

Friday, October 17, 2003

BIG HOPES



Height will play an integral role in the Duck offense this season. Four Oregon players stand 6-foot-10-inches or taller, including sophomores Ian Crosswhite (11) and Matt Short (5).
Mark McCambridge
Photographer

No Ridnour, but no worries for Ducks basketball

The Ducks met the media for the first time on Thursday and predicted they will be in the Pac-10 hunt in 2004 for the third straight season

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

The change of scenery at McArthur Court has claimed No. 13. Luke Ridnour is gone. He is gone to the Seattle Sonics, missing out on what would have been his senior season in Eugene. So are Brian Helquist and Robert Johnson, fixtures in Oregon's success the past two seasons. They will be missed, but the Ducks say they won't miss a step.

They say they will be one of the top teams in the Pacific-10 Conference this season, ready to battle for another crown and berth to the NCAA Tournament.

DUCK BASKETBALL

And they'll do it with a team effort, much like they've done it in the past.

"We've built this program on the premises that the program is bigger than any one coach," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said at the team's media day Thursday. "I also believe that it is also bigger than any one player."

The Ducks will be like teams of the past. They will run an up-tempo offense but change it up to a post game. The team's point guard, expected to be either returnee Bran-

don Lincoln or freshman Aaron Brooks, will be fast. The big forwards, which are now led by Ian Crosswhite, can run and gun but are hoping to be able to battle with their bodies.

It's going to be the Ducks of old, but a team of new. "The diversity of this team will be really good in terms of what we can throw at teams," Kent said. "This will be one of the biggest teams in the country, I think. It has the potential to be the fastest team I have ever coached."

The Ducks say Ridnour's hole can never really be filled, both in leadership and talent. Lincoln and Brooks will attempt to step up into the point guard position, although Kent said he will not name a starter this early.

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Northwest foes await Duck soccer

The Ducks travel to Washington in hopes of upping its win total to eight after defeating OSU

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

One rivalry down. Two to go. Off the momentum of a 4-3 overtime victory against Oregon State, Oregon heads north to face Northwest rivals No. 10 Washington (7-3-3 overall, 0-1-1 Pacific-10 Conference) and Washington State (4-8, 0-2) this weekend.

Oregon (7-5, 1-0) is on a two-game winning streak and will look for its eighth win this weekend. Another win would tie the most all-time wins in a season in Oregon soccer history, after the Ducks finished 8-8-2 in 2001. "Coming off of last weekend, I think we have a good vibe going," forward Cristan Higa said. "This is a very important weekend to reach our main goal, which is to get to the (NCAA) tournament. We're ready, we're prepared and I think we'll play well this weekend."

Oregon has never beat Washington. With a series record of 0-6-1, Oregon managed a 1-1 tie in 2001 in double overtime in Seattle. "It's always a motivating factor," Oregon head coach Bill Steffen said. "For some reason we seem to have very competitive games with them. Part of that is a regional thing. The players look forward to it because they know it's going to be a good game. "I'm expecting us to be very competitive as usual with them,

but hopefully come out on the good side."

Before facing the Huskies on Sunday, Oregon makes a stop in Pullman tonight. Washington State is at the bottom of the Pac-10 and is seeking its first conference win after losses to UCLA and USC.

Of the Cougars' four wins, three have been shutouts in Pullman. Oregon shut out Washington State 4-0 on the road in 2001, and the teams tied 1-1 at Papé Field last year.

"Washington State last year did pretty well," senior Lindsey Werdell said. "They got a new coach and they haven't been scoring. If we can stick a goal in, I'm pretty confident we can stop them from scoring."

The Cougars are led by first-year coach Matt Potter, a former Washington State assistant. The Cougars have lost four of their last five and scored only once in those contests.

In the Washington game, the Ducks will have to face junior forward Tina Frimpong. Frimpong led the Washington offense in last year's 2-1 win over the Ducks by scoring both goals and has scored nine times this year. The Ducks know they must contain her to have a chance.

"She's really fast," Werdell said. "She's just a nightmare to defend. The only way that you can really defend against her is team defense. She's always the focus of our defense."

The focus of Oregon's offense will be to score — and score early. After a five-game skid earlier this season where Oregon went scoreless, the Ducks have scored seven goals in the past two games.

Scoring this weekend won't be an easy task. Washington goalkeeper Lisa Brookens has 34 saves and five shutouts this season with a .60 goals-against average. Washington State goalkeeper Katie Hultin is just as comparable with 37 saves, four shutouts and a .84 GAA.

Steffen doesn't seem worried.

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Kost leads Oregon into first matches in Eugene this year

Junior Manuel Kost will lead the Oregon men's tennis team at the ITA Regionals this weekend

By Alex Tam
Sports Freelancer

The Oregon men's tennis team is staying in Eugene this weekend for the first time all season.

The Student Tennis Center, located on Oregon's campus, will host the 2003 Intercollegiate Tennis Association Men's Regionals starting today. The winners of the singles and doubles draws will advance later this year to the National Indoor Championships at the University of Michigan.

The Ducks will feature six players in the singles bracket, led by junior Manuel Kost, who is ranked 31st in the nation and is competing at the No. 4 seed in the tournament.

The men are eager to play at a tournament of this magnitude in their own backyard after winning the hosting rights through a bidding process.

"It's a big deal for us," head coach Chris Russell said. "I don't

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DUCK TENNIS