

# Final Season: Andre Joseph

by Jerry Thompson

## "Mr. Energy"

Andre Joseph is a young man who has strong opinions, firm goals, and who is willing to venture out on his own path in life. Most of the schools who recruited him out of Lee Junior College in Baytown, Texas, where he averaged 22.3 points per game were from the South. Joseph said he came to Oregon in order to experience the world and a new life. "When I came out here it was very different, all the trees and mountains, stuff I'd never seen so I wanted to try it out for a couple of years." Although he gets homesick for home in Houston he likes Eugene: "I like the friendly people in Eugene. I'm still not as friendly as most of the people around here because at home you always have to have your guard up. Here they are so nice and friendly you have to speak back to them, but at home



Brian Schapper, BODOGSPORTS.COM

Andre is averaging 12 points a game.



Ducks Illustrated photo courtesy: John Stoops

Coach Kent and Andre both agree he has matured this season.

you walk down the street and nobody says anything to you. Everybody says "hi" here. Joseph has become an ambassador of sorts for Eugene as he encouraged prep star Chamberlain Oguchi from Houston to sign with the Ducks, which he did in November.

Andre's mother Ann was a single parent who worked full-time and with the help of Andre's two older brothers raised Andre "in the hood" in Houston. Andre said it was "tough". He acknowledges that's one of the reasons for the past few years he has had a goal of someday owning a day care. "Whenever I start making some money I plan on investing in it."

Another of Andre's dreams may be more difficult than owning the day care

center. He wants to help the Ducks get to the final four in San Antonio which would be pretty close to home for him. "If we play unselfishly and pass the ball and play good defense I don't think there are many teams out there who can beat us. Coach wants all our shots off the pass, or assists. If we can do that we can go a long way." He said he doesn't have any personal goals other than to go out and play hard every night.

As with most junior college transfers, Joseph's time at Oregon has been a learning experience. "I learned a lot about basketball. Here there's a lot of plays, reading screens, when to shoot and not to shoot. There's a lot more to the game than I thought there was before I got here. I've really learned a lot since I've got here." He said he has learned to "keep his head" instead of "just losing it" as he did last year in a game against the Huskies in Seattle. "I've grown up and matured a lot since last year. I don't like sitting on the bench at all, but that's something you've got to learn. Joseph said not getting to start last year helped him work out harder this summer to earn a starting role. Andre has worked hard in the classroom also as he plans on graduating early in March. That's a big thing that my mother is looking forward to and I'm looking forward to it too. Of all his classes his favorite has been a sign language class. "I love sign language, it's pretty tight."

Coach Kent said that Andre is "on the verge of having an excellent basketball season."

Andre defined his role on the team this way: "My role is to hit the open jump shot, make the right entry passes to the posts and try to play unselfishly as a team. On defense it's to shut down or contain the other team's "go-to" players. Joseph said he takes more pride on his defense than his offense. "The biggest thing on defense is that we use Andre to bring us energy to the floor. Typically he picks up the point guard, not necessarily the best player, but he's capable of playing the point guard, the shooting guard, or a big wing even for that matter. We just look for his energy and his hustle on the defensive end of the floor and his toughness," coach Kent explained.

Joseph is of course a potent offensive player who can drive, hit the mid-range jump shot and the 3-pointer. Andre's biggest offensive games were last year when he scored 18 against UCLA and hit five 3-pointers against Stanford. This year he is averaging 12 points per game with a high of 17 against Alabama.

There are a lot of game yet to play this season but Andre's last game at Mac Court is going to be special. One of Andre's older brothers, Sherman moved to Eugene in 2003 to live with him and of course attends all his games. His mother has never been to Eugene. He said his mother doesn't like to fly, but she is going to come out to Eugene with his other brother on senior night to see his last home game March 6th against UCLA. **O**

## MORE ABOUT ANDRE

Favorite Food: **Steak**

Favorite Movie: **Scarface**

Favorite Actor:

**Al Pacino**

Funniest Teammate:

**Aaron Brooks**

On my wall I have a poster of:

**Kobe Bryant**

Favorite TV Show:

**ESPN's SportsCenter**

Life after Football:

**Own a day care center**

Favorite Pro Player:

**Kobe Bryant**

Most Influential People:

**My brothers & my mother Ann**

If I was stranded on an island, I'd like to be with... :

**Halle Berry**

On my wall I have a poster of:

**Kobe Bryant**

What I like about Eugene:

**The people are friendly**

Dream Play:

**At the Final Four... throw the ball off the backboard to myself for dunk.**

EUGENE WEEKLY'S WINTER 2004

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