

Sports Editor:
Hank Hager
hankhager@dailymerald.com

Best bet
NBA:
Sacramento vs. Houston
6 p.m., ESPN

Wednesday, January 28, 2004

Rebounding woes plague Ducks in Pac-10 play

Oregon has out-rebounded its opponents this season, but has slipped in the early conference games

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

It has become a problem for the Oregon men's basketball team in recent seasons, an Achilles heel that can hurt most during games where physical play is central to the team's success.

Rebounding, which the Ducks have said all season is key, has been a concern over the last few weeks. That came to a head against Arizona on Sunday, a game in which the Wildcats out-rebounded the Ducks by 12.

Arizona had 19 offensive rebounds. Oregon grabbed just seven. "It's just we haven't been physical enough with our box-outs and we haven't been sticking to our assignments," Oregon forward Ian Crosswhite said. "It's pretty much solely on us. I know it seems to be a problem for the last few years, not just this year. I don't know, we're just having to keep trying to get better at it."

Oregon has out-rebounded its opponents by 22 — an average of 1.6 more per game — this season, but in Pacific-10 Conference play that number is reversed by seven. Offensively, the Ducks have been out-rebounded, 94-60, by their Pac-10 opponents.

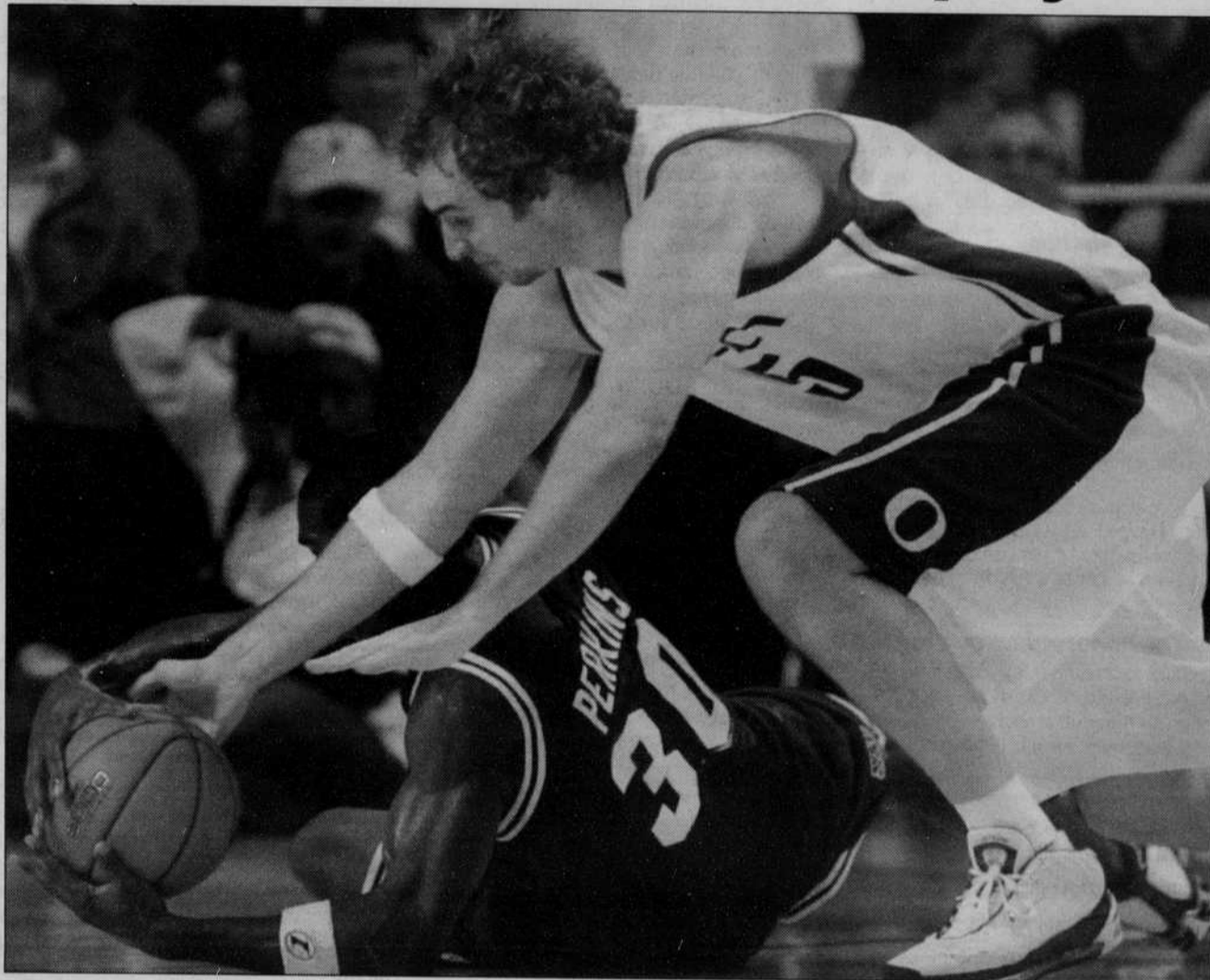
The Ducks have received a recent boost in the form of freshman Mitch Platt, who, after suffering a high-ankle sprain during the Papé Jam, is finally getting back to 100 percent healthy. He collected 13 rebounds in Oregon's games against Arizona State and Arizona last week.

In those two contests, he scored 23 points. "I think my health is almost back to normal," Platt said. "It's definitely helping (me) get up and down the court and I think I'm back on my game as I should be."

Oregon will face a tough California team at McArthur Court on Thursday. The Golden Bears average 35.1 rebounds per game, almost four more than their opponents.

They are led by freshman sensation Leon Powe, who nets 9.7 per game, good enough to lead the Pac-10. Amit Tamir, a perpetual Duck killer, grabs more than five per game as well.

Turn to **REBOUNDS**, page 6



Erik Bishoff Photographer

Matt Short and the Ducks have suffered on the boards since Pacific-10 Conference play started on Jan. 2.

Pac-10 women create tie at top

Eighth-ranked Stanford and Arizona lead the Pac-10 with 8-1 conference records

By Mindi Rice
Senior Sports Reporter

At the midway point of the Pacific-10 Conference season, Stanford, Arizona and USC are right where they want to be: At, or near, the top of the Pac-10 standings.

The Trojans, third in the conference, are off to their best Pac-10 start in seven years.

That start came at the expense of then-No. 6 Stanford in a come-from-behind, 59-56, victory Sunday.

"We feel we're in the conference race now," USC head coach Chris Gobrecht told reporters after the game. "A loss would have put us three games out."

Gobrecht's team showed the Cardinal that it's not the only talented team in California when the Trojans (10-7 overall, 7-2 Pac-10) wiped out a 12-point deficit in the final nine minutes. USC outscored the Cardinal, 23-8, to earn the victory.

The loss was the first conference defeat for the Cardinal (15-3, 8-1) this season.

"It's not good for the conference if one team sails through undefeated," Stanford head coach Tara VanDerveer said.

Stanford is tied for first place in the conference with Arizona (16-4, 8-1). The Wildcats have a four-game winning streak in progress and travel to Arizona State Saturday.

USC returns home for a visit from Oregon and Oregon State, while Stanford hosts Washington and Washington State, this weekend. Washington is winless in Pac-10 play on the road this season while the Cougars are 0-9 in the conference.

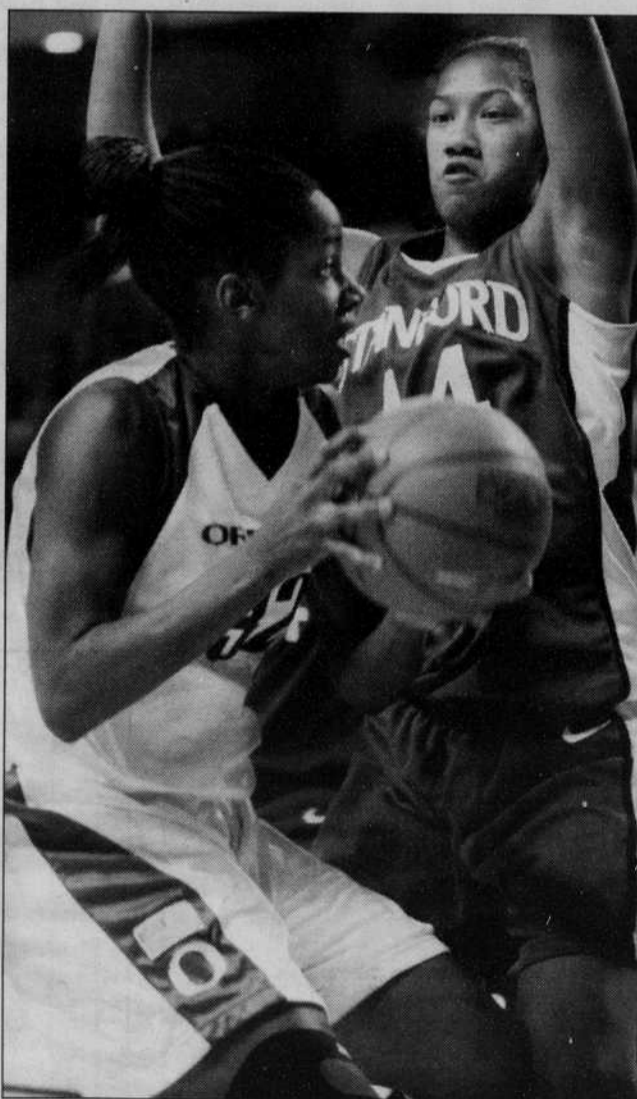
Golden Bears pull through tough week

After California reserve Alisa Lewis died Jan. 19 from bacterial meningitis, her teammates continued their season with a planned road trip to Los Angeles for games at USC and UCLA.

The Golden Bears (9-9, 2-7) lost Friday's game to USC, 67-47, before losing in the final seconds Sunday to UCLA, 67-66.

"I think we all decided that it's important for us to do the things we normally do," Leigh Gregory, a forward on the team and Lewis' roommate of the past two years, told the Daily

Turn to **TIE**, page 6.



Adam Amato Senior Photographer

Stanford junior Azella Perryman is ninth in the Pac-10 with six rebounds per game and has helped the Cardinal to an 8-1 Pac-10 record.

Oregon reeling after latest loss to Bakersfield

The Ducks are puzzled over what could have been after losing two matches last weekend

By Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

A half hour before Oregon's match against No. 21 Cal State-Bakersfield, the Roadrunners were nowhere to be found.

It was the same thing with 20 minutes left before the scheduled start of the match. With about 12 minutes to spare, the team bus pulled up and the wrestlers entered McArthur Court.

They were offered an opportunity by Oregon coaches to wait and allow their players to warm-up, but when a Cal State-Bakersfield coach asked his first wrestler if he needed time to warm up, it was as if the

coach had insulted him. "(The coach) asked the 157-pound kid, 'How much warm-up do you need? When do you want to start?'" said Oregon head coach Chuck Kearney. "He still has his tennis shoes on and says 'I wanna go now.' That kind of attitude is why they were successful (Sunday)."

DUCK WRESTLING

A pin isn't enough

Everyone loves to win, especially in dramatic fashion. For instance, the pinning of an opponent. But for Jason Harless pinning his opponent, as he did with eight seconds remaining in the first round of his match Sunday, wasn't necessarily the best thing.

Harless was seen moments after his victory running around the middle level of Mac Court. Harless said that was because he wanted to keep an eye on his weight, and, well, his competition didn't give him much of a workout.

"I'm trying to keep weight down," Harless said. "I would have liked to have (wrestled) longer."

He also said he wanted to try some new things he has been

Turn to **REILING**, page 6