

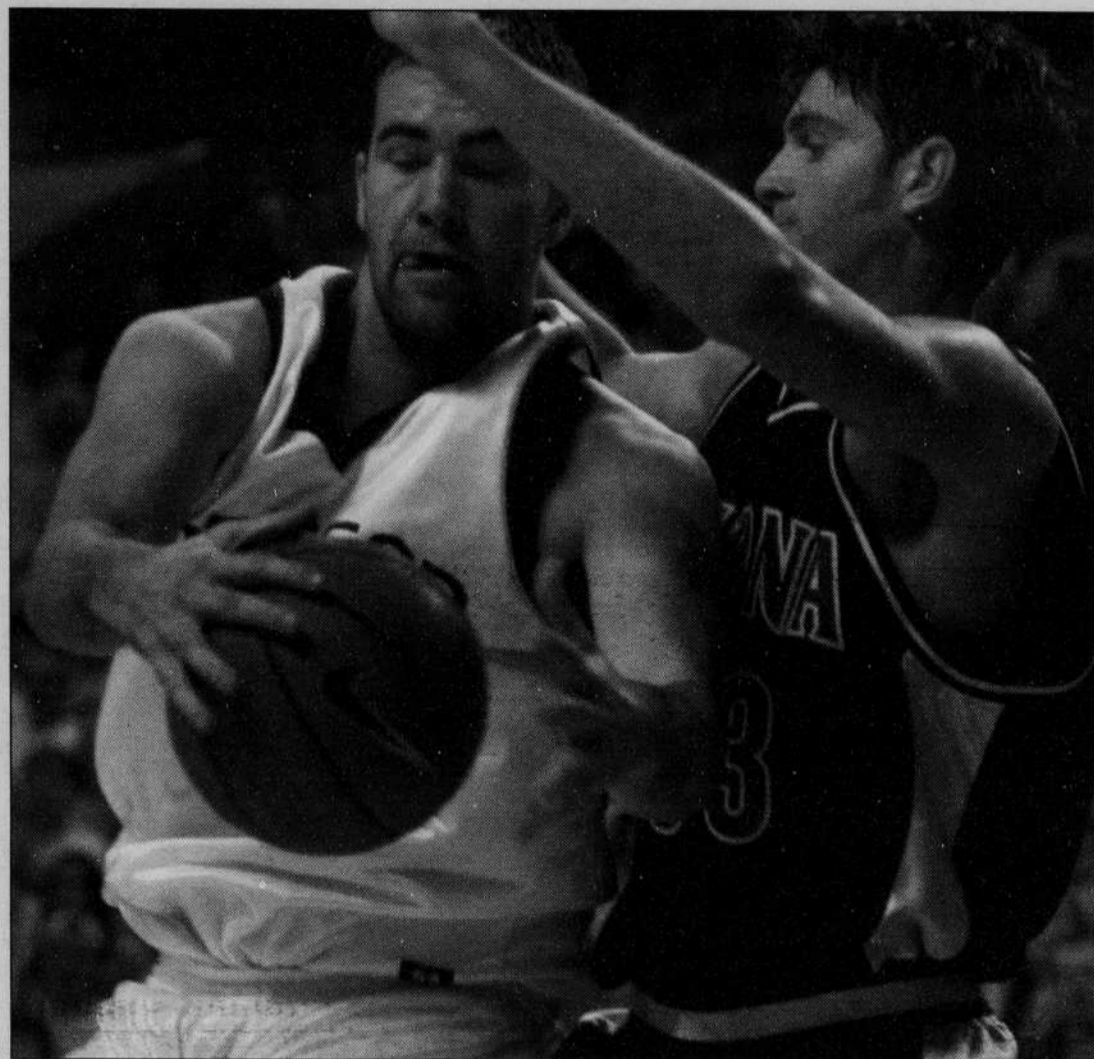
SPORTS

Best bet
NBA: L.A. Lakers at Houston
6:30 p.m., ESPN

Sports Editor:
Peter Hockaday
peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com

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Ducks hope 'grandma's house' helps



Adam Amato Emerald

Ian Crosswhite (with ball) struggled against Arizona, but scored 17 points in Wednesday's win at Portland State.

The Oregon men return home in need of a win in Saturday's Civil War

Men's basketball

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

Over the river and through the woods -- well, let's let Ernie Kent explain it.

"I always say we need to get back to grandma's house, and Mac Court is grandma's house," the Oregon head coach said.

To grandmother's house they go.

For Kent, the way to fix his team's recent problems is easy: Return home, use a little McArthur Court magic dust against a team, Oregon State, that hasn't beaten the Ducks in seven tries — nine at Mac Court — and see what happens.

Maybe grandmother's cookies will get Oregon out of the slump.

All kidding aside, the Ducks need a win against a Pacific-10 Conference opponent now. They went to Portland on Wednesday and scraped by the Division I-AA Portland State Vikings, mere days after limping home from a Bay Area trip in which they lost to California and Stanford by a combined 40 points.

Oregon is 2-3 in its last five games.

"Come Saturday, it's a whole new ball game, we've got to go back to work again and get ready to play," Duck point guard Luke Ridnour said. "We've got to get geared up for Oregon State."

The Beavers are an interesting opponent to start a streak against. They've played a handful of Pac-10 teams though, including Arizona and Stanford,

but still don't have a conference win. Oregon State has won only once in the last 18 games of the Civil War series.

But the Beaver big men are just big enough to give the Ducks fits.

"We're going to have to get ready for Brian Jackson and (Phillip) Ricci from Oregon State, and we're going to have to do a good job on them," Oregon forward Ian Crosswhite said.

Jackson and Ricci are, indeed, the dual wrecking balls of the Beaver frontcourt. Ricci averages 17.4 points and 7.8 rebounds per game, while Jackson is one of only two other Oregon State players averaging in double figures.

The pair will be a challenge for Crosswhite and the other Oregon big men, who have struggled against talented Pac-10 players this season. Crosswhite had a spectacular preseason but slumped against the Arizona schools, and Kent kept him off the floor for much of the Bay Area trip. He returned to action and form against Portland State, scoring 17 points.

"A lot of (Oregon's struggling) has to do with our big guys," Kent said after the game Wednesday night. "We need a little bit more production out of them. Ian had a big game tonight; we just need to continue to come."

Crosswhite isn't the only struggling Oregon big man. Brian Helquist has been hampered by a shoulder injury that he suffered in the preseason and hasn't returned to form. He is averaging only 4.1 points per game.

Oregon State will also have the dangerous underdog factor, which has worked for Oregon's opponents in the

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Women's War usually comes down to crunch

The Ducks and Beavers have a recent history of last-second thrillers and they prepare for war

Women's basketball

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

This is no time to be civil.

Oregon comes off one of the closest defeats in the nation this season as the Ducks competed in one of the most intense games of their college careers.

And Oregon State can't forget the buzzer-beater by junior Cathrine Kraayeveld with 4.4 seconds left, after the Ducks rallied

from 12 down to knock off the Beavers 50-48 in the second round of the Women's National Invitation Tournament last year.

Last February, prior to the tournament, the Beavers received another blow from Oregon as senior Edneisha Curry hit a 10-foot bank shot with 1.8 seconds left in overtime to give the Ducks a one-point victory.

In the last two matchups of the Civil War, in a total of 80 minutes of basketball, all that seems to matter is 6.2 seconds. And after Oregon's last-second loss to Stanford last week, this game could be downsized to a matter of mere moments.

"That game against Stanford is getting us pumped for the games ahead, and what better game to go

into after that than OSU," sophomore Amy Taylor said. "We are confident yet knowing we have to play like we have by working hard, making stops on defense. It's going to be a really good chance for us to get back on a winning note."

Oregon (6-9, 2-4 Pac-10) will face off with Oregon State (8-7, 2-4 Pac-10) at Gill Coliseum Saturday night with both teams trying to gain some kind of conference edge.

The Ducks have won 13 of the last 14 in the rivalry, including six in a row in Beaver territory. Oregon State has not had a victory over Oregon at Gill Coliseum since Jan. 5, 1996.

"As a player, you know you have to prepare for war, and it is exciting

both ways," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "Our players are going to make it exciting for us as a coaching staff."

Oregon lost in Eugene last year to Oregon State, as the Beavers cracked the Ducks' 11-game win streak with a 61-53 wake-up call.

This season, the Beavers had a very strong start, winning three out of their first four. Yet, prior to a win over Cal last weekend, Oregon State had lost four straight in conference play.

The Ducks have not fared well either, losing three out of their last four Pac-10 games. But the statistics prove to be in Oregon's favor, as they have won 40 of their last 44 games against the Northwest schools.

It may be tough for the Ducks to continue their streak in Corvallis, because the Beavers will be ready.

"As a player, you know you have to prepare for war, and it is exciting both ways."

Bev Smith
Oregon head coach

They have a 9-2 record at home this season.

"It's going to be a tough game," senior Alissa Edwards said. "We are going in anxious to play again. After

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Wrestlers return home for meet

Oregon hosts two Pac-10 foes in back-to-back dual meets today

Wrestling

Mindi Rice
Freelance Sports Reporter

One month after starting the dual meet season at home, the Oregon wrestling squad competes again at McArthur Court in two dual meets today.

The Ducks host Stanford at 3 p.m., and battle California-Davis at 7 p.m.

"We're at a point where we need to start putting things together," head coach Chuck Kearney said.

Oregon, with a 3-4 overall dual meet record and 2-0 record in the Pacific-10

Conference, will face both conference opponents for the first time this season.

"We want to be wrestling smart, strategic, tough matches," Kearney said.

Three guys who are wrestling consistently well are seniors Casey Hunt and Tony Overstake, and sophomore Shane Webster.

Hunt, who wrestles in the 141 class this season, finished fourth at 149 in the Pac-10 last year. He has continued the strong finish into this season, recently winning three of four matches during Friday's Oregon Classic. Hunt is ranked No. 20 by The Wrestling Mall in the latest 141 class poll.

"141 will be a weight class where he will make a run for the Pac-10 title," Kearney said.

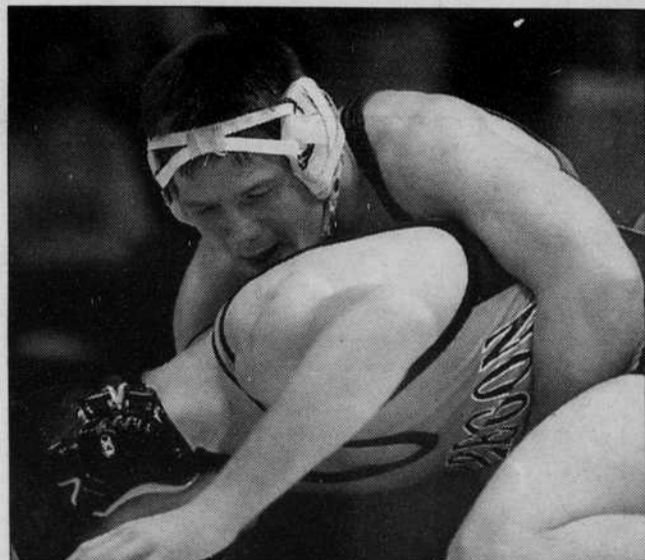
Another wrestler who dropped down

one weight class, Overstake won the Pac-10 title at 157 last season. This year, he has improved upon his success, winning six of his last eight meets. The two losses have been to ranked opponents. Overstake is currently ranked No. 19 in the latest 149 class poll by Amateur Wrestling News.

"He's coming off a Pac-10 Championship," Kearney said. "He's setting his sights at not just achieving at that level, but achieving at the national level."

Webster won all four of his matches in the Oregon Classic, putting him at 16-2 on the season at 174. Between three wrestling polls, Webster is ranked No. 12, No. 13 and No. 14 in his weight class. Webster is 5-2 against ranked opponents this season with the two

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Jeremy Forrest Emerald

Casey Hunt (top) is one of three Oregon wrestlers ranked in the top 20 of their weight class. He is ranked 20th in the 141 class.