

# The McGee twins: Tall and talented

By Ulysses Tucker, Jr.

It's not often that a brother six-foot-six receives the opportunity to meet a sister standing tall at 6 foot 3, but can you imagine meeting two of them?

"The McGee twins," Pam and Paula, better known as "amazing," traveled to Portland recently to participate in the Giusti Tournament of Champions with the University of Southern California women's basketball squad.

U.S.C.'s only loss of the season came in their first contest against Old Dominion 73-56, but the Trojanettes bounced back to clobber Brigham Young University 102-79 and Portland State 108-61 to set a Giusti Tournament scoring record. U.S.C., 8-1, also took home a fourth place trophy and the Sportsmanship Award which should be "Sportsomenships."

At Northern High School in Flint, Michigan, "The McGee twins" led their school to two consecutive state championships, while establishing a 48-0 record. Both were named to almost every high school All-

American team, and both should receive similar honors during their tenure at U.S.C.

The loss suffered to Old Dominion was the first one experienced by the "twins" in the last two years. When questioned about their biggest adjustment to college life, both were articulate and warm with their answers.

"Being away from home has been one of my biggest adjustments," said Paula. "It took me about three months to get use to Los Angeles which is nothing like Flint. The people here are a lot different than the ones back home and I had to get use to it. As far as basketball is concerned, the players are much bigger and stronger than in high school." Paula received a black eye in the victory over BYU also.

Most of Pam's adjustment came in the area of academics. "In college, there's no such thing as slacking off once you get ahead in your classes. You have to study, study and study because the professors are harder on athletes. It was hard at first, but I seem to be doing well in class."

How would you rate the Giusti Tournament?

"I liked it," said Paula. "Our team picked up some valuable playing experience against Old Dominion. They showed us what it takes to be Number One in the country. It's a very prestigious tournament." U.S.C., has been ranked as high as tenth in some coaches polls.

"I enjoyed it too," said Pam. "But I didn't do well. I know it shouldn't happen, but after losing to Old Dominion it affected me mentally." Paula came into the tournament averaging 25.0 points a contest and had games of 13, 22, and 25 points. She also had a high game of 17 rebounds against Portland State University.

Pam scored only 8, 13, and 11 points but more than compensated on the boards with a three game average of nine rebounds despite fouling out twice. She sported a 21.0 point scoring clip before the tournament.

Coach Linda K. Sharp, head coach for U.S.C. summed up the playing ability of her two eighteen

year old freshmen.

"Pam is an excellent defensive player and rebounder while Paula is an offensive player and rebounder. They compliment one another," she said. The McGee twins were recruited by almost every college in the United States.

What's it like playing and being together?

"It's fun because we know what each other can do on the basketball court," said Pam. "Off the court, we help each other with advice, feedback, and talk over the fake situations and phony people we meet in life. It's nice having a real person around..." Paula agreed.

Paula then explained how their mother Diana stressed academics over athletics.

"She made sure we knew that there was life after basketball. If we messed up in class, she would make us sit out a game or two," said the industrial engineering major.

"No books, no ball," said Pam. "Those were her favorite words. She was the one who made me realize that I need something upstairs (pointing to her head) to survive in this world." Pam is majoring in physical therapy and wants to work with handicapped children after graduation.

What about playing in the Women's Basketball Association?

"I don't want to play," said Paula. "They do not make enough money for me. I can make just as much money with a degree from U.S.C., than playing in the W.B.A. If the money situation changes by the time I get there, then maybe I'll change my mind. But for right now, no!"

"Me either," said Pam. "All I want to do is get my degree, get married and raise a family."

"She comes in handy sometimes," said Pam. "We look out for each other." The twins are products of a tall family -- their father, the late Jimmy McGee stood 6'3; mother Diana stands 6'2 and younger sister Alayna is already 6 foot at fourteen. They also have a little brother five years old who is destined for height.



Which is which? Pam and Paula McGee of the USC women's basketball team pose with Observer reporter Ulysses Tucker, Jr. (Photo: Steven N. Brenner)

Do either of you discriminate against shorter men? "Yes," said Paula quickly. "I'm naturally attracted to taller men." Pam was less discriminating. "I don't," she said. "I'll deal with them if they are nice but I prefer to have a tall man."

These ladies won't return to Portland until December of 1982 when

they appear in the Giusti Tournament as juniors. But like the winemakers who helped to establish one of the finest women tournaments in America would say, "like a fine wine, the McGee twins will get better with age."

In Vino Veritas!!!!

## Sports Talk

By Ron Sykes  
Sports Editor



Oregon Duck basketball has suffered tremendously since Dick Harter departed for Penn State two years ago. Harter is the man generally given credit for turning the Duck program around and adding excitement never before seen at the "Pit."

Under Harter, the Ducks enjoyed six straight winning seasons, highlighted by a 1974-75 team that won 21 while losing only nine. While Harter laid the foundation, Ronnie Lee and Greg Ballard were the catalysts. These two all-time Oregon greats, both of whom later became All-Americans were the men who made the Ducks go.

Ronnie was the man around whom the Ducks built from scratch, the intense, hustling brand of ball now known throughout the country as the Oregon system. Ballard was the tower of strength who led the Ducks to national contention in a season when injuries were supposed to have left Oregon at the back of the pack. Both Ronnie and Greg were first round draft choices. But both are now gone. And on the horizon looms two freshmen; Fred Cofied and John Cheatham, whom many think will eventually become a la Ronnie and Greg.

Cofied, 6-3, from Upsilauti, Michigan had to choose basketball over football, where he was

recruited as a quarterback by Michigan State. It took a last minute trip by coach Haney to convince the Michigan product to enroll at Eugene. Fred averaged 21 points, seven rebounds, and 6.5 assists in leading his high school to a 21-5 season last year. Big things were expected from Fred and he began his Duck career in high gear. As the starting point guard, Fred has shown that he will eventually be a force to reckon with in the PAC-10.

John Cheatham, the other prize recruit, didn't start as fast as Cofied, but now is starting to jell. In Oregon's dismal 104-64 drubbing at the hands of Southern California, Cheatham was the lone bright spot. John played 28 minutes, shot .500 from the field on 5-10 shooting, had four rebounds and 2 blocked shots.

In his senior year at East High School in Phoenix, John earned recognition from one service as the best player in the Southwest and Mountain State region. *Basketball Weekly* ranked him seventh among the nation's "big" high school guards. So Oregon just may have the stars of the future, and hopefully they'll prove as good as the pair now doing so well at Oregon State.

"If you value a player for being able to shoot down an opponent, hit the boards, pass and lead the break, John has it all," according to coach

Haney. "John comes to us as an excellent athlete. He has good shooting ability, driving skills and is unselfish offensively. John is capable at the defensive end of the court as well."

While the Duck's program is down this year, look for better things in the future. Oregon is loaded with talented young people and need only to mature. The Ducks are only one year away from being a very good team. And while Cofied and Cheatham may never reach the heights that Lee and Ballard climbed, they too, will be a tremendous boost to Duck basketball.

The Seattle Mariners and the city of Tempe, Arizona, have announced a three-year extension of their agreement for the Mariners to utilize the Tempe stadium complex as their spring training base through 1983. The Haushin Tigers of Japan will once again share the Tempe facilities this coming spring.

Remember Dean "the dream" Meminger, the ex-Marquette, and New York Knics star? Well, Dean has just been hired to coach the San Francisco Pioneers of the Women's Basketball League. Meminger, 32, will replace Frank LaPorte, who was fired after his team lost five of their first six games. Meminger is known as a hard nosed coach who demands respect from his players.

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## FROM THE FRONT DOOR

Tom Boothe

From the front door, there are two basic attitudes, positive attitudes, and negative attitudes, or, winning attitudes and losing attitudes. I am publishing the following as a guide example for my readers who are winners and wish to remain so in 1981.

**The Winner:** Is always a part of the answer.  
**The Loser:** Is always a part of the problem.

**The Winner:** Always has a program.  
**The Loser:** Always has an excuse.

**The Winner:** Says I will do it now.  
**The Loser:** Says I will do it tomorrow.

**The Winner:** Sees an answer for every problem.  
**The Loser:** Sees a problem in every answer.

**The Winner:** Sees a green near every sand trap.  
**The Loser:** Sees two or three sand traps near every green.

**The Winner:** Says it may be difficult but it's possible.  
**The Loser:** Says it may be possible but it's too difficult.

Have a good and prosperous year during 1981....A winning Year!!!



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