

■ In my opinion



JON ROETMAN
ROUGHING THE PASSER

Blazers get yet another opportunity to screw up

Portland can't screw this one up. Can they?

The Trail Blazers got lucky Tuesday when they were awarded the No. 3 pick in the 2005 NBA draft lottery. Portland finished with the fifth-worst record in the league (27-55), but moved up two spots when its four-number ping pong ball combination was selected after Milwaukee and Atlanta filled the first two slots.

A top-three selection seemingly assures a team of landing a quality player, but with Portland's shoddy draft history, nothing is guaranteed.

Let's review:

Last time the Blazers drafted in the top 10 was 1995, and they selected Michigan State guard Shawn Respert with the eighth pick. Then they quickly sent him to Milwaukee for muscle-bound forward Gary Trent.

While Trent averaged double figures in scoring for two of the three seasons he was with the Blazers, he was only a marginal talent in exchange for a top-10 pick.

Since 2000, the Blazers have also wasted first-round picks on St. John's guard Erick Barkley and Northeast Mississippi Community College disaster Qyntel Woods. They did manage to land über-talented forward Zach Randolph from Michigan State in 2001, but even he has come at a price in the form of his inability to stay out of trouble.

And let's not forget the granddaddy of all draft busts.

In 1984 — the last season the NBA used its "coin flip" strategy to determine which team would open the draft — Portland wound up with the second overall pick after losing the coin flip to Houston (the coin flip was between the last-place team from each of the NBA's two divisions).

With the first pick, the Rockets selected hall-of-fame center Akeem Olajuwon. The Blazers, in need of a big man after selecting Houston guard Clyde Drexler the year before, opted to go with Kentucky center Sam Bowie with the second pick.

Why is this so bad? Because Chicago selected some guard by the name of Michael Jordan with the third pick.

Ouch.

Adding salt to the wound, Dallas and Philadelphia selected Sam Perkins and Charles Barkley, respectively, with the next two picks.

So who will Portland take with the third pick on June 28?

High school shooting guard Gerald Green? Wake Forest point guard Chris Paul?

Will North Carolina forward Marvin Williams or Utah center Andrew Bogut fall out of the top two? Will the Blazers package the pick with Nick Van Exel's expiring contract for a stud shooting guard through a blockbuster trade?

My advice: Take a certain former 6-foot-11 Oregon center and continue the comedy of errors that has become the Portland Trail Blazers.

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■ Men's tennis

Swinnen advances to round two

Sven Swinnen beat Oklahoma State's Tomas Bohunicky in the opening round of the NCAAs

BY ALEX TAM
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

When Sven Swinnen traveled to the NCAA Men's Tennis Individual Championships, he reminded himself that the key to his success has been sticking to his game plan.

Behind an aggressive style of play in which he continually attacked the net and put pressure on his opponent, Swinnen advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament after defeating Oklahoma State's Tomas Bohunicky, 6-0, 7-6 (3).

"It was a pretty good performance for a first-round match," Swinnen said. "I feel really good about it. Getting used to the climate here was really important also because it was hot."

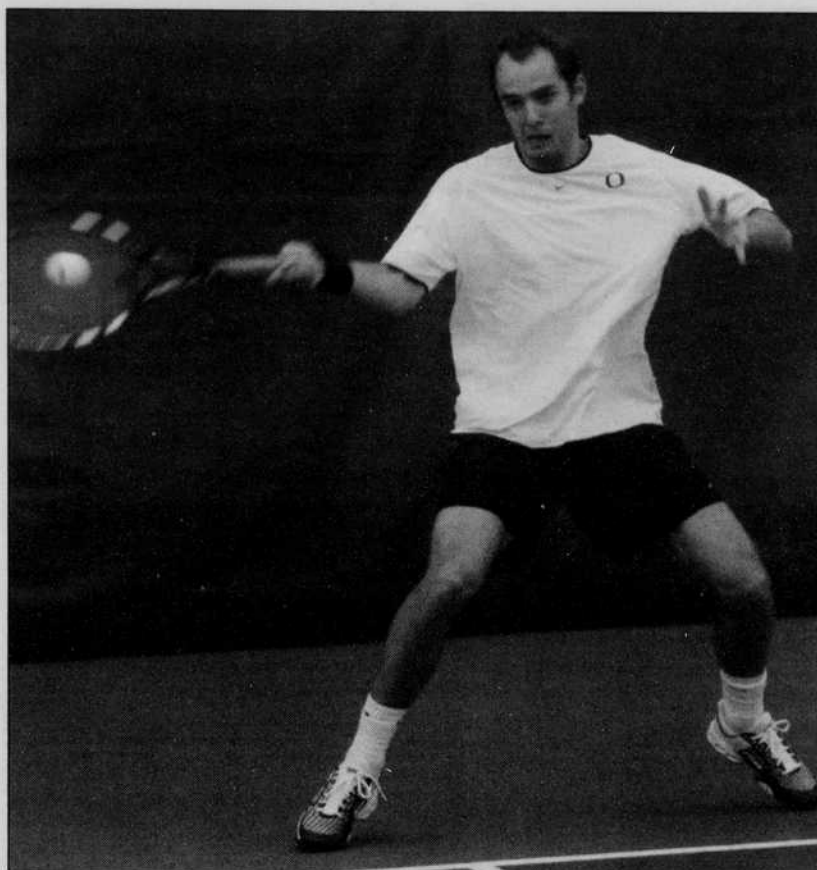
With temperatures reaching the high 80s in College Station, Texas, Swinnen was nearly worn out in the second set when he fell behind, 5-2. However, he then rallied back to take the match to a tiebreaker, where he eventually won.

"In the first set, I had a really good start and played pretty good," Swinnen said. "The other guy just started missing some shots. In the second set, he started to come back and was making those shots, and then I had to fight back."

In the next round, Swinnen battles Florida State's Mat Cloer today at noon. The two already faced one another earlier this season when Oregon and Florida State had a match in Honolulu on Jan. 15. Swinnen ended up winning a close three-set match against Cloer, 7-5, 6-7, 6-4.

Swinnen said he needs to continue playing the way he has all season to advance to the third round of the 64-player tournament.

"I just need to stick with my game plan," Swinnen said. "Cloer is a solid baseline-to-baseline player. I just need to stay aggressive and



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Oregon's Sven Swinnen defeated Oklahoma State's Tomas Bohunicky, 6-0, 7-6 (3), in the first round of the NCAA Tournament on Wednesday. Swinnen faces Florida State's Mat Cloer today at noon in the second round.

come attack at the net."

When asked about his chances of winning the whole tournament, Swinnen said he wasn't going to speculate, but he felt confident about the way he is playing.

"Anything can happen at this tournament," he said. "I just have to take it match by match."

This season, Swinnen was one of the lone bright spots on a struggling Oregon men's tennis team. The 24-year-old recorded a school-record 26 singles victories to add to his career total of 83. That number also places him first in Oregon history.

On Wednesday, Swinnen was also announced the 2005 Intercollegiate Tennis Association/Rafael Osuna National Sportsmanhood award winner, which goes to the player who displays sportsmanship, character, excellent academics and outstanding tennis performances.

"I feel honored to get that award," he said. "It's always good to win awards like this. It shows that all the hard work is appreciated."

Swinnen, a three-time most valuable player for the Ducks, is a pre-business administration major with a 3.31 GPA.

■ Club Sports

Baseball strives to continue hot play at World Series

Oregon has won 11 of its last 15 games and is ready for first-round play against North Carolina State

BY LUKE ANDREWS
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

The Oregon Club baseball team will attempt to keep its recent hot streak alive today in the first round of the National Club Baseball Association's World Series from McKechnie Field in Bradenton, Fla.

The Ducks (12-2, 22-8) have won 11 of their last 15 games and will face last year's runner-up, North Carolina State (11-1, 30-9), today at 9:30 a.m. The Wolfpack, winners of the South East Atlantic Regional tournament, fell to Colorado State in the NCBA's World Series a year ago. This season marks North Carolina State's third consecutive World Series appearance.

"They've (NC State) got a lot of seniors and are a really scrappy

team like we are," head coach Bradley Ficek said. "It's a really good matchup."

The Ducks are hoping to ride their late-season surge, which helped garner a second consecutive Northern Pacific Regional Tournament championship and a first-place finish in the Pacific Mountain Conference.

Oregon will send third team All-American pitcher Scott Sullivan (6-0, 1.24 ERA) to the mound. In his last outing, the Beaverton native went seven complete innings in a 13-4 win against Weber State.

"He is not an overpowering pitcher," Ficek said, referring to Sullivan's 17 strikeouts on the season. "But he gets a lot of ground balls and makes teams



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Oregon Club baseball pitcher Jay Tlougan and the rest of the team will begin their quest for a National Club Baseball Association World Series championship today against North Carolina State in Bradenton, Fla.