

Oregon gets third shutout of season

The Ducks went in search of respect on the road but weren't able to pull off a win over the weekend

By Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

It happened again.

Before the season began, the Ducks hadn't been shut out of a wrestling match in 20 years. This year is a little different.

They were shut out again Friday for the third time in the 2003-04 season alone.

Oregon lost to Boise State, 42-0. The Ducks' record fell to 1-11 overall and 0-6 in Pacific-10 Conference play after also falling to No. 19 Arizona State, 24-11. Meanwhile, Oregon's counterpart in Friday's dual, Boise State, raised its record to 6-3.

Oregon was hoping improved performances in practice and a strong showing in its open matches last week would propel the team to its first Pac-10 win or at least a score that could indicate the team is truly improving.

"We have a group of young guys, and when they are in situation they are not used to it is tough to call on them to wrestle in tough matches, and we didn't make the adjustments we needed to make," head coach Chuck Kearney said. "We just got overwhelmed, overwhelmed by the crowd, by the officiating and we didn't respond to the venue."

While Oregon is trying to learn from its mistakes and trying to improve for the next season, shutouts weren't a part of the plan, especially to an unranked team like Boise State.

The Ducks had a strong performance from Joey Lucas, who lost in the last two minutes in the 125-pound class.

Jason Harless, Oregon's most reliable competitor this season, also lost in the final period.

The closest match of the day belonged to Chet McBee, McBee, known to have a flair for the dramatic, lost a close match, 2-1.

Oregon heavyweight Cody Parker lost in overtime to Jacob McGinnis, 7-5.

Oregon then traveled to No. 19 Arizona State on Sunday for a showdown with the Sun Devils. Oregon lost to Arizona State 24-11. However, the Ducks were able to score points in the match and earned solid victories from several Ducks. Jason Harless was the first to win for the Ducks in a 10-0 victory.

Oregon also earned points from victories by Joey Bracamonte and Luke Larwin. The win pushed the individual record for Larwin, who leads the Ducks in team victories, to 22-10.

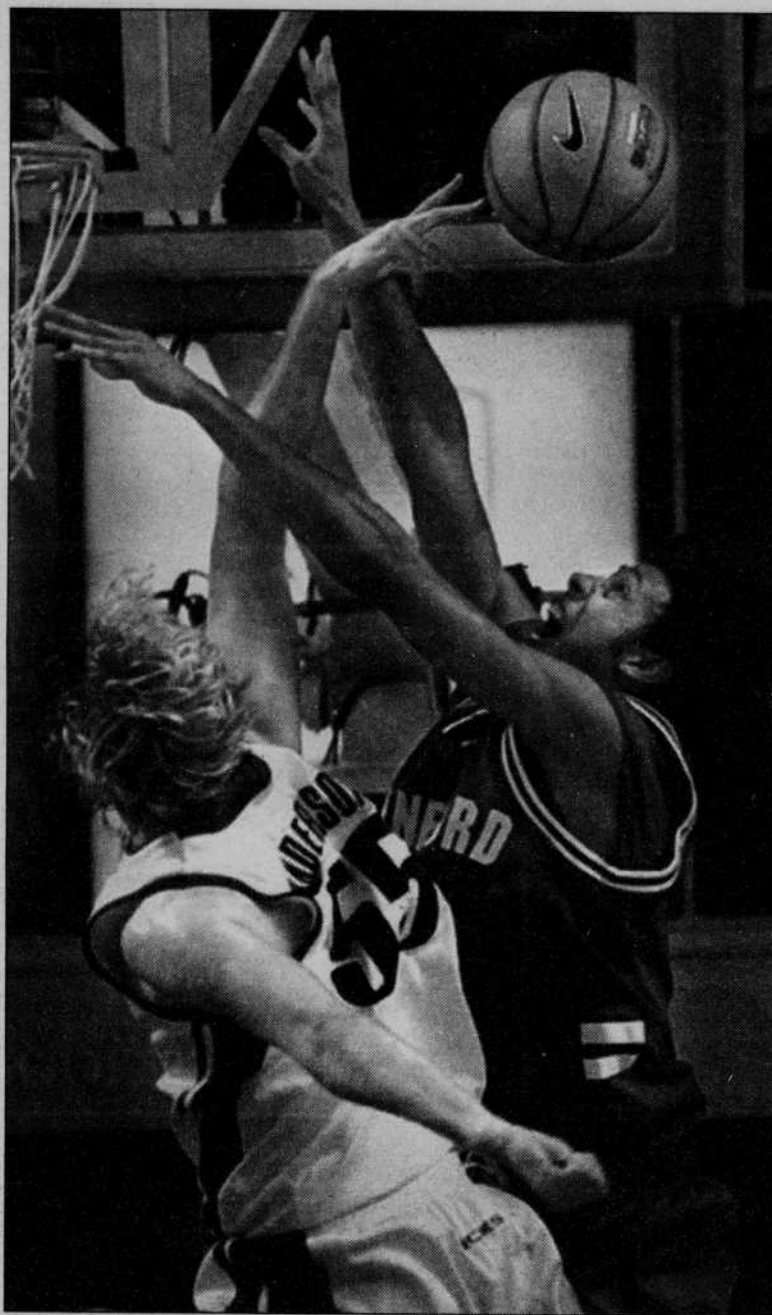
"We wrestled better this afternoon," Kearney said. "We bounced back from Friday night's match against Boise State. Arizona State is a great team, probably the best team in the conference."

"We need to have a good couple of weeks to work on things and hopefully this is the start of our comeback in the season," Kearney said.

The Ducks now have two weeks off before a match against Oregon State Feb. 15 at McArthur Court.

The previous shutouts this season were to No. 1 Oklahoma State and No. 2 Nebraska. This year also marks the first time the Ducks have been shut out three times in one season.

Scott Archer is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.



Erik Bishoff Photographer

Oregon's Jay Anderson blocks a shot by Stanford's Josh Childress in Oregon's 83-80 loss to Stanford Saturday night. No Oregon reserve scored in the game.

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better from the field in the second half.

It's better this way. Everything being said, Oregon learns much more from losing this game than it does winning.

Sure the celebration would've been great and I would've liked to see the Pit Crew rush the floor in pandemonium, but it would've all seemed to strikingly familiar to the Oregon-Michigan upset in football. Remember what happened after that game?

Now the players are still hungry and not arrogant. Now the players realize the level of play they are capable of rising to rather than believe they are the best in the country — because they're not ... yet.

Now Oregon has time to improve, time to grow, time to progress into an even stronger offensive powerhouse when freshman Aaron Brooks returns this month.

Consider Saturday's game a satisfying, bittersweet what-if glimpse of what is to come. It's not where Oregon is right now that's important, but where the Ducks will be come March.

It is difficult to see, but it's better this way.

Contact the sports reporter at jessethomas@dailyemerald.com.

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