

Sports briefs

Steen's season done

Junior Kyla Steen, a guard for the Oregon women's basketball team, won't play again this season after she tore the anterior cruciate ligament of her left knee in Saturday's

game against UCLA.

It will be six months before Steen can fully recover from the injury, which she suffered on a fast-break play late in the game Saturday. On the play, she stole the ball from a Bruin player, broke down the court and crumpled to the floor as she went up for the lay-in.

Men's

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— in the second round.

The reason the Ducks are projected in the bottom-half of the bracket? Because they are ranked No. 48 in the Ratings Percentage Index, and their strength-of-schedule rank is No. 124.

"Does it concern me that we're so low? A little bit, and that's why I feel we have to continue to win games," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said.

A No. 9 seed in the Big Dance is tough to swallow for an Oregon team that was ranked as high as No. 5 in the national polls this season after a Dec. 7 win over Kansas. Kent also used wins over Minnesota, Stanford and Pepperdine to boost his team's schedule strength.

"I felt like we had a very tough preseason schedule," Kent said. "Some of those teams, like Pepperdine, have faltered because of injuries. Our expectations were so high, we started the season so high, and we got blown out in a couple games there, and people started to go away from us."

"But if we can get into the tournament, we're a very dangerous team."

The Ducks close out the Pac-10 season this week on the road against Arizona State (17-10, 9-7), the team Oregon will face first in the conference tournament, and No. 1 Arizona (23-2, 15-1). A sweep in the desert would surely raise the Ducks' seed — but that's easier said than done.

"We don't want to leave it up to the selection committee," point

guard Luke Ridnour said. "We want to play for a higher seed. These are NCAA-type games, and they get you ready for the tournament."

Oregon recruit named All-American

Seattle native Aaron Brooks, the highlight of Kent's incoming recruiting class, was named a high-school All American last week, one of only 24 players in the country to earn such recognition.

Brooks became just the fifth prep hoopster from Washington to earn All-American status. In 2000, Ridnour, of Blaine, Wash., was the last Washingtonian to be named to the team.

"Oh, man," Brooks told The Seattle Times shortly after learning about the announcement on Thursday. "I am so honored. I can't believe I made it. I was surprised."

A 6-foot senior guard at Franklin High School, Brooks is averaging 21.9 points, 5.2 assists and 3.3 steals for the Quakers, the state's top-ranked Class 4A team. He will play in the McDonald's All-American Game on March 26 at Cleveland's Gund Arena. The game will be broadcast on ESPN at 4 p.m.

"That's good for the program and shows what coach Kent has been able to do here," Ridnour said.

Asked if two high-school All Americans were going to be on the Oregon roster next year, Ridnour hesitated, then said, "That's what it looks like."

Ridnour, of course, may opt to enter the NBA draft after this season.

Contact the senior sports reporter at adamjude@dailyemerald.com

Steen will miss the Ducks' rematch with the Bruins on Saturday in the Pacific-10 Conference Tournament. UCLA and Oregon are set to tip off at 7:15 p.m. Saturday.

— Peter Hockaday

Golfers finish 13th

John Ellis was the bright spot.

The rest of the Oregon men's golf team wasn't spot-on.

The Ducks finished 13th of 17 teams at the Cleveland Golf Classic in Westlake Village, Calif., Tuesday. Ellis notched his third top-10 finish of the season by climbing 13 spots on the final day to finish eighth overall.

— Peter Hockaday

The next-best Oregon finisher was Gregg LaVoie, who finished 54th.

Oregon's next tournament will be at home, when the team hosts the Duck Invitational, March 24-25 at the Eugene Country Club.

Wrestling

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Redshirt senior Tony Overstake saw the end of his collegiate wrestling career as he was pinned by Beaver wrestler Tony Hook. Overstake lost his first match at 149, bumping him to the consolation bracket, where he faced Hook. Overstake ended with an 18-10 record on the season and an 85-46 career record.

Martin Mitchell ended his season the way he spent most of it — by pinning his opponent. The sophomore won his first match, then lost a 9-6 decision. Mitchell next lost a 5-3 decision, sending him to the fifth-place match. He pinned Stanford's Nathan Peterson at the 1:03 mark, earning fifth place. He finished the season with a 15-8 record at 125, including seven pins.

Redshirt freshman Neil Phillips pinned his first opponent in the conference tournament before losing two matches. Phillips finished the season with a 10-21 record after becoming the starter at heavyweight in January, when senior Eric Webb withdrew from competition for medical reasons.

Elias Soto had a 1-8 record at 184 before moving up to 197 for most of the dual season. The sophomore won an 8-3 decision in the tournament before losing two matches to end his season. Soto finished with a 4-11 record at 197.

Freshman Tony Rolen went 0-2 in the conference tournament at 184, ending his freshman season with a 6-15 record. Rolen became a regular starter after Soto moved up to 197.

"We have a group of guys that



Adam Amato Emerald

Luke Larwin (top) won fourth place in the Pac-10, but had his national berth taken by a challenge from Boise State's Nathan Ploehn, who finished fifth.

worked so hard, things just didn't go our way," head coach Chuck Kearney said.

Larwin's finish challenged

Larwin was challenged late Monday by what the Pac-10 calls its "true fourth-place" rule. The rule says that the fifth-place finisher can challenge the fourth-place finisher under one of two conditions: The two wrestlers had not previously met in the tournament, or the fifth-place wrestler had already defeated the fourth-place wrestler in the tournament.

Boise State's Nathan Ploehn finished fifth and challenged Larwin for his spot in the NCAAs because the two had not met in the tournament. After regulation and one over-

time, the match was tied at one. In the second overtime, Larwin was called for an illegal hand lock, giving Ploehn a win and the NCAA berth.

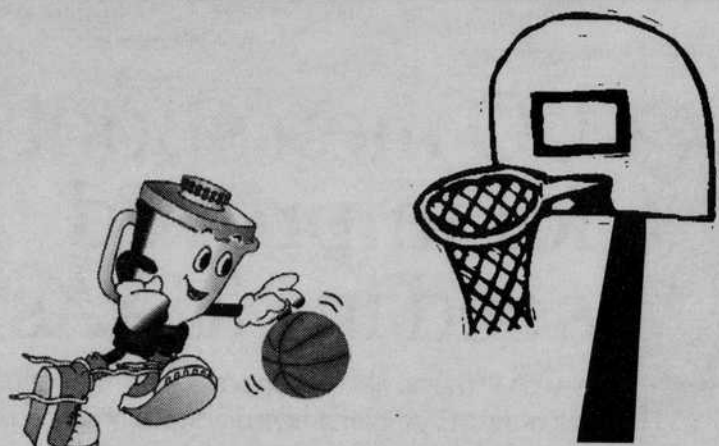
Harless 'wild' choice for NCAAs

Joining the top four wrestlers from each weight class are two wild-card wrestlers. After the 40 wrestlers were finalized, the Pac-10 coaches voted on the wild cards.

One berth went to Rowdy Lundegreen of Cal State-Fullerton, and junior Jason Harless of Oregon earned the second. Harless joins senior Casey Hunt and sophomore Shane Webster at the national tournament.

Mindi Rice is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

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Wagner

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and wasn't completely aware of her presence and her ability, but after talking with some high school coaches here and her high school coach, it became apparent that she was someone that could not only give us a lot in terms of basketball skills, but a positive attitude and wanting to be a Duck."

Wagner took the situation in stride, knowing that maybe her freshman season wasn't meant to be spent in an Oregon uniform. But now she's in Eugene, performing duties as a redshirt, helping her teammates prepare for their next opponent.

"I do wish I could get in there and play," she said. "But I try to say 'Hey, if I push them hard in practice, then they'll do well in the game.'"

It has been a long season for the Duck women, and an even longer one for Wagner. It is a season that has tested her ability to remain calm, despite an intense desire to play. But she has a lot to look forward to.

Next year, Wagner will be up for a starting spot, as will every Oregon player. But for her, just being able to step on the McArthur Court floor in a regular season game will mean more than anything.

"It's been great being able to look up into the stands and see my family there," she said. "I mean, I grew up coming to Mac Court and watching the girls play. I can look up into the crowd and go, 'Wow, I used to be the little girl up there



Adam Amato Emerald

Wagner spent a year at Hawaii, but transferred to Oregon when Smith opened a spot.

Chelsea Wagner file

Born: Chelsea Wagner on Feb. 24, 1983 in Eugene.

High School: Selected Oregon Player of the Year in 2001 by both USA Today and the Oregonian coming out of Springfield High. Named all-Midwestern League selection in all four seasons at Springfield.

Before Oregon: Spent a year at Hawaii, setting freshman record for three-pointers in a season. Averaged 8.6 points and 3.2 rebounds per game as a Rainbow Warrior.

Oregon: Redshirting this year with Corrie Mizusawa. Could battle for starting spot next year as a junior.



Wagner

watching them.'

"It's been a pretty amazing experience. It's kind of like a dream come true. That almost sounds

corny, but it really has."

Contact the sports reporter at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.