

SPORTS

Sports Editor:
Peter Hockaday
peterhockaday@dailymerald.com

Online exclusive
Read a recap of the Club
Hockey team's exploits at
www.dailymerald.com

Wednesday, January 22, 2003

Ducks' vapid defense leads to Pac-10 woes

Oregon must step up defensively if it hopes to move up in the Pac-10 standings

Women's basketball

Hank Hager
Sports Reporter

Take a look at the Pacific-10 Conference standings and you will find a situation that many Oregon fans are not used to seeing.

The Duck women are tied for eighth place with USC. Both teams have a 2-5 conference record. Oregon is 1-4 in its last five games and has gone just 1-3 against teams ranked in the top 25 this season.

Then take a look at the Pac-10 statistical categories and you will find one glaring reason for the drop in the standings.

Scoring defense. The Ducks are allowing 78.4 points per game in Pac-10 play. And although Oregon State failed to score more than 70 points against the Ducks, it was apparent the Oregon defense was outmatched.

"In the second half — and I still think we're playing harder than a month ago — but I think we relaxed a little bit with pressure on their perimeter," head coach Bev Smith said. "As a result, they moved the ball around the perimeter, were very patient, and our post players cannot battle two excellent post players when they have time to pass the ball and look in."

Oregon has averaged 67 points per game this season. Couple that with the team's inability to hold most opponents under 70 points, and you've got a recipe for disaster.

Against the Beavers, the Oregon defense was noticeably absent from the court, especially during the Beavers' 20-2 run that seemed to last the entire 20 minutes of the second half. It didn't, but it may as well have.

"They were playing all offense, and we were playing defense the whole time," senior Alissa Edwards said.

Injuries abound

Oregon has been suffering from a multitude of injuries this season, never more apparent than when the Ducks had only eight players suited up against Oregon State.

There is no update on junior Cathrine Kraayeveld. She is still expected to miss at least four more weeks, although Smith has said there is a strong possibility the forward will not make it back this season.

Sophomore Andrea Bills has been filling in for Kraayeveld on the offensive end, but she is suffering from plantar fasciitis in her left foot. She is not expected to miss any games.

The same goes for junior Kayla Steen. The junior missed the Oregon State contest due to a sore back but should play against Washington and Washington State.

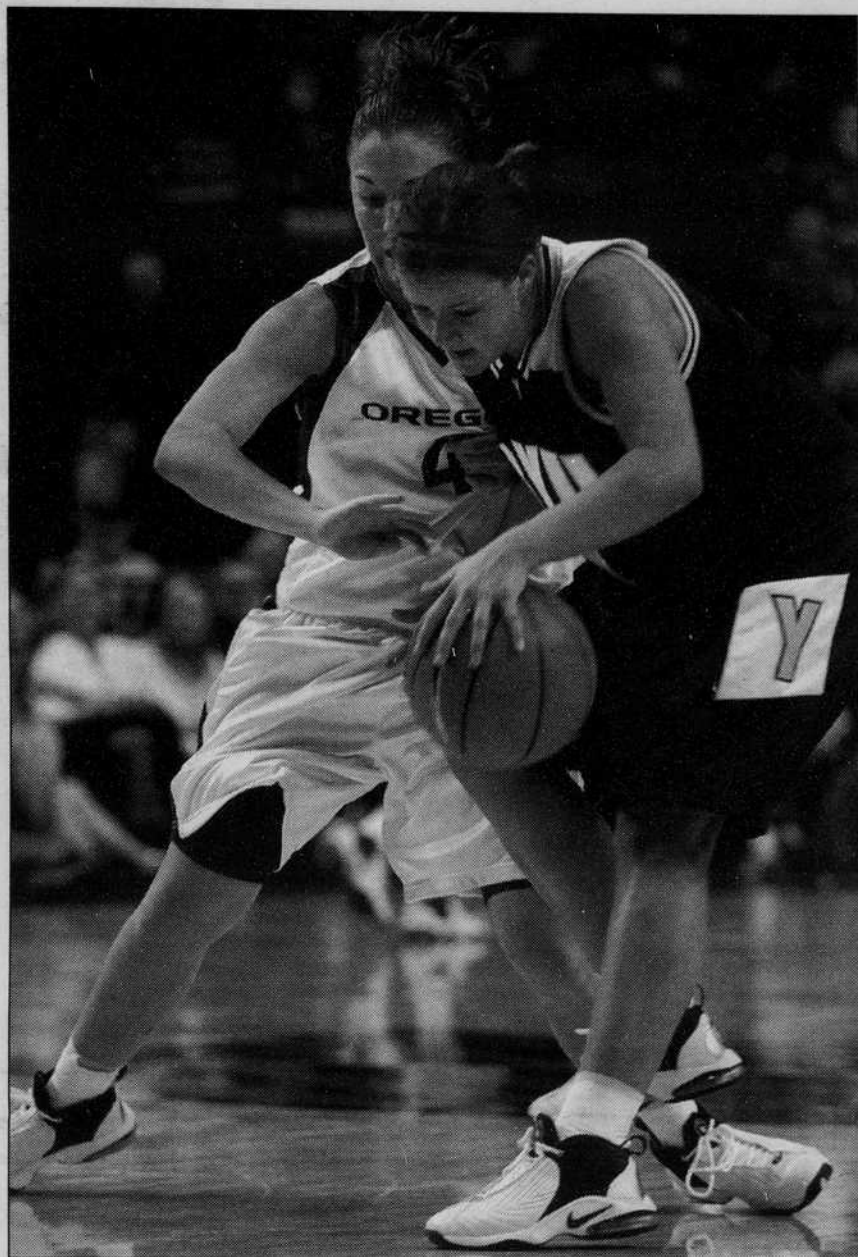
"This is a big test for us and this program, in terms of what has happened to us, and we've got good reasons to go on," Smith said. "We've got games in front of us, we've got the Pac-10 Tournament, and our focus is to get better each and every time we hit the basketball floor."

Final Duck thoughts

Oregon is 3-4 this season when freshman Carolyn Ganes scores more than 10 points in a contest. Conversely, the Ducks are just 3-6 when the 6-foot-3 forward fails to score in double digits.

The Gill Coliseum jinx was supposed to take care of Oregon State when the Ducks visited Saturday. The Beavers had not won in Corvallis against Oregon since 1996, but they did so in convincing fashion. The loss for Oregon pushes the Ducks' record on the road in Pac-10 play since the 2000-01 season to 7-14.

Turn to **Women's**, page 6



Adam Amato Emerald

Kayla Steen (4) and the Ducks have allowed 78.4 points per game in conference play this year.

Arizona rolls into top spot, now faces Kansas

Arizona coach Lute Olson says the No. 1 Wildcats don't deserve the top spot, but his team is on top nonetheless

Men's Pac-10 notes

Adam Jude
Senior Sports Reporter

After a four-week hiatus, Arizona returned to the top of the charts Monday. But don't expect a wild party this week in Tucson — the Wildcats are hoping that will happen in late March.

"Frankly, we're not even close to No. 1 yet in terms of how we're playing," Arizona head coach Lute Olson told the Daily Wildcat.

The top-ranked Wildcats (13-1 overall, 6-0 Pacific-10 Conference) received all but five first-place votes in the Associated Press poll this week, and all but one first-place vote in the USA Today/ESPN coaches' poll. Duke, previously ranked No. 1, lost its first game last week, giving way to Arizona.

Pittsburgh is No. 2, followed by Duke, Texas and Florida in the top five.

Arizona was ranked No. 1 in the

preseason, but fell to LSU, 66-65, on Dec. 21 and dropped from the top spot. With a healthy Luke Walton in the lineup, though, the Wildcats are rolling.

After an 81-72 win at USC on Thursday, Arizona demolished UCLA, 87-52, on national television Saturday.

But the Wildcats are still not content.

"We still have a lot of areas where we need to improve," senior guard Jason Gardner said. "The guys know we could improve on the defensive end, and on the offensive end we could cut down on the turnovers and

take better shots."

Arizona could easily fall from the top spot after this week. The Wildcats host Arizona State (12-5, 4-2) Wednesday before traveling to No. 6 Kansas on Saturday (noon, CBS).

UCLA searching for answers

It's never been this bad at UCLA. Engrossed in rumors about the possible firing or resignation of head coach Steve Lavin, the Bruins (4-9, 2-3) have the worst record in the Pac-10.

UCLA was swept by the Arizona schools last weekend, including a 35-point loss to the Wildcats, the Bruins'

worst-ever loss at Pauley Pavilion.

With six home games remaining, UCLA has already lost a school-record seven home games.

"I don't know how to respond," UCLA's Jon Crispin told The Daily Bruin. "After you lose this many, it's like, 'What the heck?'"

Despite leading the Bruins to five Sweet 16 appearances in six years, Lavin is likely on his way out, though he has said he will not resign.

"I blame the players," Arizona freshman Hassan Adams said. "You could tell they didn't want it. They have a talented team, and they

Turn to **Men's**, page 6

Oregon looks to Mitchell for pins, wins in early part of 2003 season

Martin Mitchell provides Oregon with a spark, pinning opponents for half his wins this season

Wrestling

Mindi Rice
Freelance Sports Reporter

In front of 620 fans Friday evening, sophomore Martin Mitchell stood up in the middle of the mat with his California-Davis opponent Tommy Schurkamp rolled into a ball on his shoulders.

Mitchell said later that Schurkamp

had his wrists pretty well controlled and there wasn't too much Mitchell could do with him.

Except set him down.

And pin him in the same period to win the six points for Oregon.

"It was good for him to go out tonight and get a fall and dominate somebody," head coach Chuck Kearney said.

Mitchell lost his first match Friday, 10-5, in overtime against Stanford's Nathan Peterson before coming back to pin Schurkamp at the 2:47 mark.

Mitchell, who is 10-6, has earned exactly half of his victories by pinning his opponent.

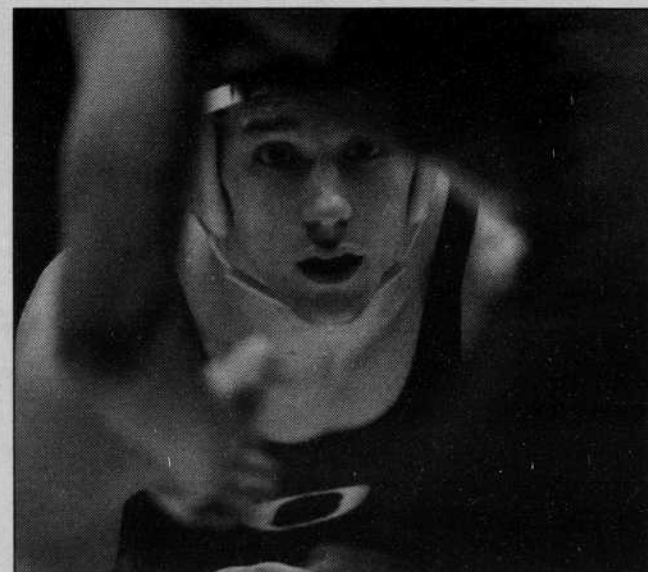
The Tonasket, Wash., native had two pins in nine victories last season, when he wrestled in the 133 weight class. Like two of his teammates, seniors Casey Hunt and Tony Overstake, Mitchell has dropped a weight class and currently wrestles at 125.

While Mitchell has definitely improved since last season, Kearney still expects more of him.

"There are some things he's got to do better," Kearney said. "And he's going to."

"Athletically and technically, he's got all of it. He's a guy that's going to contend

Turn to **Wrestling**, page 6



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Martin Mitchell has pinned five different opponents this season.