



DANIELLE HICKEY | PHOTO EDITOR

Oregon's Malik Hairston's team play and intelligence on the court has made him a great fit for the men's basketball team.

'Little big brother' game

As the team-dubbed younger sibling, Malik Hairston's talents are full-grown

BY CLAYTON JONES
SPORTS EDITOR

A long and lean blue-chip recruit began his reign at Oregon much the way he approaches the game he loves: quietly dangerous.

He poured in a "quiet" 30 points and nine rebounds in 19 minutes of play in his first appearance at McArthur Court.

He is deemed the most prestigious player Oregon has ever recruited.

He has been asked to fill the shoes of one of the best players Oregon has ever seen in Luke Jackson.

He is only 17 years old.

And Malik Hairston isn't phased by any of it.

"I don't feel any of that pressure at all," the Detroit native said of his role on the team. "I have confidence in my game that I can get the job done."

Assistant coach Kenny Payne said that Hairston's performance thus far shows how he can handle the spotlight.

"For a 17-year-old kid to be averaging 13 points, four rebounds and three assists per game is pretty amazing," the first-year assistant said. "He has a love and is a student of the game and is working to be his best. He wants to win and he pushes his teammates and he pushes me."

He is unlike many top recruits because he plays the game with great intelligence and excellent fundamentals combined with phenomenal physical abilities.

Point guard Aaron Brooks sees first-hand everyday what Hairston brings to the court.

"Malik isn't the type of guy who is going to dazzle the crowd," Brooks added. "He stays within the system and handles the pressure extremely well."

Brooks still doesn't believe he's so young.

"I don't think he's 17," Brooks said. "I haven't seen a birth certificate or anything so I think he's like 19."

Going up and over

Growing up in Detroit, Hairston has been surrounded by basketball since he could walk. His father played basketball at Morris Brown College in Atlanta and his older brothers also played.

"I think I tried to dribble and shoot when I was three," Hairston said.

As for being young for his grade, Hairston said his mom enrolled him in school early.

"I went from pre-school to first grade and skipped kindergarten," Hairston said. "My mom said I was bored — at least that is how she explained it."

Hairston would step into high school and grow nearly eight inches, leading to a breakout season his junior year. He led Renaissance High School to the first of two city championships that same season.

During his senior year he led his team to city and state titles while accumulating a 27-0 record. He would average 20 points, 11 rebounds, and six assists per game and would record his fondest basketball memory.

During the state playoffs, he broke a mid-court trap with only one person between him and the basket.

"I ran up and the guy was about 6-foot-4 or 6-foot-5 and was trying to take a charge and I jumped over him and dunked it," Hairston said. "I've never actually jumped over somebody before. I guess I got an extra boost."

"I might have ate my Wheaties that night."

He would be invited to play in the McDonald's All-American game, and after that his decision would have to be made.

Heading West

Hairston wouldn't decide to come to Oregon until late in the recruiting process because he was unsure of whether he wanted to go to college or enter the NBA draft.

"People thought I was an inconvenience to a lot of coaches," Hairston said. "But that's my future, and that's much more important to me than anybody's program. I just wanted to make the best decision for me and I felt I had the right to do that."

He knew fellow freshman Maarty Leunen from basketball camps around the country and asked where he was going. Oregon was one of his choices.

HAIRSTON, page 7B

Adult Shops



ADDITIONAL
25% OFF
on
selected DVDs

New Releases weekly
VHS & DVD
5-day Rentals
Over 3,000 DVDs
• Arcade
• Novelties
• Games
gift cards available

ADA accessible

HE & SHE I 290 River Rd., Eugene 688-5411
HE & SHE II 720 Garfield, Eugene 345-2873
ALBANY I-5 EXIT 233, 3404 Spicer Dr. 541-812-2522

Welcome to
YOUR LOCALLY-OWNED
NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANT
SERVING OVER 100 TEQUILAS
ALONG WITH THE
BEST MARGARITAS IN TOWN!
CHECK OUT LOW-CARB OPTIONS
ON OUR NEW MENU.

TACO LOCO

BEST
of Eugene
2003-2004

Mexican & Salvadorean Restaurant • 900 West 7th Avenue • 683-9171

Sofa by day / Bed by night

Renelle
DENMAN
\$199

Double Frame
and Mattress,
Cover not
included



Renelle
GIBSON
\$179

Double Frame
and Mattress,
Cover not
included



FREE
Delivery & Setup

**AMERICAN
MATTRESS
MANUFACTURING**

Buy Factory Direct & Save
4075 W. 11th • 343-2690

Open Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.,
Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sun 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.



\$49
TWIN MATTS

\$69
TWIN SET

\$79
FULL SET

\$109
QUEEN SET

\$179
KING SETS

Feed Your Mind & Fill Your Belly

...without
emptying your wallet!



"Bowls, Burritos, & Beyond"

Fresh, home-made whole foods
with lots of veggie & vegan options
...mixed with goofy artwork, snappy tunes
& an oxygen-based atmosphere

Organic Juice & Smoothie Bar
Scrumptious Home-made Vegan Baked Goods
Micro-brews on tap

760 Blair Blvd

(@ 8th Ave & Monroe, just west of downtown)

Open Mon-Sat 11-10pm; Sun 11-9pm 868-0668