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Best bet
NCAA men's championship
April 7, CBS

NCAA TOURNAMENT

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Big box O'basketball

Tasty morsel No. 1

Oregon has not fared well against the Mountain West Conference. The Ducks have a winning record against their first-round opponent, Utah (6-5), but overall, Oregon is 30-34 against the MWC.

Morsel No. 2

The Pacific-10 Conference has won more NCAA Division-I men's basketball titles than any other conference in the nation. Oregon won the first in 1939. UCLA has won the most (11).

Trivia Bowl

Who holds the record for most points in an NCAA Tournament game by an Oregon player?

Rank me

Oregon and Utah in the 2003 national rankings.

Scoring

Oregon 5
Utah 233

Rebounding

Oregon 137
Utah 243

Three-point percentage

Oregon 16
Utah 34

Free-throw percentage

Oregon 5
Utah 115

Quote Me

"We want to go deep like last year or even deeper."
— Oregon's Luke Ridnour

Morsel No. 3

Of the four teams to play in the women's NCAA Tournament at McArthur Court, only SW Texas has yet to make a previous trip to Eugene. LSU is 0-1 all-time at The Pit, while UW-Green Bay is 1-0 and Washington sports a 11-19 record.

Morsel No. 4

The Pac-10 sent five teams to the NCAA Tournament this season. That makes nine straight seasons where the conference has sent at least four teams to the Big Dance.

Trivia answer

Frederick Jones scored 32 points in Oregon's 104-86 loss to Kansas in 2002 in the Midwest Regional Final.

Tigers, Huskies lead pack at Mac

With Oregon out of the NCAA Tournament, four teams will enjoy a neutral bracket at McArthur Court

Hank Hager

Sports Reporter

Oregon, after a 12-16 season, failed to make the NCAA Tournament's field of 64 when it was announced Sunday. That leaves McArthur Court as a neutral site when four teams come calling March 22.

Top-ranked LSU, No. 16 Southwest Texas, eighth-ranked Wisconsin-Green Bay and No. 9 Washington will converge on Eugene when the NCAA Tournament opens up.

No. 1 Louisiana State vs. No. 16 SW Texas

Fans in Eugene will get to see the best of the West bracket when LSU, the third-ranked team in the nation and top-ranked in the region, takes on SW Texas.

The Tigers (27-3 overall, 11-3 Southeastern Conference) are led by forward Aiysha Smith and point guard Temeka Johnson, who both earned All-SEC honorable mention honors. Johnson connected on 52 percent of her shots from the field this season.

Still, the Tigers believe they have to fight for respect, evidenced by the fact the Tigers failed to place a member on the All-SEC first or second teams.

"We really don't get the respect we deserve," Smith told the Reveille Online. "So we just have to come out and earn it, just like we did in the (SEC) tournament."

The Bobcats (18-13, 14-6 Southland Conference), on the other hand, will be making their second-ever visit to the NCAA Tournament.



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Loree Payne (left) and the Huskies come to Mac Court as the No. 9 seed in the West, and will face Wisconsin-Green Bay.

That became possible after SW Texas defeated Texas-San Antonio in the Southland Conference's championship game.

"We are excited to be representing the league in the NCAA Tournament," SW Texas head coach Suzanne Fox said. "What an incredible moment for our program and our players."

No. 8 Wisconsin-Green Bay vs. No. 9 Washington

UW-Green Bay (27-3, 15-1 Horizon League) enters Mac Court with a sense of history in Eugene. The Phoenix defeated Oregon, 75-57, in the 2001-02 season.

The Phoenix are led by Kristy Loiselle, who averaged 14.4 points per game and was tops in rebounds

at 5.3 per game. Chandra Johnson gives the Phoenix a presence down low, as she is scoring 13.3 points per game.

"We've got a good squad," UW-Green Bay head coach Kevin Borseth told the Green Bay News-Chronicle. "Obviously, we're not to be taken lightly. We'll play well, and we'll

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Oregon's regional loaded with talent

The Midwest bracket has one of the NCAA Tournament's favorites, top-seeded Kentucky, lying in wait

Peter Hockaday

Sports Editor

It'll be a grand ole time in Nashville, Tenn., on Friday. Country music. Square dancing. Elvis.

And oh, a little basketball, too. Oregon's bracket is stacked with a defensive monster in Kentucky, a famously rotund coach in Utah's Rick Majerus and a team with the longest name in the history of universities (probably) in Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

So without further ado, let's try to sort through the madness.

No. 1 Kentucky

The Wildcats have the nation's longest winning streak and a defense widely regarded as the best in college basketball. What's not to fear?

Kentucky, ranked No. 2 in both national polls, is riding a 23-game win streak. The Wildcats (28-3, 16-0 Southeastern Conference) haven't lost since Dec. 28 when they fell to Louisville, 81-63. Kentucky then ran the SEC table, cap-

ping the year by winning the SEC Tournament title game Saturday over Mississippi State.

Kentucky's defensive statistics are mind-boggling. The Wildcats hold opponents to an average of 64.5 points per game and keep them shooting only 41.6 percent from the floor. The Wildcats outscore their opponents by 13.4 points per game, on average.

Kentucky, it seems, has finally responded again to Tubby Smith's defensive system. The Wildcats won the NCAA title in 1998 but exited early in subsequent seasons.

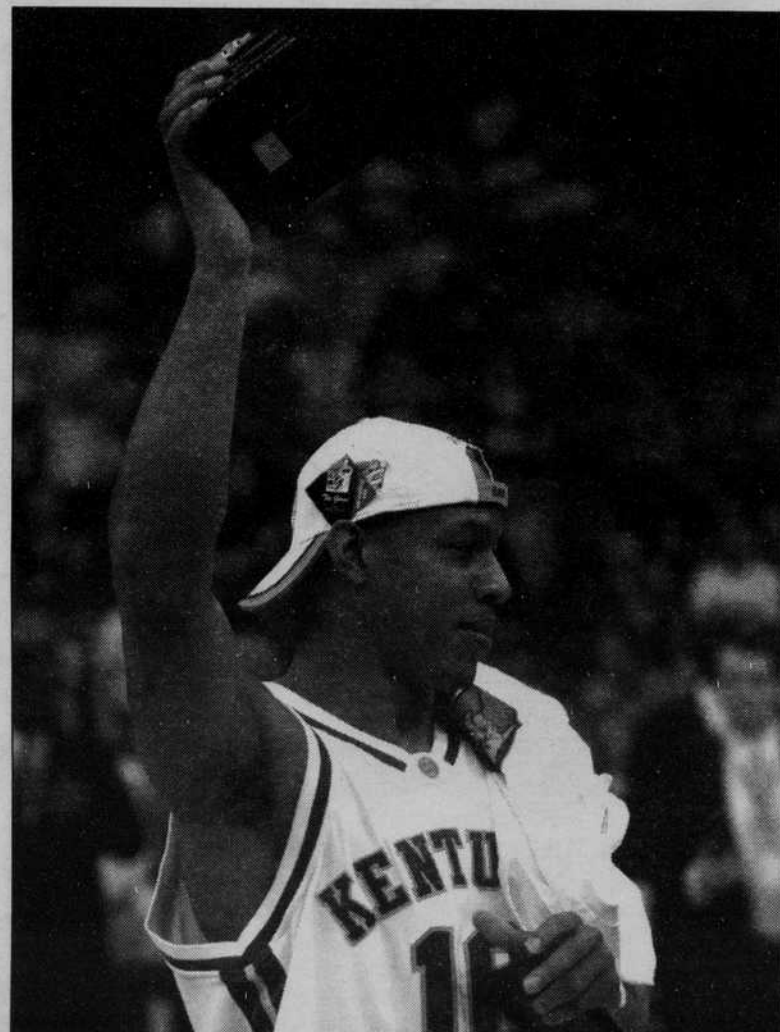
Those in the Nashville bracket hope the Wildcats will exit early this year, too.

No. 16 IUPUI

We'll spare the full name on second reference, but IUPUI has that funny moniker and not much chance to beat Kentucky.

IUPUI (20-13, 10-4 Mid-Continent Conference) made it to the NCAA Tournament by winning the MCC Tournament last week. The Jaguars have only been competing at the Division-I level since 1998 (that's when IUPUI changed its mascot from the "Metros"), and went through the 2002-03 season with a 17-13 record.

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Frank Anderson KRT

Keith Bogans, hoisting the SEC Tournament MVP award Sunday, and No. 1 Kentucky could be awaiting Oregon in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.