

SPORTS BRIEFS

Basketball teams host "Midday Madness"

Saturday is the first day that college basketball teams nationwide can officially practice, and the Ducks are kicking it off at 4 p.m. with a fan-oriented event at McArthur Court.

"Midday Madness" will feature scrimmages by the men's and women's basketball teams. An autograph session will follow the scrimmage. Both teams and coaches will be available for autographs.

The first 500 fans in the doors of Mac Court will receive a free "Midday Madness" T-shirt.

Fans will also have the opportunity to have their picture taken with Oregon cheerleaders and the Oregon Duck. Free popcorn and soda will be given out to fans during the event.

Graduate students from the University's Warsaw Sports Marketing Center and EA Sports are giving away prizes throughout the afternoon. Giveaways include video games made by EA Sports. March Madness 2004, Madden 2004 and NCAA College Football 2004 will be among the games given out at the event.

The "Midday Madness" event is free to attend. Doors open at 3:30 p.m. at Mac Court.

— Mindi Rice

Cross Country sends nine runners to Pre-NCAAs

The Oregon men's cross country team travels to Cedar Falls, Iowa, on Saturday for the 2003 Pre-NCAA Invitational. It will be the first race for the men since they ran in the Roy Griak Invitational on Sept. 27.

The men's team takes on an elite field, featuring many

of the teams it faced earlier in the season when it finished fourth at the Roy Griak.

The women's team will only send two runners. Standouts Magdalena Sandoval and Eri Macdonald are looking to take their team-leading times against some of the nation's most highly regarded harriers in anticipation of an eventful season.

Sandoval has been Oregon's leading runner since she returned to the team a week before the Sundodger Invitational on Sept. 27.

The senior also ran well for the team at the Willamette Invitational on Oct. 4., finishing second overall.

Macdonald finished the Sundodger Invitational in fifth place overall with a mark of 17 minutes, 22 seconds. She finished behind two professional runners and was the third collegiate finisher. When the team traveled to the Willamette Invitational, Macdonald finished 14th overall.

The Pre-NCAA's first race is scheduled for an 11 a.m. start time. It is hosted by Northern Iowa.

However, both the men's and the women's races are divided three ways because of the explosion in popularity.

Oregon will send nine runners to the event. Included are Oregon's most dominant harriers: Ryan Andrus, Brett Holts and Eric Logsdon. The Ducks will also send three true freshmen, Kyle Alcorn, Alec Wall and Patrick Werhane, will also run.

The men's team did not compete in the same race a year ago, while the women sent their entire squad and finished 18th overall.

The race features 74 teams, seven of which are in the most recent top-10 poll, along with 20 top-25 teams.

— Scott Archer

BASKETBALL

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"Well, my initial goal is to keep the team on the same track it is," Brooks said. "I would feel a lot more pressure if we didn't have a lot of good guys here, but there are a lot of incredible athletes here. I will step in there, distribute the ball and play defense."

Leadership-wise, the Ducks will count on a senior quartet that has seen three of the best seasons in Oregon basketball history.

Luke Jackson let Ridnour go to the NBA alone, deciding to stay for his senior season. Guards James Davis and Andre Joseph and center Jay Anderson will be key leaders on the team, although one specific player is being counted on for overall leadership.

That's Jackson. And all that comes with him is 16 points and 6.9 rebounds per game last season, as well as 71 career starts. He's being touted as a potential player of the year, both in the Pac-10 and nationally.

"The seniors that came in with Luke (Ridnour), they definitely want to do some good things," Lincoln said. "I'm going to be committed to sending these guys out with a bang."

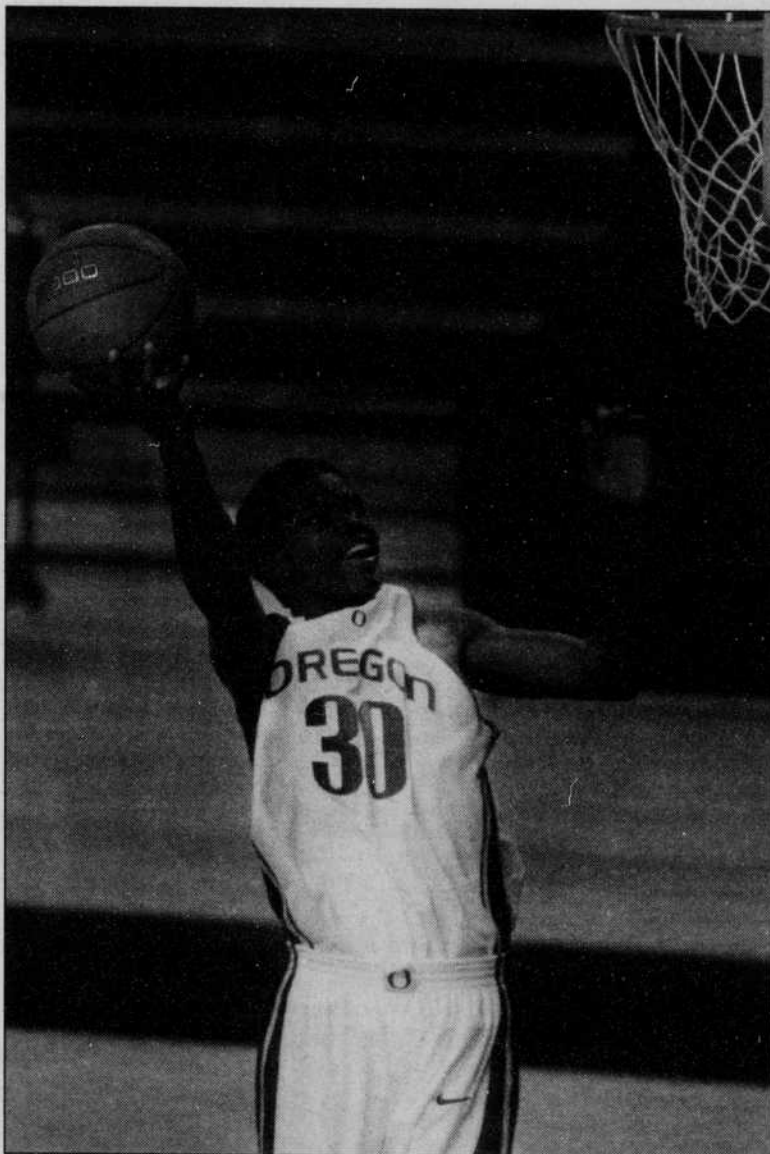
"We need a definite vocal leader and we're all looking to Luke Jackson for that. We have other seniors, but primarily the leadership role is going to fall on Luke's shoulders. He knows that and he's been preparing for it all summer."

Because the Ducks have always been a mobile team, the ability to post up and rebound is expected to play a key part in the team's potential success this season.

Oregon returns a more experienced Crosswhite — now a sophomore — as well as center Matt Short. The sophomore is expected to be out until mid-November with an injury but won't miss much.

Short and freshman Ray Schafer are both 7-foot, while Crosswhite is 6-foot-11-inches, freshman Mitch Platt 6-foot-10-inches and Anderson is 6-foot-9-inches.

The group will be bolstered by red-shirt freshman Adam Zahn, a muscular forward the Ducks hope can come in and play in key defensive situations.



Mark McCambridge Photographer

Aaron Brooks has been considered the heir apparent to Luke Ridnour, although head coach Ernie Kent will not name a starting point guard just yet.

"I know our small lineup, because there's going to be more experienced guys there, is going to do well but I think our big lineup is going to work well against some teams," Crosswhite said. "I think with a little experience from our nonconference games, both are going to be great."

Oregon can do nothing but talk at this point. Saturday marks the first time the team will practice, with the Ducks' first game coming Nov. 9 against the Basket-

ball Travelers in an exhibition game.

The first real game of the season comes Nov. 21 when Fresno State visits McArthur Court. From then on, a prime time game comes against Kansas in Kansas City, Mo., on Dec. 13. Pac-10 play begins Jan. 2 when Oregon visits USC.

That'll show Oregon's true colors.

Contact the sports editor at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.

denced by a 2-1 record in the Palouse.

"With our momentum, it's a good weekend to go into the Washington schools," Higa said.

Contact the sports reporter at jessethomas@dailyemerald.com.

SOCCER

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"When we're on, we'll score against anybody," he said. "So it's a matter of making sure we're on for the remain-

ing games. We've been pretty good about creating chances, we just haven't been as good at finishing the chances."


Neither Washington school has won its first conference game, so the Ducks are the target. However, Oregon traditionally plays better on the road, evi-

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