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True test comes against Huskies

Despite a slow start to the season, the Huskies will give the Ducks all they can handle

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

Without Doug Wrenn, who left early after last season in hopes of landing a position on an NBA team, Washington is (pick one):

- a) A team close to dominating the Pacific-10 Conference.
b) A team in the middle of the road, led by the rebounding exploits of 6-

foot-6 forward Bobby Jones.

c) A team still looking for its first win of the conference season.

While head coach Lorenzo Romar anticipates Washington will be at least the answers to (a) or (b) in the coming seasons, the Huskies are still looking to get on the Pac-10 map.

"The umbrella over all of it is consistency," Romar said. "There are times when we look like a really good team, and obviously from our record there are times when we don't look so good."

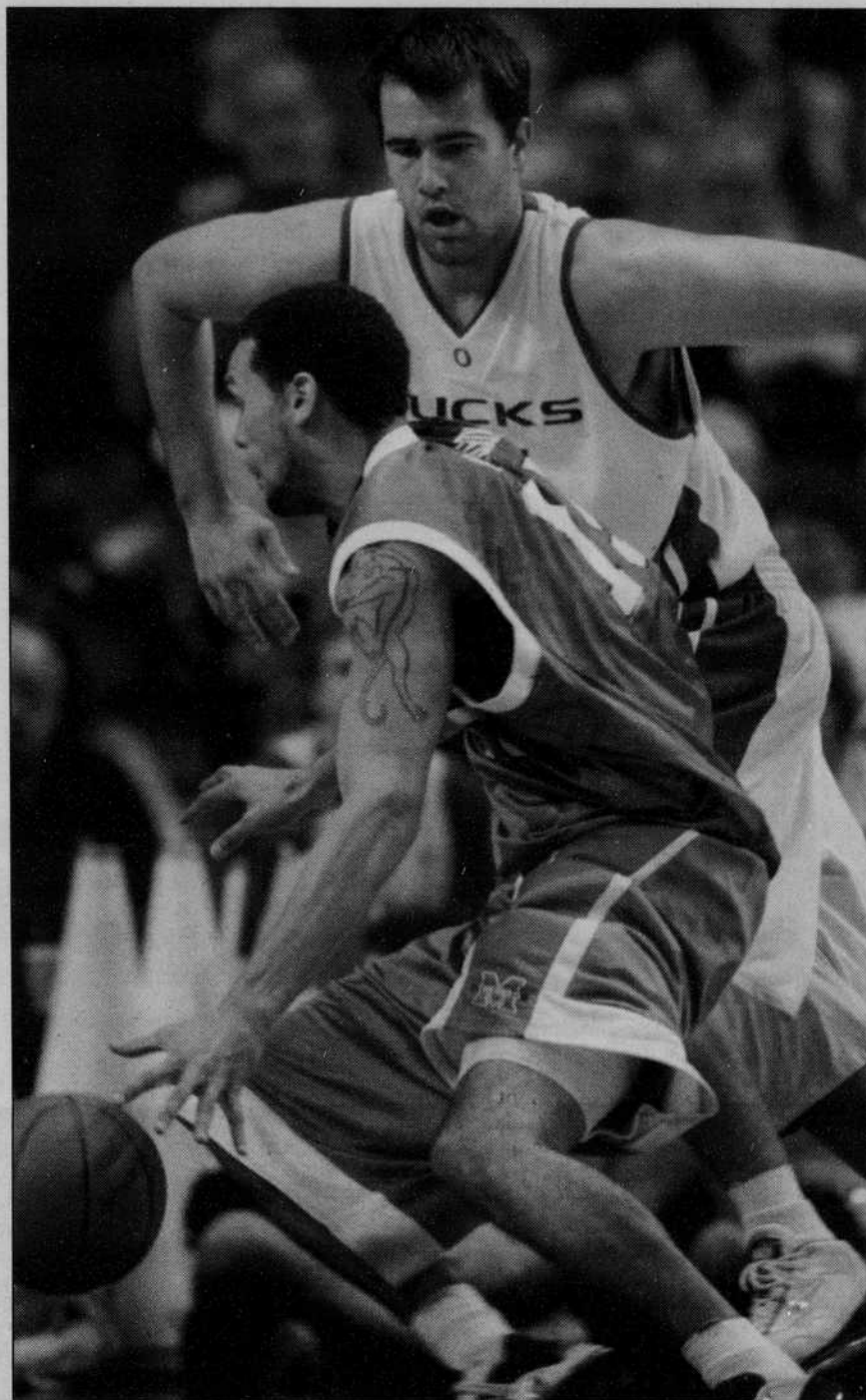
When Washington (5-7 overall, 0-4 Pac-10) visits McArthur Court today at 6 p.m., it will be the Huskies' fifth Pac-10 game. It is also the fifth — and perhaps best — opportunity for Romar's team to pick up a win before playing at Washington State on Jan. 24.

The Ducks and Huskies play games similar in style. They both like to run, and speed is a key element in that equation.

Oregon averages 81.4 points per game while Washington is a shade lower at 79. Both teams average a little more than 17 assists and 34 rebounds per game.

They're equal, at least based on statistics. "You can't make many mistakes," Oregon forward Ian Crosswhite said. "Maybe it comes down to who makes more mistakes, more mental errors."

Some could make an argument that the loss of Wrenn has hurt the Huskies this



Adam Amato Senior Photographer

Oregon's Ian Crosswhite averaged 14 points per game during the two games against Washington last season. The Ducks split last season's series with the Huskies.

season, but the Ducks aren't necessarily buying it. Wrenn left early for the NBA Draft after averaging 12.4 points per game his junior season.

"I think that was kind of good and bad because he was a very capable player who sometimes took a little too much attention for himself and not for the team,"

Oregon forward Luke Jackson said. "I think at times he hurt the team, but he was a good player. I'm sure they miss him." Wrenn was not drafted.

While the Huskies are just looking for a bone to be thrown their way, the Ducks get

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Oregon seeks second victory of Pac-10 season

The Ducks and Huskies are hoping to put an end to their losing ways tonight in Seattle

By Jon Roetman
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's basketball team won its first conference game Saturday and is hungry for more.

The Ducks (9-6 overall, 1-4 Pacific-10 Conference) battle Washington (8-7, 1-5) tonight at Bank of America Arena in a game featuring a pair of teams looking to rebound from recent slumps.

Oregon's 56-54 win over Oregon State on Saturday snapped a five-game losing streak, including four Pac-10 losses. A combined 31 points from guards Brandi Davis and Chelsea Wagner was enough to vault the Ducks over the Beavers.

"We've built a little bit of a log to stand on," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "We're beginning to shoot the ball a little better from the outside, and I think that has given us some relief and some confidence that we can do that and will continue to do that."

Washington has lost five of its last six games, all conference matchups, after starting the season 7-2. Pac-10 play has been rough on the youthful Huskies, who lost to USC and UCLA last week.

"It's not a time to panic; it's not a time to lose your head," Washington head coach June Daugherty said. "What's important is that we continue to develop the younger players ... and to continue to improve overall."

"We're keeping things positive."

With six freshmen on the Washington roster, the bulk of the offensive load has fallen upon the shoulders of three Husky seniors.

Giuliana Mendiola, last season's Pac-10 Player of the Year, ranks second in the conference in points (19.6) and assists per game (5.9). The 5-foot-11 guard scored a season-high 30 points against Oklahoma State on Nov. 29 and had a career-high of 43 against UCLA last season.

Mendiola also leads the team in rebounds per game (6.5), field goal percentage (.504), three-point field goal percentage (.446) and steals per game (1.87).

Andrea Lalum ranks fourth in the Pac-10 in scoring at 17.1 points per game, including a career-high 28 points against Maine on Nov. 22. The 6-foot-4 center can score from anywhere on the court and is second on the team in three-pointers made (28).

Gioconda Mendiola is averaging a career-high 8.1 points per game, while playing more than 30 minutes per night. The 5-foot-8 guard has connected on 38 percent of her three-point attempts and provides a solid third scoring option.

If Oregon can slow Washington's senior trio, the Ducks have an excellent shot at leaving Seattle with their second conference win. Smith said Kedzie Gunderson, Corrie Mizusawa and Wagner will likely take turns guarding the Mendiola sisters.

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Larsen oversees Club lacrosse until NCAA Ducks begin

There's more than a year left for the head coach to prepare for her first year at the helm of UO's program

By Kirsten McEwen
Freelance Reporter

There's a new coach in town.

Jen Larsen, Oregon's newly appointed lacrosse coach, has been preparing for Oregon's inaugural lacrosse season next spring. In the meantime, Larsen has been keeping herself busy. In between recruiting, ordering new equipment and scheduling games, Larsen and her assistant coach, Rob Bray, have found a team to coach and a match has been made.

The Oregon women's lacrosse team has found what they have been missing — a coaching staff — and they could not be any happier. After Larsen and Bray found out Oregon's Club lacrosse team was coachless and looking for help, they jumped at the opportunity to share their experience and knowledge of the game.

"The Club girls actually came into our office a couple of times and were just asking for drill ideas so we just had little x-and-o sessions," Larsen said. "At first we just tried to steer them in the right direction."

But as Larsen and Bray talked more with the girls and noticed how interested they were in learning and improving, they wanted to get out on the field and participate in the team's practices.

"It just seemed like the next direction to go," Larsen said. "They had practice going on and we were just sitting here without a team and they were practicing without coaches and it seemed like a perfect fit. Once we found out we were allowed to get involved, everyone was so excited."

After one week of practices, the team had nothing but positive things to say about Larsen and Bray's involvement.

"Jen's a breath of fresh air," team Co-Coordinator Marissa White said. "A lot of us have never had any coaching and it's great to have direction and leadership. Everyone respects her."

Putting coaching aside, Larsen is down-to-earth, makes an effort to relate to her players and helps them enjoy being at practice.

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Adam Amato Senior Photographer

Jen Larsen (middle), the newly-appointed women's lacrosse coach, is also busy helping coach the University's Club lacrosse team. She will be leading the NCAA team when it begins play next season.