

■ In my opinion



BRIAN SMITH
LEFTY SPECIALIST

Oregon women rely on clutch, not crutch

PORTLAND — The Ducks are 5-0.

Déjà vu, anyone?

Everyone grab a piece of wood because the Oregon women's basketball team doesn't need a repeat of last year.

Desks. Chairs. The Trojan Horse. (Random, I know.)

Anything made from trees.

Do you remember what happened last year?

Hey kiddies, time for a crash course in history.

Last year: 5-0 marked the beginning of the end to the 2003-04 season. Ranked No. 20 in the nation, the Ducks lost do-everything player Cathrine Kraayeveld for the season with a knee injury during a practice at the Morse Event Center at Northwest Christian College. Oregon went 9-15 the rest of the year, 6-12 in the Pacific-10 Conference.

This year: 5-0 marks...well, who knows?

Unfortunately, this soothsayer knows nothing (in advance) nor wants to predict anything (too early in the season), but what I can say is I saw a team on Saturday.

Not just five players on the court wearing the same uniform, but a true team.

The Ducks' 64-40 victory Saturday at the Papé Jam was a great example of that.

It's not a surprise that Kraayeveld is the best player on the team. Coaches know that. Players know that. My friend's brother's grandmother's aunt's mailman knows that.

On Saturday, however, I saw an Oregon team that doesn't need to use Kraayeveld as a crutch. The Ducks have too many good players to let that happen.

There's that point guard, Corrie Mizusawa is it? Thirty-nine assists and only nine turnovers for a 4.3 assist-to-turnover ratio?

That's pretty good.

How about that Andrea Bills? Ten points and six boards per game?

Not bad.

Eleanor Haring? Twenty-one points against Miami last week on 10 of 11 shooting? Thirteen points on 6 of 7 shooting Saturday, including six in a row to increase the lead and capture the momentum at the end of the first half?

Sounds pretty clutch to me.

Speaking of clutch, how 'bout Chelsea Wagner? Top five in three-pointers made in the conference, adding five more against the Colonials?

Basically, Oregon has four legitimate scorers in its starting lineup, and any one of them is capable of buoying the team in case Kraayeveld isn't shooting lights out.

"One of the things that I am very proud about our team is that they are a real team," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "Defensively, to be that good you have to play as a team."

Oh yeah, defense. As a team.

"(Defense) is something we focus on," Smith said, "and we know that is our foundation."

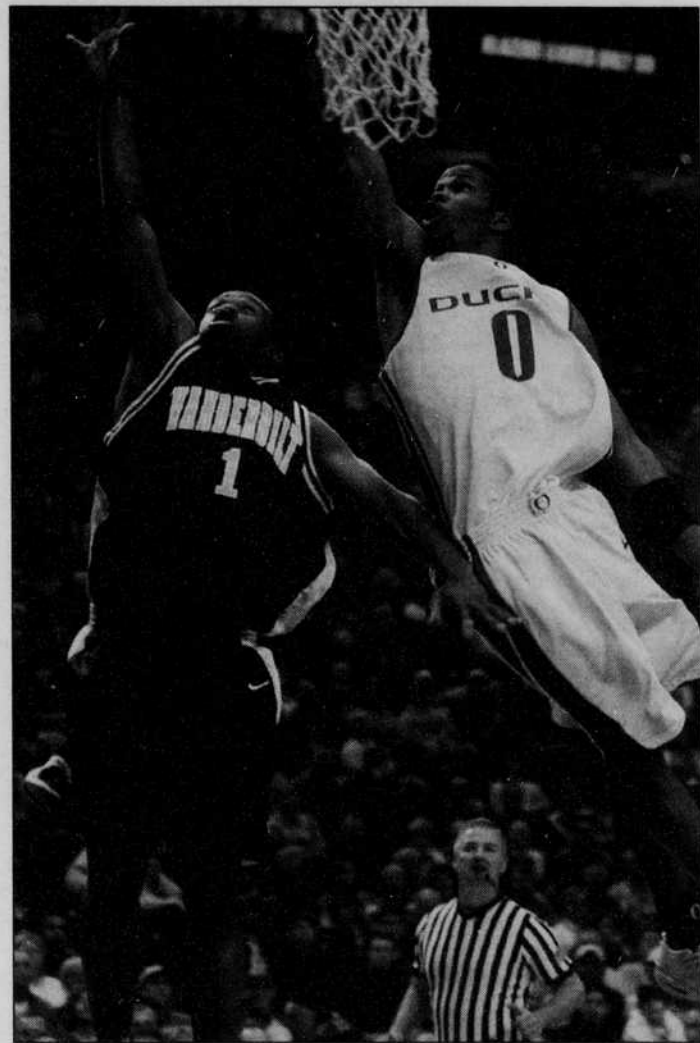
Oregon held George Washington to 16.1 percent shooting in the second half. For the game, the Colonials shot 24.6 percent.

Not too shabby, eh?

The Colonials' 40 points was their lowest total since 1988, and the fewest points Oregon has allowed since holding Boise State to 29 in 2001.

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■ Men's basketball



DANIELLE HICKEY | PHOTO EDITOR

Oregon point guard Aaron Brooks goes up for a block against Vanderbilt's Mario Moore in the Papé Jam on Saturday. Brooks totaled 11 points and two assists.

Home away from home

After defeating Vanderbilt 75-65 Saturday, the Ducks move to 7-0 in the annual Papé Jam held in Portland

BY JON ROETMAN
SENIOR SPORTS REPORTER

PORTLAND — A stellar defensive effort propelled the Oregon men's basketball team to a 75-65 win against Vanderbilt during the seventh annual Papé Jam at the Rose Garden on Saturday.

The Ducks (4-0 overall) pressured Commodore shooters relentlessly, forcing them to live and die with perimeter shots. Fortunately for Oregon, there wasn't much life in the Vanderbilt offense as the Commodores shot 39 percent from the floor, including 21 percent from three-point range.

Saturday's game marked the fourth consecutive contest in which Oregon held an opponent to less than 40 percent shooting. Vanderbilt (4-3), which was shooting 45 percent from three-point range before Saturday, connected on only 5 of 24 from

behind the arc.

"We need to stop relying on our three-point shooting," Commodore center Dawid Przybyszewski said. "It was not as effective today as usual. We needed to get the ball inside more and look for open shots."

At 7-foot-2, Przybyszewski is considered one of the best outside-shooting big men in the country. However, Oregon limited the senior to six points in 22 minutes after he got into early foul trouble.

With all of the solid defensive plays Oregon made, one stood out from the rest. With his team leading 7-4 early in the first half, Vanderbilt junior guard Mario Moore picked up a loose ball and appeared to be on his way to a layin. Oregon point guard Aaron Brooks never stopped hustling,

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Brooks leads Oregon's defensive effort

The sophomore's 'energy plays' helped the Ducks pull away from Vanderbilt in Saturday's victory

BY ALEX TAM
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

PORTLAND — As Oregon guard Aaron Brooks hustled back on defense to swat away Vanderbilt guard Mario Moore's layup early in the first half of Saturday's Papé Jam, it stirred up a bitter-sweet memory for fellow Oregon guard Jordan Kent.

Sitting on the bench, Kent was reminded of when his teammate had run the same defense on him

at a recent practice.

"I picked the ball up at half court and decided to not go up that hard at all," Kent said about the practice. "(Brooks) read it perfectly in my right hand and basically swatted it out of bounds."

As long as Brooks can apply his skills to opposing teams' players, Kent said getting blocked by his teammate is no big deal.

"When he's on my team, then

shoot, I don't care at all," Kent said. "I don't mind him doing that to me in practice as long as he does it in games."

That type of defensive effort by the Ducks helped them pull away from Vanderbilt in the second half en route to a 75-65 victory at the Rose Garden.

Brooks had two blocks in the game, both served on attempted layups by Moore. Kent said those kind of "energy plays" are needed when a game — or a team — gets sluggish, the way the Ducks had been after committing 14 first-half turnovers.

"Once we get the energy going

and the crowd going and start running up and down the floor, plays like that are huge," Kent said.

Vanderbilt head coach Kevin Stallings said Moore was probably bothered by the blocks, but needs to forget about those kinds of plays in future games.

"If you've never had your shot blocked, then you haven't played college basketball," Stallings said. "There wasn't a guy on that court, I don't think, who has never had their shot blocked, so he just has to come back and know he's going up against those kind

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■ Women's basketball

Ducks breeze by George Washington, 64-40

Oregon used a late run to defeat the Colonials at the annual Papé Jam at Portland's Rose Garden

BY STEPHEN MILLER
SPORTS REPORTER

PORTLAND — Oregon received another lights-out performance from sophomore Eleanor Haring while holding George Washington to its lowest point total of the season.

Haring, who was named the game's most valuable player, scored 13 points and sank 6 of 7 from the field in Oregon's 64-40 Papé Jam victory at the Rose Garden. The soft-shooting forward has made 18 of her last 20 shots through three games.

The Ducks held the Colonials to the lowest point total recorded by a Papé Jam opponent, remaining

undefeated (7-0) at the event. With the win, Oregon began its second consecutive season with a 5-0 record.

"I think slowly, in the first 20 minutes, we got under their skin a little bit," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "Then in the second half, they really ran into a wall, both in terms of our defense just not giving in and their fatigue piling up."

Oregon strung together a 17-1 scoring run in the final seven minutes of the game.

"Basically, we just settled down a bit with our offense and our defense execution (in the second half)," Haring said. "That gave us

a chance to score."

George Washington (3-2) witnessed its "East Coast" offense struggle due to Oregon's presence inside. Senior forward Anna Montañana scored a game-high 19 points on 7 of 19 shooting. She also committed eight turnovers in 37 minutes.

"It was kind of like we could never catch up to them (Oregon)," Montañana said. "I think we didn't have our best offensive game. We wanted to get the ball inside, but we didn't have a good selection of shoots."

Oregon junior shooting guard Chelsea Wagner collected a team-high 15 points as she finished 5 of 11 behind the arc.

Senior Andrea Bills contributed heavily to Oregon's defense in the paint. The 6-foot-3 center also

posted 14 points (7 of 10) and nine rebounds. Bills has recorded double figures in points in her last four contests.

Center Jessica Simmonds, who is averaging a double-double this season, struggled for the Colonials as she shot 1 of 11 from the floor, totaling three points, and snatched six rebounds.

"(The Ducks) have the size, and they have the ability to dismantle people defensively," George Washington head coach Joe McKeown said. "We just couldn't score, that was the biggest thing."

The Colonials shot 16.1 percent in the second half and 24.6 for the game. Other than Montañana, no George Washington player reached double-figures in points.

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