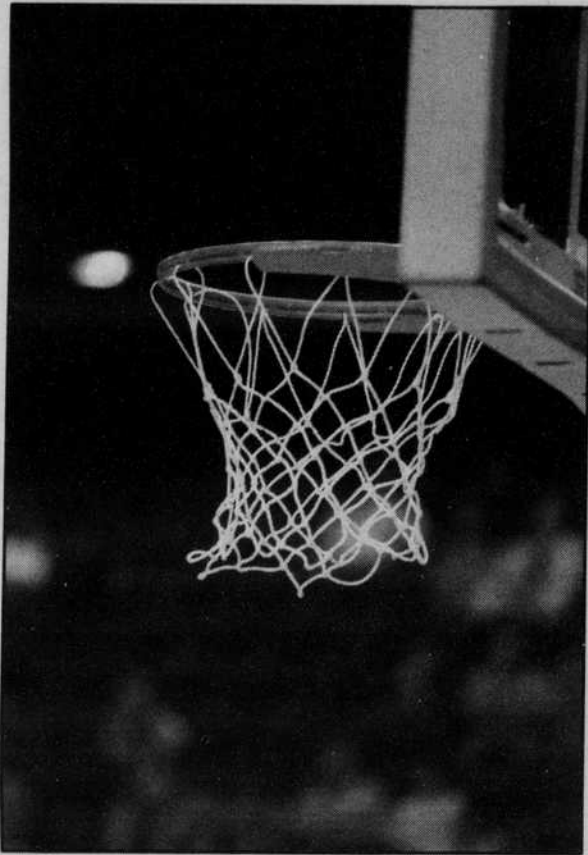


basketball EXTRA



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OREGON DAILY EMERALD

The independent campus newspaper for the University of Oregon

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Johnson promises his best celebration yet this Sunday

BY JOE KAY
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chad Johnson tucked the "Terrible Towel" into the neckline of his shirt, letting it hang like a yellow bib.

"I was eating lunch and I just didn't want to get my shirt dirty," the former Oregon State player said mischievously.

No, the least-bashful Bengal wasn't getting ready to bash the next opponent — he has grown beyond that. But the receiver did have a little tease Wednesday for those thousands of fans who will show up Sunday waving their towels in Pittsburgh.

He's planning to entertain them with his best touchdown celebration yet.

"That is the Steel City, isn't it?" Johnson said. "The first time we played them, we all know we lost. We had some mistakes that we made early

in the game. As far as I'm concerned, we have some things to iron out."

In a tone that amounted to a wink, he continued: "The key word is: Iron out. Everybody remember the key word: Iron."

Heading into what amounts to a showdown for the AFC North title, Johnson isn't deviating from his routine of having a little fun with the next opponent. The higher the stakes, the bigger the stage, after all.

Johnson added the "Terrible Towel" to his locker following a 42-29 victory Sunday over Baltimore, and made sure to pull it out and tuck it in when the cameras approached Wednesday.

Nothing against Pittsburgh.

He praised the Steelers' players and coaches on Wednesday, and conceded that the Bengals need to beat them for

their self-confidence as well as their playoff chances. They've lost to Jacksonville, Pittsburgh and Indianapolis, the three best teams on their schedule so far.

"As far as the rest of the schedule, I don't see any teams that would put us in that mold of 'We are the real deal,'" Johnson said. "Until we beat somebody who has been consistently winning like they have."

Until then, all he can do is have some fun.

"I don't like everybody to think about it being a big game," he said, grinning. "It's just another team in the way of what we're trying to accomplish, and that's getting to the playoffs."

"And, therefore, I'm going to guarantee ... that I won't be stopped this Sunday, either."

Basketball: Hibbert and Green lead Hoyas

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"I'm going to tip my hat to Vanderbilt and we'll go back to work and get ready for Georgetown and the next one," Kent said.

Like the Ducks, Georgetown enters the contest following a loss to Vanderbilt. The Hoyas fell 68-61 at home against the Commodores last Saturday.

The second half, as it was against Vanderbilt, has been the nemesis for the Hoyas. They were outscored 39-25 against the Commodores after taking a

seven-point lead into the break.

Georgetown has been out scored 104-93 in the second half this season but has owned the first half, outscoring its opponents 113-79.

The Hoyas, led by 7-foot-2 sophomore Roy Hibbert, will present challenges for the Ducks inside. Hibbert is averaging a team-high 16.3 points per game.

Complementing Hibbert inside is another sophomore — 6-foot-9 forward Jeff Green — who is second in scoring with 10.3 points per game

and averages a team-high 7.3 rebounds per game.

Georgetown, under coach John Thompson III — son of basketball legend John Thompson, Jr. — defeated Navy 72-49 to open the season and James Madison 73-66 before falling to Vanderbilt.

"Oregon poses a very big test, and that's an understatement," Thompson III said. "They're veteran team and they play well at home."

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Wushu: Routine rule change will benefit Dang

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event. His performance placed him solidly in the top five male entrants and scored him a spot in Hanoi.

The only male representative from the western United States, Dang differs from the rest of his teammates in another way: He is self-trained. Dang acknowledges that not having a coach makes succeeding in wushu more difficult, but the added challenge suits his personality well.

"I learned the hard way, and I'm that much better for it," Dang said.

Learning the hard way includes a rigorous training program, featuring cross-training and other activities to

build fast-twitch muscle and increase stamina. Top physical condition is necessary for wushu because some of the aspects of the routines, especially the jumps, are dangerous. Knee injuries are common and most athletes retire from the sport around the age of 25.

The greatest challenge of Dang's career awaits him at the World Championships and marks the culmination of 12 years in the sport.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. If you asked me four years ago, would I be here, I would have said no," Dang said. "I've wanted it so bad."

Dang will be facing not only other amateurs from around the world but

professional teams as well, predominantly from east Asian countries such as China and Japan.

"I'm the underdog, but I've got nothing to lose," Dang said.

A rule change at this year's World Championships could work in Dang's favor. Instead of requiring all athletes to complete compulsory routines, competitors will now be able to craft their own, suited to their own strengths and style. Dang prides himself on his intensity and the cleanliness of his routines.

"Others concentrate on the flashy moves and don't work on core movements," Dang said. "Core technique — that's my advantage."

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The Other Coast

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