

## SPORTS

Best bet  
NCAA men's basketball:  
Virginia at Maryland  
6 p.m., ESPN2

Thursday, February 6, 2003

## Books and basketball

With hoops and academic life in balance, Andre Joseph has finally found his comfort zone on the Oregon basketball team

Adam Jude  
Senior Sports Reporter

One of the last players remaining in McArthur Court, Andre Joseph practices alone at a corner basket. He sizes up his phantom defender, fakes right, dribbles between his legs, spins quickly to the left baseline and throws up a soft floater.

Swish.

After a few minutes of one-on-none, Joseph heads across the court to the south hoop, just vacated by sharp-shooting teammate James Davis, and begins taking jumpers from the three-point arc. Assistant coach Fred Litzenger approaches the junior guard, placing his hand on Joseph's back after each shot to push him forward.

"That makes you maintain your balance," Litz, as he's known to his players, tells his apprentice.

Joseph seems a bit annoyed with the coach's nudges at first, and bricks the first few attempts. Then, with his balance in check, Joseph finds his groove. Swish.

"There you go," Litz says. "How about that, huh?"

For too long, Joseph walked a thin tightrope, hoping not to fall back. Turns out all he needed was a helping hand, a push to keep him moving forward.

A standout basketball player at Furr High School in Houston — in his senior year, he was ranked the 107th-best prep hoopster in the nation by USA Today — Joseph struggled to balance his athletics and academics. Potential scholarships to some of the country's best college basketball programs — including interest from Oregon — were for naught because his high school grades failed to match his impressive scoring average.

"Nobody could offer me (a scholar-

ship) 'cause I didn't have my grades," Joseph said. "I was recruited by a lot of Pac-10 schools, Big-12, Conference USA, and the only school that stayed was the school I signed with. Everybody else left, and I was like, 'Dang, all the schools are gone; I got to sign with somebody.' So I signed with them, and I never ended up playing."

That school, Stephen F. Austin in Texas, turned out to be a mistake. Ineligible even to practice — much less play in games — Joseph spent his first year out of high school partying, continuing his trend away from academic life.

"That was my first year of not playing ball." "That was hard," Joseph said. "That was my first year of not playing ball."

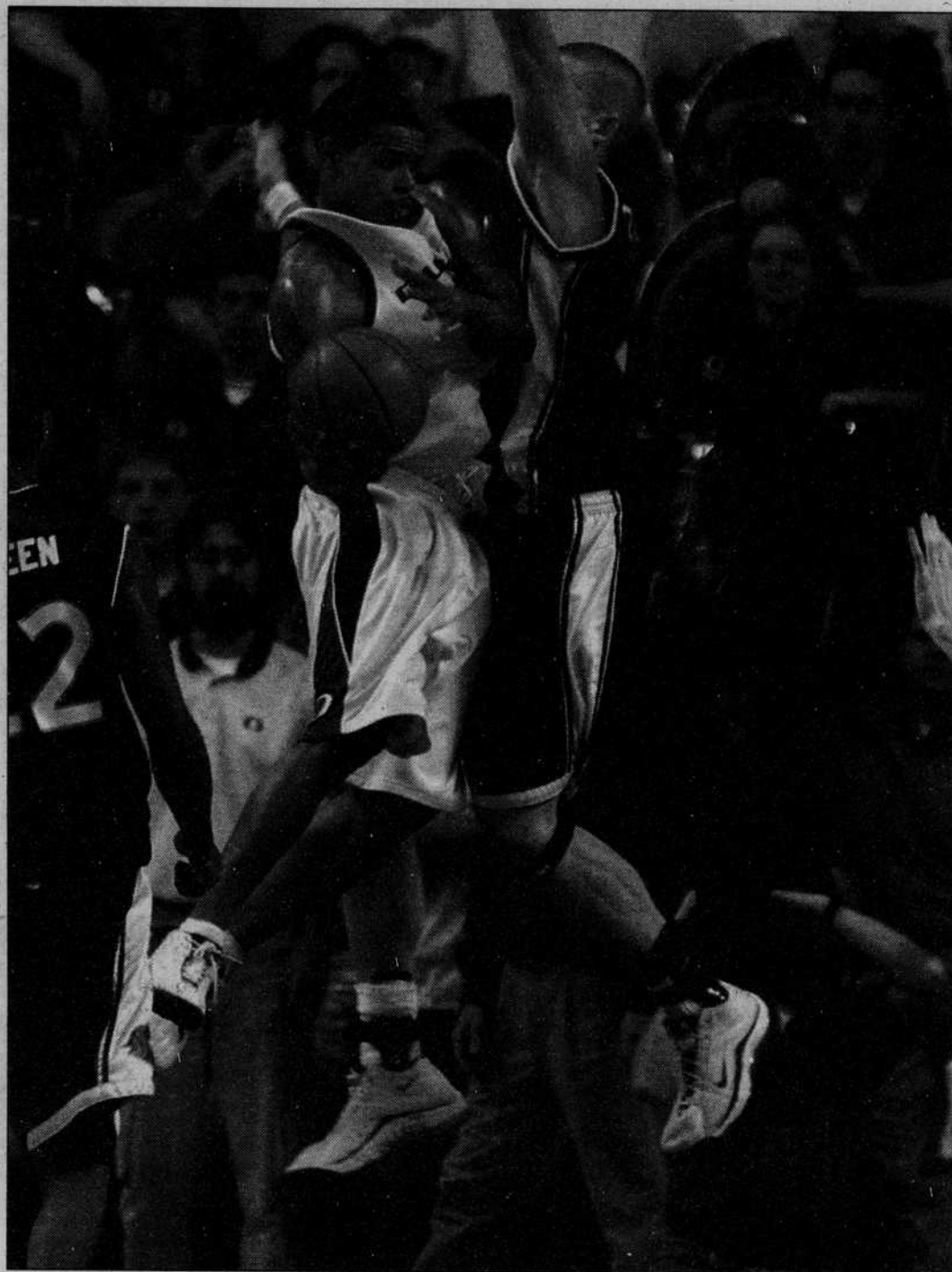
After a coaching change, Joseph left Stephen F. Austin and transferred to Lee Junior College in Baytown, Texas, where he finally found the right combination of books and basketball.

"The thing about junior college is, it really makes you want to focus in on school so you can move on to the next level," Joseph said. "Junior college helped me out a lot. With smaller classes, I could concentrate a lot better."

With his academics in order, Joseph excelled on the court as well, averaging 22.3 points per game in his sophomore season and becoming Lee's all-time leading scorer.

Then the recruiting process began again, and this time the scholarship offers came flooding in. Texas, Texas Christian, Louisiana Tech, Oregon and Houston, among others, came calling. Oregon, having recruited Joseph in high school, had the advantage over Houston, his home-town school, and a need at shooting guard with Freddie Jones' departure to the NBA.

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Mark McCambridge Emerald

Andre Joseph (with ball) had one of the highest Duck GPAs fall term, after struggling with academics in high school.

## Cardinal lurking for UO women

The Ducks look for their first win at Stanford since 1987, and revenge for the Cardinal's comeback win at The Pit

### Women's basketball

Hank Hager  
Sports Reporter

The image is hard to shake from the mind. The image of Nicole Powell celebrating her two free throws that put Stanford over the edge, 75-74, against Oregon in early January. With just a few ticks on the clock, the Ducks could not convert. All of that after Oregon had taken the lead, seemingly for good, with just 3.3 seconds left.

"I think you have to take that and learn from it," sophomore Kedzie Gunderson said. "Definitely, you don't want to forget it. That was an amazing game, and we worked very hard."

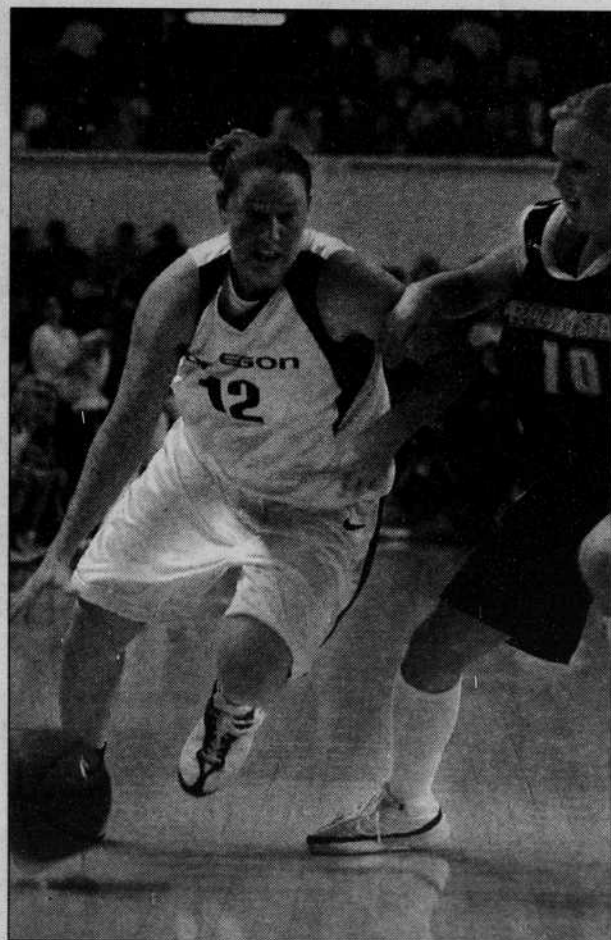
"That was a heartbreaker, and we're definitely going to want to get that one back."

Now, the Ducks must go south to get their fifth Pacific-10 Conference win of the season and will have to do it against one of the best home teams in the nation tonight at 7 p.m.

The No. 6 Cardinal are 25-1 since the start of last season, and have lost just 10 games at Maples Pavilion in the past five seasons.

The Ducks (8-12 overall, 4-7 Pac-10) have not won there since March 5, 1987.

"Against Stanford, we played very hard and very well," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "We're hoping to go down there and certainly continue that. I think although we played very hard and



Jeremy Forrest Emerald

Senior guard Alissa Edwards had a career-high 17 points in Oregon's one-point loss to Stanford earlier this season.

## Ducks improve on signing day

Head coach Mike Bellotti said the Ducks gained size and speed with their new recruits Wednesday

### Football

Hank Hager  
Sports Reporter

Oregon head football coach Mike Bellotti and his assistant coaches should probably be eligible for those frequent flyer miles by now.

Of the 24 players the Ducks signed Wednesday, only one hails from Oregon, while 14 are from California, and the rest are from as far away as Florida.

"We finished a successful day," Bellotti said. "Recruiting went very well."

At quarterback, wide receiver and defensive back — areas singled out by Bellotti that needed work — the Ducks significantly improved.

Bellotti received a commitment at approximately 11 a.m. Wednesday from San Leandro, Calif. quarterback Dennis Dixon, one of the West Coast's most sought-after players. He will not attend school until the winter or spring, allowing Oregon to sign two other quarterbacks, Johnny DuRocher from Graham, Wash., and Montana's Brady Leaf, brother of former Washington State standout Ryan Leaf.

"It allows us to have one of the best groups of quarterbacks in the nation joining us," Bellotti said.

DuRocher, Washington's Gatorade Player of the Year, is set

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