for desert trip

Oregon looks for just its second Pac-10 win in the final road trip of the season

Volleyball

Hank Hager
Sports Reporter

The Oregon volleyball team is looking to get over the hump, looking for that one last quality that will propel it to victory No. 2 in Pacific-10 Conference play.

Matches against No. 16 Arizona and Arizona State couldn't have come at a better time.

The Ducks travel to the desert for their final road trip of the season, taking on the Wildcats in Tucson on Friday, with a start time of 6 p.m. On Saturday, they travel to Tempe and duel with the Sun Devils.

Oregon, which has been playing

some of its best volleyball all season last week in losses to USC and UCLA, was one game away from defeating Arizona State earlier this season. The Ducks (11-17 overall, 1-13 Pac-10) were no match for Arizona (13-9, 8-6) the night before, but look to avenge their poor showing.

"I think our offense and defense are in a lot more sync right now," sophomore Lauren Westendorf said. "We're getting a lot of digs, which we're transitioning into points, and our passing is great."

Against the Sun Devils, the Ducks used timely scoring and a stingy defense to force Arizona State (10-9, 6-8) to five games. Oregon eventually lost what was a heartbreaking match.

The difference for Oregon this time is that the Ducks have been more consistent on a match-to-match basis recently. Before their previous match

against the Sun Devils, the Ducks had played well just once in Pac-10 play, in a five-game loss to California.

Since losing to Arizona State, the Ducks have again taken California to the limit, defeated Oregon State for their first Pac-10 win of the season, and despite bowing out early against USC, played consistently against one of the best teams in the nation.

"I don't want to get satisfied without success," head coach Carl Ferreira said. "I don't want anyone on our team to get used to just being satisfied with playing very well. We actually want to beat a top-20 team, and we think we're getting very close to being able to get to that level. The great thing about this Pac-10 volleyball conference is nobody is going to open the door for us."

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Basketball

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be happier," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said. "That was another very impressive game offensively. We challenged ourselves to run for 40 minutes, and we did."

The EA Sports team is six days away from completing a grueling 15-game, 20-day schedule, which has it competing against some of the top teams in the nation, including No. 1 Arizona and No. 4 Texas.

By comparison, Arizona defeated the EA Sports squad 117-95 on Tuesday, while Texas handed the travelers a 102-88 loss.

Six EA Sports players scored in double figures against the Ducks, led by former Wyoming guard Brett McFall's 18 points on 5-of-10 three-pointers.

Oregon was 13-for-31 from beyond the arc, with Ridnour and Davis each hitting 4-of-7 attempts. Seven Ducks scored in double figures.

"We wanted to get out and run, and that's what we did for the whole game," Ridnour said. "We have so many weapons, it's going to be hard to stop us."

Early on, the Ducks weren't all that hard to stop. The EA Sports team took a 31-20 lead with 8:45 to play in the first half, but Davis hit two three-pointers to lead the Ducks on a 23-9 run. After former Kansas forward Nick Bradford was called for a technical foul, Jackson and Ian Crosswhite sank four consecutive free-throws.

Bradford and a referee later told Kent that they were impressed by the Ducks' play.

"One of the officials said they would need to bring in two sets of officials to the games" because the Ducks run so much, Kent said. "Bradford said he'd never seen a team like this that is so skilled and plays so unselfishly."

"That was music to my ears."

Contact the senior sports reporter at adamjude@dailyemerald.com.

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Arnold to mid-court for a conference. Bradford wanted to call a play.

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"Nick told me to fake up top and get back-door," Arnold said.

With 14 seconds left, Arnold did just that, faking up top and getting back-door for the easy lay-in. He exchanged high-fives and monster grins with his All-Star teammates.

"We drew it up, and it worked," Arnold said. "They set it up. There are some great guys on that team."

And in the high-five line after the game, Arnold got another big grin, from star point guard Luke Ridnour. Then Ridnour, who scored 31 points and notched 10 assists in the contest, patted him on the back.

The grin on Arnold's face lasted all the way to the locker room, all the way to the post-locker room speech. Heck, that grin might last until Easter.

But that's what happens when you step on the court with the Oregon Ducks.

Contact the sports editor at peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com. His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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