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Roetman: Oregon's talent hindered by inexperience

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All these factors equate to a young team that hasn't quite figured out how to play consistently in the Pac-10.

If Oregon knew how to get off to a quick start, the Ducks wouldn't have let Arizona go on a 16-0 run in the first half.

If the Ducks knew how to play with intensity, they wouldn't have let their offense grow stagnant as it did late in the second half.

And if Oregon knew how to put teams away, it would have rolled with the momentum created by the Mac Court crowd and a stifling zone defense and taken a lead during its furious second-half comeback.

"The whole second half we were knocking at the door," Brooks said. "We just didn't kick it down."

The Ducks are an extremely talented team. Their skills show against inferior teams and for bursts against superior teams.

Brooks is one of the quickest players in the country, and he showed Thursday that he's capable of getting to the basket whenever he wants. But even though he scored 15 points, his timing was off when he decided to attack the rim.

When Oregon desperately needed a

bucket to stop an Arizona run, Brooks looked timid and simply passed off to a teammate. When the offense needed to show patience, Brooks would drive into a crowd and lose the ball.

Taylor — the Ducks best outside shooter — showed his ability to hit from the perimeter by knocking down a trio of three-pointers. But the freshman also showed a lack of judgment at times, either not pulling the trigger when open or casting an ill-advised outside shot.

"I don't feel like you can really put something on it," Taylor said of the Ducks inability to finish their comeback attempt. "It's just one of those things; when they needed to make plays, they made plays, and we didn't. I feel like we're just going to learn from it like you learn from every loss and hopefully in the near future, we'll learn how to get over that hump."

Despite the Ducks' inexperience, they play well enough in spurts to tease onlookers into thinking they're one of the Pac-10's elite. But while its overall record is still 11-4, Oregon is unlikely to do anything too special this season.

There's just too much to learn.

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Women: Three-game winning streak snapped by Wildcats

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"We felt really confident going in," Bills said. "We didn't do things that we normally do tonight, like attack aggressively on offense. That's the first time a team has scored that many points in transition on us without any challenges."

None of Oregon's starters scored in double-figures. Bills led the way with nine points, and senior Cathrine Kraayeveld was held to seven, breaking her 11-game double-digit streak for points scored.

Freshman Gabrielle Richards led all Duck scorers with 15 on 6 of 12 shooting, while fellow freshman Kristen Forristall added 10 points in 16 minutes of play.

The Ducks will conclude their road trip Saturday when Oregon faces an Arizona State team that has scored 50 points or less in its last three games.

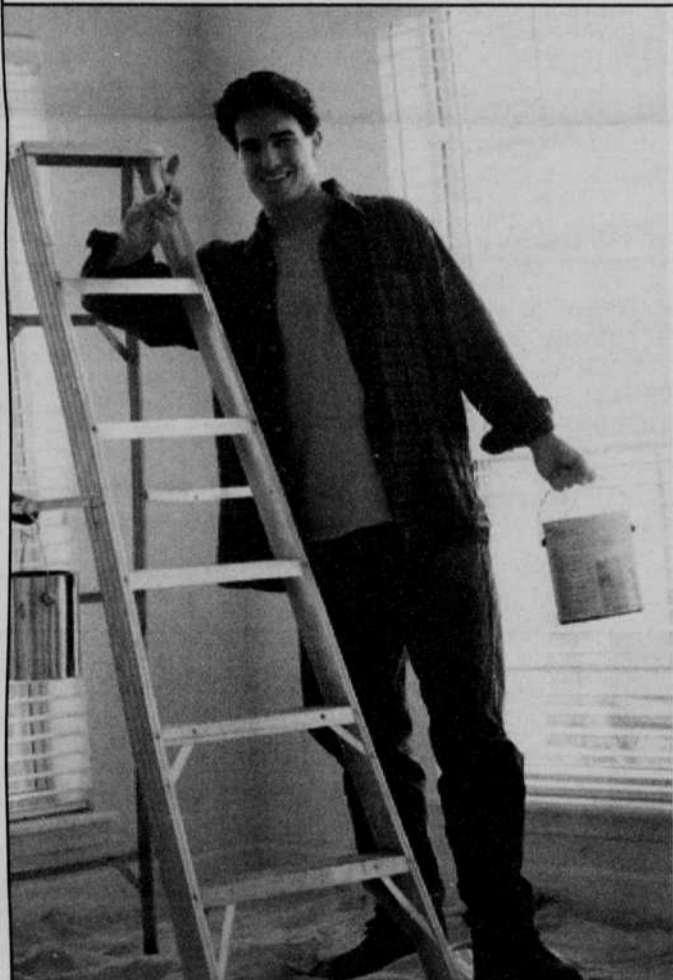
"We can't carry the baggage from previous seasons," Smith said. "We can only look to change the present."

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