

SPORTS

Best bet
NBA: Dallas at L.A. Lakers
7:30 p.m., ESPN

Friday, December 6, 2002

UO women snap
3-game streak
with blowout winThe Ducks really take care
of business by toppling the
Pilots 85-63 at McArthur Court

Women's basketball

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's basketball team stepped onto McArthur court on Thursday night, and all the right vibes were there.

The Ducks would not be denied for a fourth-straight time, as Oregon went on to beat Portland 85-63.

After a rough weekend in the Virgin Islands, the Ducks had suffered three straight losses away from home and were looking to get back on the right track.

And being at home was all it took. "Our confidence was a little bit shaken in those three games on the road and we weren't feeling very good about ourselves," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "And I give our players all the credit. They came back, they focused, they just decided they were going to go out and play disciplined basketball. And there is nothing like Mac Court."

The Ducks began a little shaky as they turned the ball over four times in the first three minutes. But after some patience and after sophomore Brandi Davis scored seven unan-

swered points, her Ducks were right back where they needed to be.

The Pilots would not go away, though, and after a few from downtown, Portland had tied the game, 12-12, halfway through the first half.

Both teams battled for the lead but after solid contributions from every Oregon player, including junior Kayla Steen, who finished the half with back-to-back baskets from beyond the three-point arc, the Ducks entered half-time comfortable at 38-30.

But for Oregon, an eight point lead just wasn't good enough, and Smith discussed it in the locker room.

And after a strong start in the second half with back-to-back three pointers by senior Alissa Edwards, Oregon led 54-35.

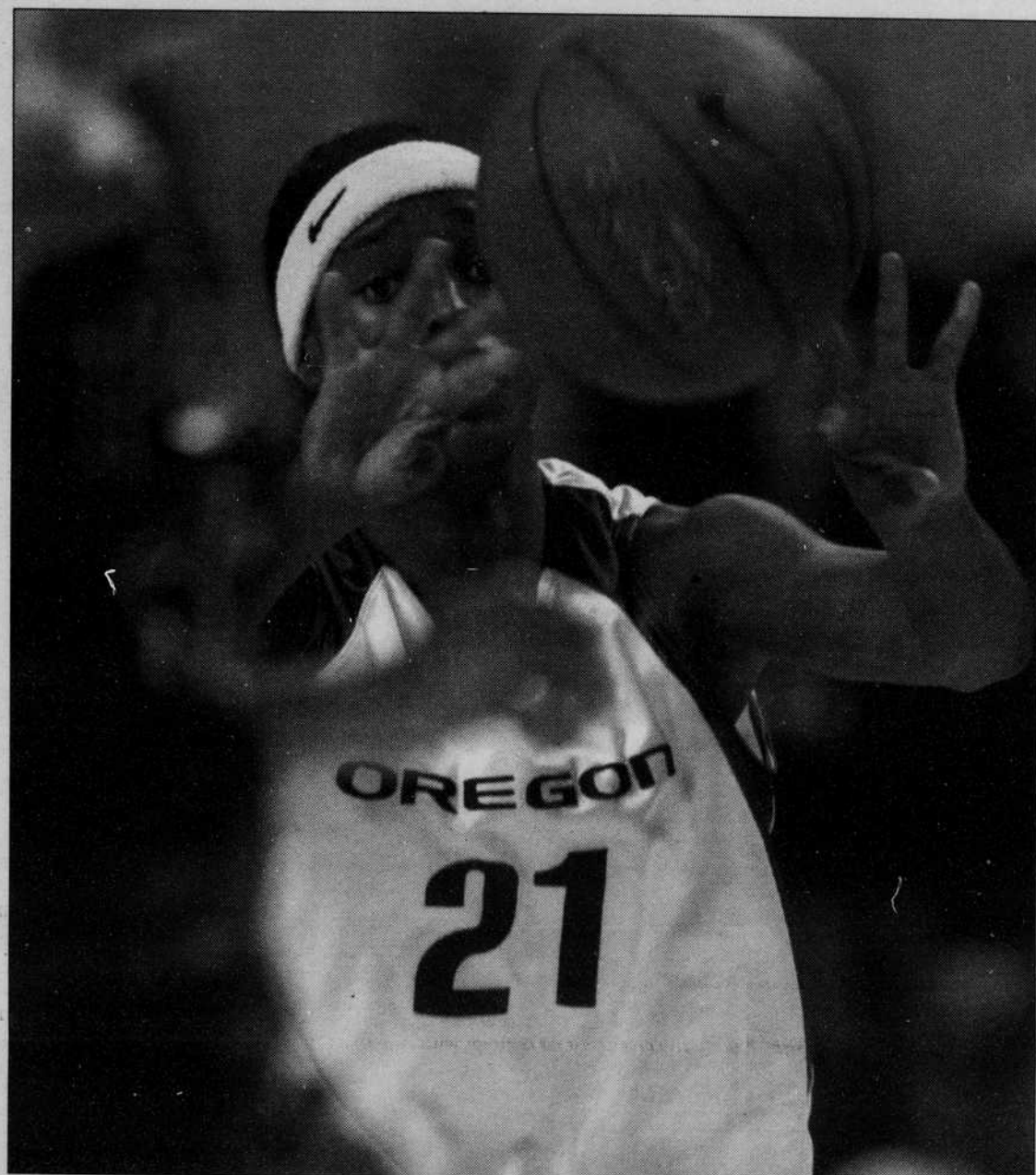
The small Pilot lineup, which had four starting guards and one forward, never had a chance, as the Ducks increased their lead to 68-42 at one point.

The outside shooting of Portland could not match Oregon's deep accuracy, as the Pilots went 10-for-27 from downtown.

Oregon never looked back en route to the 22 point victory, and took care of all the sore spots that needed attention.

"Everybody just stepped it up

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Adam Amato Emerald

Sophomore Brandi Davis victimized Portland for 19 points Thursday night as the Ducks routed the Pilots despite Shaquala Williams' absence.

Duck offense thrives despite Williams' absence

Oregon has no problem making up for the loss of its suspended star point guard in Thursday's victory

Hank Hager
Sports Reporter

The Ducks answered the cynics Thursday night against Portland, telling the rest of the rest of the collegiate basketball world that, yes, they could win without senior Shaquala Williams.

Williams, Oregon's starting point guard and former Pacific-10 Conference Player of

the Year, was suspended indefinitely Tuesday by head coach Bev Smith, and failed to make an appearance at McArthur Court in the Ducks' 85-63 victory.

Still, Oregon did not miss a beat, despite a sluggish first half that placed the Ducks just eight points ahead of the Pilots as the teams entered the locker room.

"I sort of had a feeling they would play harder and better than they had," Portland head coach Jim Sollars said, adding that the Pilots did not concern themselves with Williams' absence.

Maybe they should have, as Oregon's back-

court stepped up in Williams' place. Sophomore Brandi Davis ended the night with a team-leading 19 points, 12 of which came in the first half.

Davis brought a majority of the 3,570 in attendance to their feet late in the first half with a circus-like shot that had no business going in the basket. The guard drove from the right side of the baseline into the lane with the ball in her left hand, and upon switching it to her right, banked it into the hoop.

Davis said she understands Williams' impact on the court and admitted she's not trying to replace the star.

"I'm not even trying to fill those shoes," Davis said.

Senior Alissa Edwards, normally Oregon's starting shooting guard, moved over to the point in place of Williams. She responded with six points, but more importantly, six assists in leading the Ducks out of early game doldrums that produced four turnovers in less than three minutes to start the first half.

"I thought Alissa Edwards was a rock," Smith said. "There was a sense of determination in her. She set the tone tonight. When we faltered at the beginning tonight,

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Men look to Jam on Kansas in Papé

The Ducks will have revenge on their minds as they face Kansas in the Papé Jam on Saturday

Men's basketball

Adam Jude
Senior Sports Reporter

For more than eight months, Oregon has dreamed the Kansas blues.

The Ducks spent the offseason reliving the horror of their 104-86 loss to Kansas in the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament, a loss that ended Oregon's magical season.

The Ducks waited patiently for another chance, careful not to look past their first opponents of this young season. That pa-

tiency will soon evaporate, as could the Ducks' nightmares.

"Now we can finally start talking about Kansas," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said Wednesday after Oregon's 96-66 win over Portland.

No. 7 Oregon (4-0) has a rare chance at redemption Saturday when Kansas visits Portland for the Papé Jam at the Rose Garden. The game, set for 12:30 p.m., will be nationally televised on CBS.

"It's a big-time revenge game," forward Robert Johnson said. "We're looking forward to it, but we had to take care of (Portland) first."

More than 17,300 tickets have been sold for the game, which should have the largest audience at a college basketball game in the state's history.

And it should be a dandy.

Kansas (3-2) entered the season

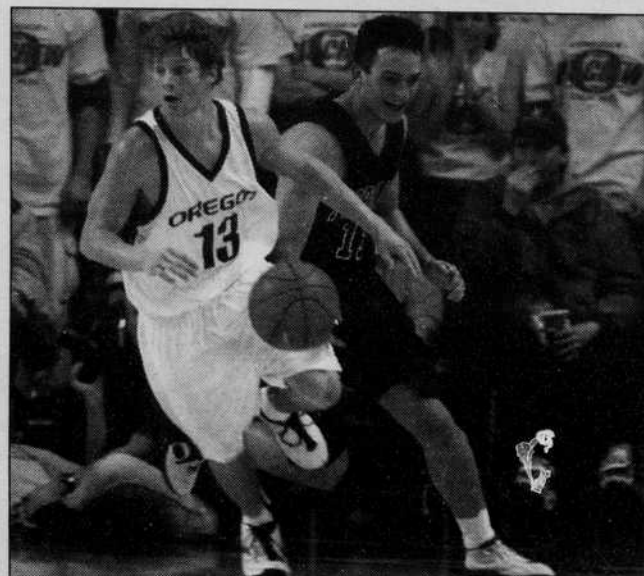
ranked No. 2 in the polls, but lost consecutive games last week to North Carolina and Florida and fell to No. 14 this week, the Jayhawks' lowest ranking since the end of the 1999-2000 season.

To make matters worse for the Jayhawks, preseason All-American Kirk Hinrich sat out Kansas' 97-70 win over Central Missouri State on Wednesday because of a strained back he suffered in the loss to North Carolina. Hinrich is expected to play against Oregon.

"They've got some revenge on their minds, possibly, and they are playing very well and we're not playing as well," Kansas head coach Roy Williams said. "It will have to be our best game of the year."

If history holds true, Kansas should have the advantage in the paint, where the Jayhawks outrebounded the Ducks

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Jeremy Forrest Emerald

Luke Ridnour and the Ducks will look to avenge last year's season-ending, Elite Eight loss to Kansas on Saturday in Portland.