

■ In my opinion



BRIAN SMITH
LEFTY SPECIALIST

'Jeopardy!' star's streak has nothing on sports

Cal Ripken, you ain't got nothing on Ken Jennings.

The software engineer who won more than two million dollars on "Jeopardy!" was ousted after a run of 74 victories in a row, concluding the game show's greatest streak ever and placing Jennings among the elite.

Ken Jennings and Barry Bonds.

Ken Jennings and Lance Armstrong.

Jennings was on such a streak that I can't believe it's over. I didn't think that he would ever lose again. This streak was so fascinating that I still think it was rigged in some way, à la the rigged game shows of the 1950s.

But now I have a better theory: I think Jennings tanked it. And no, it isn't really the greatest streak ever.

Here are some ideas:

Maybe Jennings wanted to hang out with his boy Ricky Williams and have the most intelligent, weed-influenced conversations imaginable.

Maybe Jennings watched some old-school NFL films and wanted to go out on top like John Elway, Jim Brown or Barry Sanders.

So in honor of his 74-game run, I've decided to put his streak up against some of the most impressive individual streaks in sports history.

1. Ken Jennings vs. the aforementioned Cal Ripken Jr.:

The numbers alone are the answer: 2,632 against 74. Let's say that "Jeopardy!" aired 162 times a year, same as the number of games in a Major League regular season. Jennings would have to win the next 2,558 episodes — or for the next 15 and a half years — to equal Ripken. Or, let's say that "Jeopardy!" aired 365 days a year. Jennings would need to win every episode until 2011 to even get close.

Verdict: Ripken. Do you really think I would pick Jennings in this case?

2. Ken Jennings vs. Johnny Unitas' 47 consecutive games with a touchdown streak.

In terms of numbers, Jennings has Unitas beat. But let's remember what we're talking about. A game show vs. the NFL. Alex Trebek vs. 11 defensive players every week. Yes, Trebek and that pen he wields can strike terror into the hearts of teachers and software engineers alike, but Deacon Jones standing on the opposite side of the ball wanting your head for a mantlepiece ... yikes.

Verdict: The pen is mightier than the sword, but not an NFL defense.

3. Ken Jennings vs. Wilt Chamberlain's seven straight NBA games with 50 points or more.

I'm sorry. This one is just laughable. Picture Jennings in those '70s-style shorts and long tube socks.

Exactly.

Verdict: Chamberlain by NBA fashion default.

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■ Men's basketball



Oregon's Maarty Leunen (10) and Ray Schafer surround a New Mexico player during a victory earlier this season. The two freshmen have helped the Ducks hold all three of their opponents this season to under 40 percent shooting from the field.

ERIK R. BISHOFF
PHOTOGRAPHER

Height increases increase defense

With an infusion of height this year, the Ducks reach fourth in the Pac-10 for defensive rebounding

BY CLAYTON JONES
SPORTS EDITOR

While much of the emphasis this season has been on the run-and-gun offense the Oregon men's basketball team thrusts upon its opponents, this young squad has stepped it up on the defensive end of the court as well.

The Ducks have amped up their defensive intensity and have held

their opponents this season to a 38.1 percent shooting percentage and have held all opponents to under 40 percent.

"I'm happy defensively overall with this team," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said.

Freshman Bryce Taylor said the team has been working hard to become better defensively.

"We take about half of practice to work on defense," Taylor said.

"It's one of those things you have to keep working on, especially our intensity and our technique."

So far it has paid off. In their opening game of the season, the Ducks held Idaho State to 51 points, their best defensive game in an opener since 1982.

The team's improvement on defense has been helped by the resurgence of 7-foot redshirt freshman Ray Schafer.

Schafer brings a presence to the inside for Oregon, especially when teamed with fellow 7-footer Ian Crosswhite.

Though his four blocks this season may not show any kind of dominance, his ability to alter shots has been key for the Ducks.

"It's not necessarily a blocked shot (that helps the team),"

Schafer said. "If a guard gets beat and his guy comes down the middle and I just alter his shot and make him throw up some junk, I've done my job."

Another aspect the Ducks have improved on this season is rebounding. Crosswhite said Oregon has struggled with rebounding the last few years, and Kent has made it a focus for the Duck big men.

"A big emphasis this season has been on rebounding," the Castlecrag, Australian native said. "The last couple of years we have lost some games because we haven't boxed people out and rebounded."

Oregon currently ranks fourth in the Pac-10 Conference in rebounding, averaging 38.8 per game. On the other end, the Ducks

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■ Pac-10

Oregon, Stanford remain undefeated

Oregon's Cathrine Kraayeveld comes away with MVP honors at the Long Island Turkey Classic

BY BRIAN SMITH
SPORTS REPORTER

Heading into the fourth week of the regular season, two teams — Oregon and fifth-ranked Stanford — sit atop the Pacific-10 conference with perfect records.

The Cardinal improved to 5-0 after their victory over No. 11 Texas Tech on Sunday, which came on the heels of Stanford's first-place finish in the 2004 Great Alaska Shootout.

In the two Shootout games in Anchorage, Alaska, the Cardinal's average margin of victory was 30.5 points — defeating Eastern Washington 91-50 and Louisiana-Lafayette 67-47.

Stanford's junior center Brooke Smith averaged a team-high 14.0 points and 7.0 rebounds per game during the recent three-game stretch, including a career-best 22 points against Texas Tech. Oregon remained among the unbeaten after taking home the Long Island Turkey Classic title last weekend.

Oregon senior forward Cathrine Kraayeveld was named the tournament MVP, with a combined 28 points and 18 rebounds in both games.



ERIK R. BISHOFF | PHOTOGRAPHER

Oregon sophomore forward Eleanor Haring, seen here against Portland, went 10 for 11 against Miami, registering the 10th best field-goal percentage in a single game in Oregon history.

The Ducks got some clutch shooting from junior guard Chelsea Wagner and sophomore forward Eleanor Haring. Both Wagner and Haring scored or tied career-highs with 21 points in the Ducks' 79-73 victory over Miami. Wagner

hit five three-pointers, while Haring went 10 for 11 from the field — the 10th best field-goal percentage in a single game in Oregon history.

UCLA women ranked for first time since 1999-2000 season

In other non-conference action, UCLA handed fourth-ranked Texas — who defeated top-ranked Tennessee a few days before — a major upset with a 63-60 victory on Sunday in Pauley Pavilion.

As a result, the Bruins moved into the rankings of the Associated Press poll for the first time since Feb. 21, 2000, when UCLA was ranked No. 22.

The Bruins' win over Texas was their first over a top-10 opponent since the 1999-2000 season, when they defeated No. 8 North Carolina 69-65.

"I think we're playing very good basketball right now," UCLA head coach Kathy Olivier said. "It's so early, but we're executing and doing little things really well. Hopefully, we can maintain it throughout the year."

UCLA's guard Noelle Quinn named Pac-10 player of the week

One of the main reasons for the Bruins' victory over the Longhorns was the play of guard

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