

■ Duck wrestling

Wrestling sees mixed results in winter break matchups

Individual successes in tournaments balance out team losses in duals against OSU and Nebraska

BY SCOTT ADAMS
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

The Oregon wrestling team kept busy during winter break, competing in two team duals and two tournaments.

Senior Scott Barker took fifth place Wednesday in the 197-pound weight class at the 42nd-annual Midlands Tournament.

Barker leads the Ducks in pins this season with 11, and he improved his record to 18-5 at the tournament held at Northwestern University, in Evanston, Ill. As a fifth seed, Barker rallied his way into the fifth-place finals after losing his opening two matches. Barker started the tournament with a loss to top-seeded Jon Trence of Lehigh by a 2-1 decision.

Barker then advanced to the consolation semifinals, which pitted him against third-seeded Sean

Stender of Northern Iowa. Stender walked away victorious with a 6-2 decision, sending Barker to a final match against sixth-seeded Tyrone Boyd of Illinois. Barker won by forfeit for fifth place. The forfeit came as a reward for Barker, who wrestled well despite his two losses.

"Scott has wrestled tough all season, and he continued to do that today," head coach Chuck Kearney said. "He faced two of the top wrestlers in the nation and was in both of those matches. I'm pleased with the way he was able to come back."

On Dec. 19, the Ducks competed in the 19-team Reno Tournament of Champions where they took fourth. Barker took second place individually. Barker's tournament record was 4-1, with all of his wins coming by way of pin. Juniors Joey Bracamonte and Martin Mitchell both

placed third in the 165- and 133-pound weight classes, respectively.

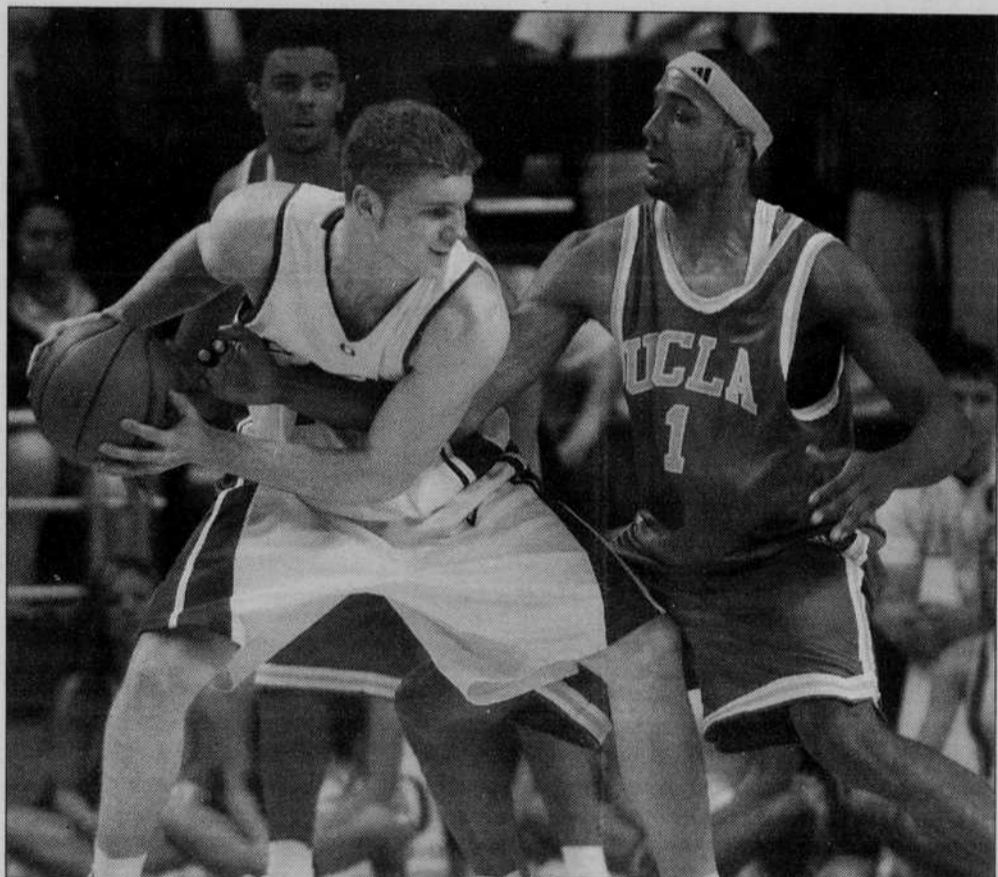
Bracamonte closed out the tournament by winning his final six matches. Sophomore Cody Parker also placed, taking fifth in the heavy-weight division. Kearney was pleased with Parker's outing.

"He had a very good day and is close to becoming the wrestler he is capable of being," Kearney said.

Oregon saw action Dec. 11 as the team faced No. 4 Nebraska in a much-anticipated dual at McArthur Court. The Duck faithful were in full force that evening but could not lift Oregon past the Cornhuskers, who took a 39-10 victory. Once again, the Ducks were crippled by injuries — Shane Webster and Bracamonte were not able to wrestle.

Mitchell and Barker were the only Ducks to record victories in the dual. Barker tallied a major decision over B.J. Patton, and Mitchell pinned Dominick Moyer midway through the first period.

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DANIELLE HICKEY | PHOTO EDITOR

Oregon's Maarty Leunen fights off the pressure of UCLA's Dijon Thompson during the Ducks' loss to the Bruins on Sunday. Leunen grabbed a team-high 10 rebounds in the losing effort.

Men: Ducks' home win streak is snapped

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guards caused turnovers and was the key to victory, UCLA head coach Ben Howland said.

"This was a big victory for us in a tough environment," Howland said. "Our defense played great during the first 10 minutes of the game. We also took better care of the ball in the second half and were more patient."

Kent said UCLA's defensive effort wasn't as much the cause of Oregon's lackluster offensive performance as was their inability to focus.

"I give UCLA credit, but I felt this had nothing to do with their defense as much as it had to do with our mental approach," Kent said. "We were out of our rhythm and made a lot of careless turnovers. We were not as sharp and didn't come to play with the right amount of intensity."

Oregon point guard Aaron Brooks, who admittedly had an off-day with 14 points on 4 of 12 shooting and four turnovers to one assist, agreed.

"I just couldn't get myself on track," Brooks said. "They did a great job on transition, and we didn't get out a run."

After trailing at halftime, the Ducks would claw their way back to within two points thanks to excellent bench play from Brandon Lincoln and Jordan Kent.

"Jordan and Brandon brought a lot of energy to us late in the game and helped us get back in the game," Ernie Kent said.

The Ducks were within two at 56-54, but UCLA senior Brian Morrison hit a deep three pointer at the top of the key to boost the Bruins and cut the momentum out from under Oregon.

Morrison's three pointer was the last of five he would hit in the game, accounting for all 15 of his points.

"We knew about Morrison coming into the game and knew he was a big time three point shooter," Kent said.

The Bruins would ice the game, making 9 of 10 free throws down

the stretch.


The victory marks the first time UCLA has won at McArthur Court since 2001 and breaks a 10-game winning streak the Ducks had at home.

For the Ducks, their two starting freshmen — Malik Hairston and Bryce Taylor — combined for 3 of 10 from the field, scored 10 points, grabbed five rebounds, dished out 3 assists, turned the ball over four times and only took one shot in the second half, numbers way below Kent's expectations.


"He's a guy that needs to be a factor," Kent said of Hairston. "The two of them need to (combine) and give us Luke Jackson-type numbers."

On a positive note, freshman Maarty Leunen put in another solid day of work, grabbing 10 rebounds while scoring six points and collecting a steal.

claytonjones@dailyemerald.com



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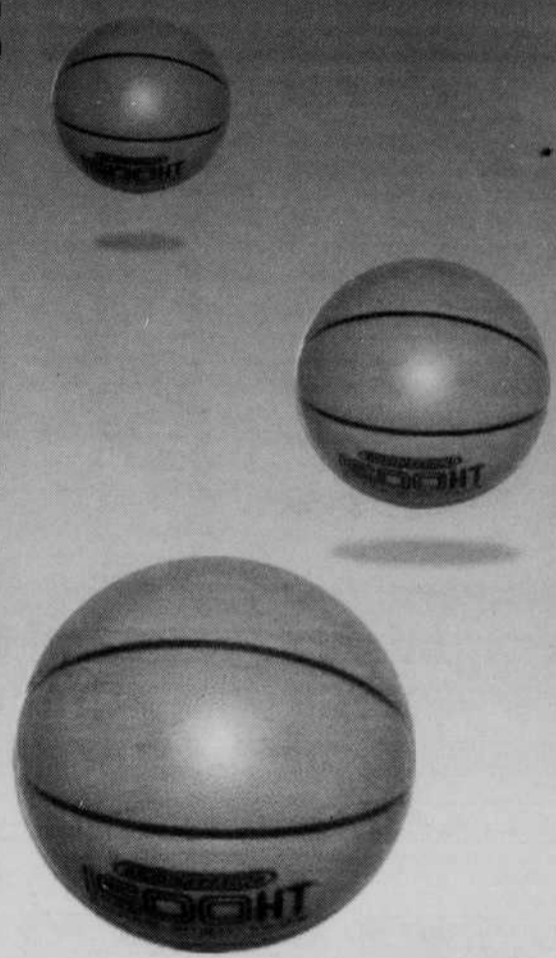
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