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Hank Hager
Behind the dish

Brooks would've made big difference

Oh, what could have been. That's an easy summation of Oregon's season, a statement that describes basically every aspect of the Ducks.

Imagine what could have been if Luke Jackson had a little more help.

Imagine what could have been if Ian Crosswhite had been a bit more consistent during Oregon's recent four-game slide. Imagine what could have been if any member of the bench aside from James Davis — and even Davis in recent weeks — had shown any kind of consistency during the losing streak.

Better yet, imagine what the Ducks would be if they had the services of Aaron Brooks for the entire season.

"I thought Aaron Brooks did a tremendous job," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said after Oregon's loss to Stanford on Saturday.

Kent has said all season the Ducks are a different team with Brooks and even went into that a little bit after the blowout to the Cardinal.

The Ducks don't otherwise have what Brooks brings to the table. It was Brooks who broke Stanford's 13-0 scoring run to begin the game, tossing in a tough reverse layup seven minutes into the first half.

It was Brooks who took over the second half of Oregon's game against California,

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Oregon lays claim to 3 NCAA bids

Three Duck wrestlers will head to the NCAA tournament; senior Jason Harless was injured and forfeited matches

By Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

They didn't do it the easy way, but they still did it.

Oregon wrestlers qualified for the NCAA Tournament a day after most of its wrestlers

lost their opening-round tournaments.

DUCK WRESTLING

Oregon finished the tournament in ninth place, ahead

of Portland State, the only Pacific-10 Conference team it beat this year.

Senior Jason Harless, who qualified a year ago, suffered a concussion in the third period of the third round and was sent to the hospital for observation. He had to forfeit his last two matches for a sixth-place finish; however, he may be selected as a

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Oregon hits positive note with wins



Erik R. Bishoff Photographer

Corrie Mizusawa (13) was fouled six times in the second half by a physical California team Saturday.

The Ducks and Golden Bears played a physical game Saturday that will give each team motivation for Friday

By Mindi Rice
Senior Sports Reporter

It seemed more was on the line in Saturday's game at McArthur Court than the No. 8 seed for the Pacific-10 Conference tournament.

The Ducks (14-14 overall, 6-12 Pac-10) had their issues in the regular season. Injuries that plagued the team from the beginning of the season resulted in losses that dampened spirits and never allowed head coach Bev Smith to settle on one starting lineup.

California, though, might have had the more difficult season. The Golden Bears (11-16, 4-14) lost reserve player Alisa Lewis after she died from bacterial meningitis on Jan. 19.

Both teams have been in a holding pattern during conference play. The Ducks spent the majority of the season eighth in the Pac-10 while the Golden Bears were right behind at ninth.

"I think our team just really wanted to play for themselves and to play for (senior) Kayla Steen and to finish this weekend on a positive note — a sweep — so that we have a good feeling and sense of identity as we go into the Pac-10 Tournament," Smith said after Saturday's victory. "I think that's what our mindset was today."

The emotion of Oregon's first sweep of the season, along with a fired-up crowd and California team, resulted in a very physical game and some ex-

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Arizona slips to third in conference

After losing two straight, Arizona gets a win against Washington State in Salim Stoudamire's return Saturday

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

Washington is hot. Arizona is not.

The Huskies have won 10 of their past 12 games. The 17th-ranked Wildcats have lost two out of the past three.

As uncommon as it may seem for Arizona (18-8 overall, 10-7 Pac-10) to not be one of the Pacific-10 Conference's top two teams, the team is showing signs of life.

After losing two straight, Arizona made sure not to lose to the conference's seventh-place team in a 72-60 victory against Washington State on Saturday.

Salim Stoudamire was back in a Wildcat uniform after being suspended for "failure to meet team responsibilities," Arizona head coach Lute Olson said. He scored 21 points against the Cougars Saturday, giving the Wildcats a boost.

Stoudamire did what Olson asked in his return: play defense.

Stoudamire held Washington State's Marcus Moore to five points. The Washington State guard had scored 36 and 29 points, respectively, in his last two games against Arizona.

"I went in and talked to Coach O and he wanted me to get out there and hold him under 10 points, and I did that," Stoudamire said.

Arizona played poorly in the 89-84 loss to Washington on Thursday and Olson actually apologized.

"I apologize for it," Olson said. "The coaches apologize for it. The thing that's getting old is the lack of our

ability to inspire guys to play like their life depended on it. That's been a tradition of Arizona basketball — guys play hard. You get beat sometimes, but it's not because we didn't play hard. This team has gotten beat because it doesn't play hard."

Traffic jam

With just one weekend of conference action remaining, feelings are becoming tense regarding who will be in and who will be out of the Pac-10 Tournament.

Three teams — Oregon, USC and UCLA — are in a tie for fifth in the conference with 7-9 league records. Oregon plays USC and UCLA this weekend, making things even more interesting.

Oregon State (11-15, 5-11) also faces USC and UCLA.

Only eight teams advance to the Pac-10 Tournament. Washington State, Oregon State and Arizona State hold down the bottom three spots in the conference. The Sun Devils are the only team in the conference mathematically eliminated.

Stanford (25-0, 16-0) is guaranteed to hold the top spot come tournament time, which begins March 11 in Los Angeles.

Roy receives weekly honor

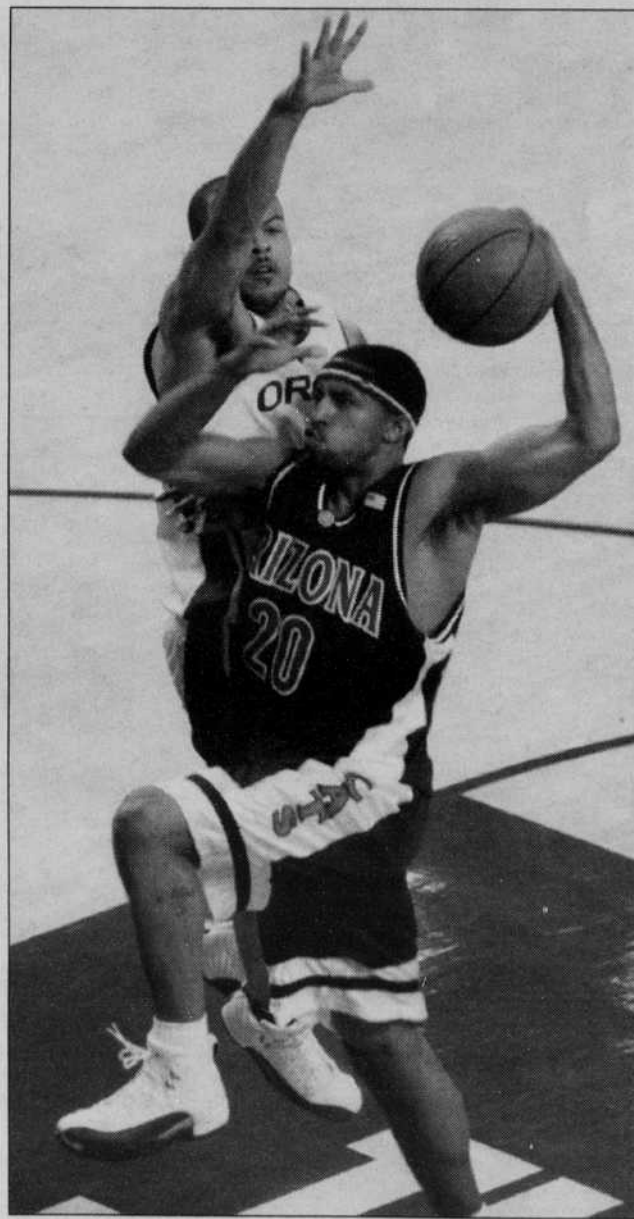
Washington guard Brandon Roy was named the Pacific-10 Conference Men's Basketball Player of the Week on Monday for the week of February 23-29.

Roy led the Huskies to their first road sweep of Arizona and Arizona State in two decades. Against Arizona, Roy had eight assists and 12 points in the upset win.

Two days later, against Arizona State, the Seattle native led the team with 18 points, five rebounds and five assists. It is the first weekly honor for Roy.

Washington is rolling

With a conference record of 10-6, the Huskies have recorded their highest win

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Adam Amato Senior Photographer

Arizona guard Salim Stoudamire (20) returned to the court Saturday to play against Washington State. The Wildcats defeated the Cougars by 12.