

SPORTS

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Best bet
NCAA basketball:
North Carolina vs. Maryland
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Erik Bishoff Freelance Photographer

James Davis scored 17 points, but it wasn't enough in Oregon's loss to Oregon State.

Ducks remain positive despite recent losses

Oregon has 15 games remaining in the Pac-10 and knows that each becomes increasingly important in the quest for the NCAA Tournament

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

The Ducks have had a few days to let the loss to Oregon State sink in, and although Oregon is not happy with the result, the team is confident heading into its game against Washington on Thursday.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

James Davis had 17 points and Luke Jackson scored a career-high 39, but the Beavers dropped the Ducks to 1-2 in Pacific-10 Conference play. It's

the third time in four years that Oregon has started off its first three games with a losing record.

"I think there are people who are still pretty unhappy with themselves," Oregon forward Ian Crosswhite said. "I know that we're going to have two hard days of practice, get after each other and make each other improve."

The games against Washington and Washington State this week could very well be the turning point in the season for the Ducks.

At 6-4 on the season, Oregon is searching for its first true winning streak. After starting out with consecutive wins over Fresno State, Portland State and Marshall, the Ducks have gone 3-4 in their last seven games.

Crunch time is near. It may not come this week, but wins over the Huskies and Cougars would be key.

"We definitely know what has cost us as far as going into Pac-10," Jackson said. "We feel like there are some specific areas we need to clean up. Every game from here on out is important. Not just this week."

After the two games this week at McArthur Court, Oregon travels to Tempe and Tucson to play Arizona State and Arizona, respectively. The Ducks have gone 10-11 against the Sun Devils and Wildcats the past five seasons.

"We know that we are capable of winning a lot of ball-games and we're not going to get down because we've lost two here lately," Jackson said. "I know this team is capable of doing good things. We're not counting ourselves out of anything."

Taken out of the game

Andre Joseph scored a season-low three points against the Beavers.

The senior forward hadn't been held to three or fewer points since the 2003 NCAA Tournament loss to Utah in March. He failed to put the ball through the basket

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Jon Roetman

Roughing the passer

Sports can be positive diversion

"It will all pay off someday."

My mother uttered those six words to me shortly after Seattle's 33-27 overtime loss to Green Bay in the Wild Card round of the NFC Playoffs Jan. 4.

As a lifelong supporter of teams with less-than-stellar résumés, losses like the one that occurred to my NFL team of choice on the frozen tundra of Lambeau Field are hard to swallow.

Despite being educated year after year on how to stomach a heartbreaking defeat, it never gets any easier. Human nature tells one that he or she should abandon something that routinely causes such ample amounts of pain and suffering. The mind of a die-hard fan, however, doesn't work that way.

No matter how much it hurts, I keep coming back. Giving up on the Seahawks would be like having part of me amputated.

Even though I've been through an abundance of agony, falling to the Packers was the worst sport-related moment of my life, finishing slightly ahead of the Cubs' collapse against the Marlins last October and the Blazers' fourth-quarter meltdown against the Lakers in the 2000 Western Conference Finals.

By now most people have either seen or heard about the guarantee made by Seahawks' quarterback Matt Hasselbeck after winning the overtime coin toss. After correctly calling heads, the confident signal caller told referee Bernie Kukar "we want the ball and we're gonna score."

After years of wallowing in obscurity, it brought a smile to my face to see a Seattle player facing down one of the most pressure-packed moments in franchise history with such confidence.

Obviously, Seattle didn't score and Green Bay won, causing me to walk around with a glazed-over look on my face for several days. When I closed my eyes, all I could see was Al Harris running down the sideline, ball in hand, finger in the air, ending what seemed to be the start of a promising playoff run.

That's where my mom came in.

The call she made to let me know that everything was OK seemed crucial to my immediate existence. Several days later, I realized that she was right. I started focusing on how the Seahawks had improved and what positions needed to be upgraded in order to make a run at next year's Super Bowl.

Impossible dreams like the Seahawks making the Super Bowl are what sports are all about. Investing your heart and soul into a team and experiencing the ups and downs can be a distraction from the daily grind. Finding out your team just signed the top prize in the free agent

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Oregon looks to improve after earning first win

Fresh off their first victory, the Ducks continue to work hard in practice with better results in mind when they visit Stanford on Thursday

By Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

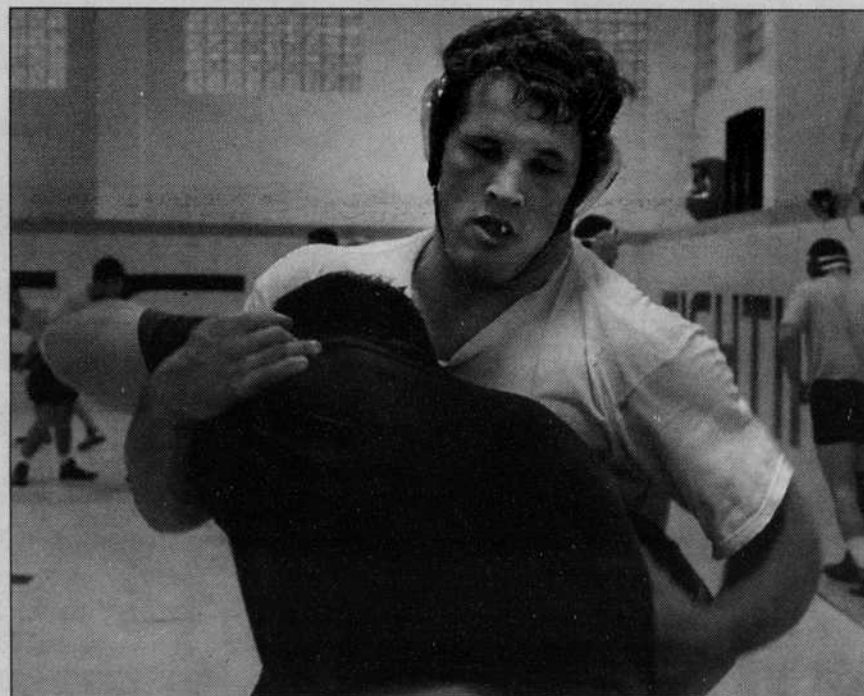
Oregon's victory over Army was a starting point for what the team hopes is a turnaround in performance.

DUCK WRESTLING

Army was Oregon's most difficult opponent of the day, according to both the team's players and coaches.

It was partly the fashion with which the Ducks beat Army that should give the team more confidence heading into this week's showdown with Stanford.

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Tim Bobosky Photographer

Freshman Cody Parker's (behind) 18-4 win contributed to Oregon's 23-21 victory Friday.