

SPORTS

Best bet
NBA: Dallas at Philadelphia
4:30 p.m., TNT

Thursday, January 23, 2003

SHORT story

Redshirt freshman center Matt Short makes his impression on and off the basketball court

Men's basketball

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

This could be a movie. A comedy. "Something About Matt." "Big and Bigger." "Meet the Americans."

The main character is a big Australian basketball player, Ian Crosswhite, who's stuck in America for Christmas. He heads south of the Oregon border with another basketball player, Matt Short, who's actually really tall! Much laughter ensues.

So they get to Short's ranch, where the Australian and the Californian ride side-by-side in a tractor and play baseball on a field that Short actually built with his bare hands, and much bonding ensues. Much laughter follows.

The Australian wears a dazed look on his face as the American's parents shower him with presents and good 'ol down home culture. Much laughter ensues.

This isn't a movie. It's real life, Christmas 2001.

"It was a bit of a trip-out for me, coming from Sydney, where there's no tractors and no baseball fields," Crosswhite says.

Welcome to Matt Short's world. Ian Crosswhite saw it first hand.

A big man with a small name, that's who Matt Short is. A big center from a small town.

Just, really, a big man.

Yreka, Calif., (population 7,290, "Ranked No. 48 of the top 100 small communities in America!") is a big part of this big man. It explains part of Matt Short, the man, and all of Matt Short, the basketball player.

"There's not anything to do but play basketball," Short says, echoing the words of fellow Oregon small-town ballers like Luke Ridnour. "Me and my friends would just live on these outdoor courts by the high school in the summer, and in the winter

we lived at the YMCA and just played like crazy."

Played like crazy. He still plays crazy, according to his teammates.

"He comes in there with a lot of energy," Crosswhite says.

"He's just running out of control, after every rebound and every loose ball," fellow center Jay Anderson says. "He just plays as hard as he can until he gets tired, and then we take him out."

Short, a 7-foot redshirt freshman, is just learning to cope with actually playing again, actually being on the court. He was the fifth-ranked center in the West coming out of Yreka High School, but because of poor competition in high school, he was raw, untested. He wasn't ready.

After sitting out the 2001-02 season to develop, Short's minutes have increased over this year, culminating in a start at Stanford — where Short played with traveling squads while he was still in high school. He is averaging only 2.5 points and 9.5 minutes per game this year, but Short has a growth curve steeper than Mt. Bachelor.

He's coming.

"That's kind of the exciting part for me," Short says. "I know I can do a lot better, and by the time my junior or senior year comes along, I think I can be a major part of every aspect of this team."

"I've got lots of room for improvement, but I feel good about where I'm at and where I'm going."

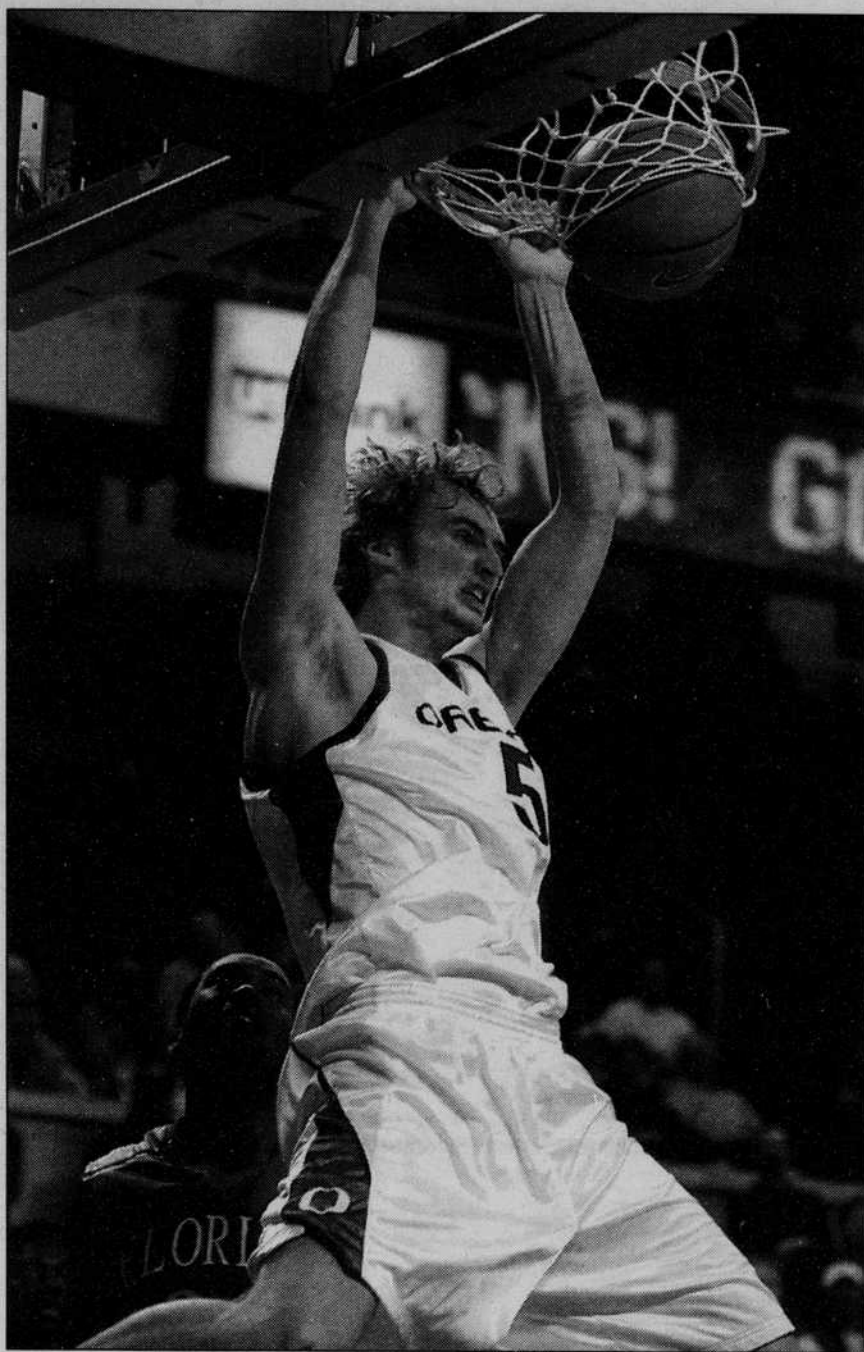
Greg: You can milk just about anything with nipples.

Jack: I've got nipples, Greg. Could you milk me?

— From "Meet the Parents"

Jay Anderson knows this line by heart. Matt Short, well, he struggles with this kind of stuff.

The roommates play a little game. Along with Luke Ridnour, who also lives with the towering

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Jeremy Forrest Emerald

Matt Short posterizes a Florida A&M player in the preseason, but he's come on later in the year.

UO hopes history holds for trip to Washington

The Ducks have beaten the Huskies 14 of the last 15 times the teams have met on the court

Women's basketball

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's basketball team is heading north for its regional rivalries against Washington and Washington State today and Saturday.

And the Ducks need to come home with at least one check in the "w" column after their trip to Seattle and Pullman.

"We need to put our confidence back up," sophomore Andrea Bills said. "We need to lay it all out there right now, and if we get a win,

it will really help us mentally."

A lot can be said about Oregon and the adversity that it's had to face. And with things just not going their way, they can side in the comfort that history bodes well for the Ducks.

Prior to a Husky victory last February, the Ducks had a 12-game winning streak against Washington, and they have won 14 of the last 15 overall facing the Dawgs.

"You look at that and feel good about the program's success, and you see that this team has been successful against them," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "At times, we focus a little too much on the history, because each year has its own story and each game has its own story."

Oregon has written a few successful chapters in the storybook recently, as the

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Adam Amato Emerald

Carolyn Ganes (left) and the Ducks are hoping for at least a split with the Washington schools.

The thin red line between true faithful and fair-weather fans

Do you consider yourself a true sports fan? Do you honestly and truthfully believe in yourself to have what it takes to be considered a hard-core fanatic?

What do you really stand for when it comes to sports mania? Because I have a little quiz for you.

It's going to be fun, I promise, and there is an underlying point to it all. All the answers are either yes or no and you can keep it entirely to yourself if you be completely honest. It will finally allow you to set the record straight on

where you stand.

For fun, we'll call it — drums please — Jesse's Ultimate Sports Fan Quiz. It is not a matter of knowledge, sex or age. Easy enough.

Now for the questions, which can be in regard to your favorite sports team or any team you care for. Here we go:

Jesse Thomas
Go the distance

1. Do you make sure to attend all of the games of your team unless, under some extenuating circumstance, your schedule does not permit it?

2. Do you walk away from the games with a groggy voice, or no voice, and in a bit of a hot sweat from becoming so worked up?

3. Have you attended games topless and painted yourself with your team's colors? (For some this question may be a little over the top and tends to usually only apply to males — but not always.)

4. Do you stick up for your team when someone puts them down and make your views well known?

5. Do you stick by your team regardless of the circumstances and through the adversity, and not jump on and off the bandwagon at will?

This last question is the one that is most important to me because I believe it to be the one that many of you falter on and might be

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