

Men's College Basketball

Ducks in transition this season with 4 starters gone

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press



AP Photo/Chris Pietsch, file

In this Feb. 18, 2017, file photo, Oregon head coach Dana Altman, center, talks to players Payton Pritchard, left, and Evan Gross, right, during a game in Eugene.

Oregon guard Payton Pritchard is just a sophomore but for now he's charged with leading the Ducks following the departure of four starters.

Oregon is in transition with few returnees from last season's Final Four team, joined by a handful of freshmen and two graduate transfers.

"We are expecting more from him in the ways of leadership, especially through November and December, until we get a lot of guys on the page with what we're doing," coach Dana Altman said about Pritchard. "I think he's going to have a big role, a tremendous role of trying to get everybody on the same page."

The Ducks set a school record for wins last season, finishing 33-6 and making just the second national semifinal appearance in school history. It was the team's fifth straight trip to the NCAA Tournament.

Oregon beat Iona, Rhode Island and No. 23 Michigan to reach the Elite Eight — where the team pulled off a thrilling 74-60 victory over the Jayhawks.

That sent the Ducks through to their first Final Four since 1939, when the Tall Firs won the first-ever NCAA Tournament with

a final victory over Ohio State. The team was bumped from their bid for a spot in the national championship game by eventual champion North Carolina.

Oregon also won a share of the Pac-12 regular-season title and went undefeated at home for the second straight season.

Pritchard averaged 7.4 points per game last season, along with 3.4 rebounds and 3.6 assists.

"I think eventually they'll

blend together and be a pretty good team," Altman said. "But they're going to have to work awfully hard and give up some of the things they think are important, to do some of the things that are important for the team."

KEY DEPARTURES: Dillon Brooks, who averaged just over 16 points last season for the Ducks, was a second-round pick by the Memphis Grizzlies. Jordan Bell also went in

the second round and was traded to the Golden State Warriors. Tyler Dorsey went to the Atlanta Hawks in the second round. Chris Boucher went undrafted but signed a two-way contract with Golden State.

"None of them were projected out of high school to develop like that. But they all worked awfully hard. Because of that, I think they should all feel really good about where they're at right now. Because it's taken us to

90 wins in three years like they did, an Elite Eight and a Final Four. It was a great group of guys," Altman said.

ADDITIONS: The Ducks added graduate transfers in Elijah Brown, a guard who averaged 18.9 points last season at New Mexico, and forward MiKyle McIntosh, who averaged 12.5 points and 5.6 rebounds last year at Illinois State. There's also forward Paul White, who transferred from Georgetown and redshirted last year. Freshmen include forwards Troy Brown Jr., Kenny Wooten and Abu Kigab, and guards Victor Baily Jr., and late addition Will Johnson. Elijah Brown is the son of Golden State Warriors assistant coach Mike Brown.

K80 BOUND: The Ducks are among 16 teams that will play in the PK80 tournament over Thanksgiving weekend. The tournament honors Nike co-founder Phil Knight in advance of his 80th birthday. The field includes five teams that were in the final AP Top 25 from last season, including NCAA champion North Carolina. The Ducks, whose home court Matthew Knight Arena is named after Phil Knight's late son, opens with UConn on Thanksgiving Day.

TROY BROWN: The versatile 6-foot-7 freshman out of Las Vegas was a five-star recruit, and considered

among the top 20 players in the country by the major recruiting sites. He chose the Ducks over Kansas, Alabama, Georgetown and Ohio State. He was among the players on the 2016 USA Basketball men's under-17 world championship team.

OUTLOOK: With the considerable turnover on the roster, the Ducks were picked to finish fourth in the Pac-12 in the preseason media poll. Altman said Arizona is the team to beat. He also offered something of a scouting report for the rest of the league at the conference basketball media day in San Francisco.

"Arizona, USC, both returned a lot of players. UCLA has a great blend of returning players and new guys. Stanford, with all the players they have returning. And Oregon State, they've got four really good scorers and guys that started for them last year, maybe they'll be coming off the bench this year. So to think they could be a surprise team," Altman said.

"Colorado and Utah are always competitive. And Arizona State, their guards, a dangerous team," he added. "And we have three teams that are major transition with Washington, Cal, and Washington State with personnel that they lost. So those three teams are kind of mystery teams."

Gonzaga coming off greatest season in program history

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Gonzaga is coming off the greatest basketball season in its history but apparently that doesn't impress the other West Coast Conference coaches.

The Bulldogs, who lost many key players from a team that advanced to the NCAA title game, were picked this year to finish second in the WCC, behind archrival Saint Mary's.

It's the first time in 17 seasons that the Bulldogs were not picked to win the league.

"It doesn't sit well, but Saint Mary's is a great team," said forward Johnathan Williams, one of two returning starters. "They've been building their program just like the Bulldogs have. We just have to go out there and just prove ourselves again."

Gonzaga broke through all kinds of psychological barriers last season when the Bulldogs (37-2) advanced to the title game, where they lost 71-65 to North Carolina. They had never before gotten beyond the Elite Eight.

But the Bulldogs lost Przemek Karnowski and Jordan Mathews to graduation, and Zach Collins and Nigel Williams-Goss early to professional dreams.

Josh Perkins and Williams are the returning starters, and veterans Silas Melson and Killian Tillie saw plenty of minutes last year. Everyone else is basically a question mark as the team seeks a 20th consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance.

Coach Mark Few has made a specialty the past 20 years of reloading the Zags. This year is not likely to be different.

Jacob Larsen, Zach Norvell Jr. and Jack Beach are coming off redshirt seasons. Alex Martin is a community college transfer, and Rui Hachimura and Jeremy Jones showed some flashes in limited minutes last year.

Also on the roster are freshmen Joel Ayayi, Corey Kispert and Jesse Wade. Kispert might provide immediate help.

Brandon Clarke, who averaged 17 points per game for San Jose State last year, must sit out this season to satisfy NCAA transfer requirements.

The Zags this season did not land a graduate transfer impact player, as they have done in recent seasons.

"It'll be different looking," said Few, who has the highest winning percentage of any active coach.

"It's probably going to

be more face-up and drive, and in some instances (more) perimeter-oriented," Few said. "We always kind of play to our strengths."

Other things to know about Gonzaga for the upcoming season:

LEAGUE PLAY: Gonzaga has owned the WCC for the past two decades, winning 20 conference championships since 1994. But Saint Mary's and BYU have provided solid challenges. Last year, BYU beat the Zags in Spokane, handing them their only regular-season loss.

THE SCHEDULE: Gonzaga has a solid non-conference slate again. They play some of the nation's top programs in the PK80 Invitational at Moda Center and Memorial Coliseum in Portland, Oregon. They also play at Villanova, San Diego State and at home against Utah State and Creighton.

FEW LOSSES: Few has an overall record of 503-113 in 18 years as head coach.

ANOTHER STREAK: Gonzaga has won at least 25 games for 10 straight seasons.

ONE MORE STAT: In the past decade, Gonzaga's .777 winning percentage on the road or on neutral courts is tops in the nation.

Kent says Washington State on pace to be where it needs to be

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
Associated Press

Washington State coach Ernie Kent is in familiar territory as he prepares to open his fourth season with the Cougars.

The team was picked for the third straight year to finish last in the Pac-12.

That's not all that surprising, considering the Cougars lost five of the six leading scorers from a team that finished 13-18 overall and ninth in the league at 6-12.

Kent isn't buying the prediction.

"I had three guys last year that redshirted that would've made all the difference in the world with our program last year," Kent said. "But we kept them on that bench and I'm glad we did because it's going to give us even more depth on this team."

Kent was referring to guard Milan Acquah, forward Arinze Chidom and guard Jamar Ergas, who become eligible this year.

The only returning starter is point guard Malachi Flynn, who averaged 9.7 points and dished out 91 assists last season, starting all 31 games as a freshman.

Other key returnees include Robert Franks, Viont'e Daniels, Jeff Pollard and KJ Langston, who all played between 21 and 31 games last year.

Franks was the most productive of the four, averaging 6.3 points and 3.3 rebounds per game. He dismissed the preseason prediction.

"I don't really listen to the media when it comes to stuff like that," the junior forward said.

Franks called the prediction "just another chip that can be on our shoulder. But at the end of the day we've got to lace up our shoes the same way everybody else in the Pac-12 laces up their shoes night in, night out."

The Cougars lost four starters — Josh Hawkinson, Ike Iroegbu, Charles Callison and Conor Clifford — who combined to score 44.2 points per game.

The loss of Iroegbu makes Flynn the floor leader, Kent said.

"All of that totally falls on to Malachi," Kent said. But he noted that Acquah is expected to help Flynn.

The Cougars will also look for help from transfer students Kwinton Hinson and Davante Cooper, both from Tyler Junior College in Texas. Drick Bernstine, a transfer from North Dakota, is battling an injury but should be ready for the conference season, Kent said.

"With the pieces we have in place, it's difficult for everybody to understand where we're at," Kent said of the last-place prediction.

He pointed to his past building programs at Saint Mary's and Oregon.

"We're on pace to where we need to be, and it's time to make a push," Kent said.

Things to watch as Washington State prepares to begin its season:

GOODBYE TO THE HAWK: Josh Hawkinson graduated after posting the most double-doubles in program history. As a senior, he averaged 15.5 points and 10.2 rebounds per game.

THE SCHEDULE: Kent assembled a non-conference schedule that should help his team. They open against Texas Southern, Seattle and Idaho State before heading to The Wooden Legacy in California. Other non-conference opponents include UC Davis, IUPUI, and Bethune-Cookman. They host Kansas State in Spokane.

PLAYING IN MARCH: Washington State hasn't played in a postseason tournament other than the Pac-12 tournament since the CBI in 2012. The Cougars haven't made the NCAA Tournament since 2008.

THE HOT SEAT: Kent was hired at WSU by former athletic director Bill Moos, who surprised everyone by departing for Nebraska in mid-October. With a 35-58 record in three seasons, his seat might be feeling a bit hotter these days.

SCOREBOARD

Local slate

PREP FOOTBALL	
Friday	No. 15 Stanfield at No. 2 Monroe (2A first round), 6 p.m.
	No. 14 La Salle Prep at No. 3 Hermiston (5A first round), 7 p.m.
	No. 13 Pendleton at No. 4 Churchill (5A first round), 7 p.m.
	No. 11 Echo at No. 6 Falls City (1A first round), 7 p.m.
Saturday	No. 9 Neah-Kah-Nie at No. 8 Heppner (2A first round), 1 p.m.
	No. 13 Arlington at No. 4 Crane (1A first round), 1 p.m.
PREP VOLLEYBALL	
Friday	No. 9 Heppner vs. No. 1 Culver (2A first round at Ridgeview High School), 8 a.m.
PREP BOYS SOCCER	
Wednesday	No. 14 Hermiston at No. 3 Hillsboro (5A first round), 5 p.m.
	No. 16 Creswell at No. 1 Riverside (3A/2A/1A first round), 5 p.m.
	No. 14 Mazama at No. 3 Mac-Hi (4A first round), 7 p.m.
PREP CROSS COUNTRY	
Friday	Heppner at 3A/2A/1A State Championships (Lane Community College), 10:35 a.m.
	Mac-Hi at 4A State Championships (Lane Community College), 11:15 a.m.
	Hermiston at 5A State Championships (Lane Community College), 1:15 p.m.
COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL	
Wednesday	Walla Walla at BMCC, 6 p.m.
Friday	BMCC at Spokane, 6 p.m.
COLLEGE FOOTBALL	
Saturday	Montana Tech. at College of Idaho, 12 p.m.
COLLEGE CROSS COUNTRY	
Saturday	Game 3: Houston 5, L.A. Dodgers 3 Game 4: L.A. Dodgers 6, Houston 2 Game 5: Houston 13, L.A. Dodgers 12

Prep Scores

OSAA PLAYOFFS	
Tuesday	Girls Soccer
	3A/2A/1A First Round
	No. 10 Cascade Christian 3, No. 7 Riverside 2, OT
	No. 5 St. Mary's Medford 4, No. 12 Western Menonite 0
	No. 8 Blanchet Catholic 1, No. 9 Riverdale 0
	No. 11 Lakeview 2, No. 6 Santiam Christ. 1
	4A First Round
	No. 1 North Marion 3, No. 16 Henley 2
	No. 2 North Valley 5, No. 15 Stayton 0
	No. 3 Scappoose 3, No. 14 Baker 0
	No. 4 La Grande 1, No. 13 Yamhill-Carlton 0
	No. 5 Molalla 1, No. 12 Cascade 0
	No. 9 Hidden Valley 4, No. 8 North Bend 2
	No. 10 Valley Catholic 4, No. 7 Junction City 0
	No. 11 Philomath 2, No. 6 Gladstone 1
	5A First Round
	No. 1 North Eugene 6, No. 16 La Salle 0
	No. 2 Summit 3, No. 15 Lebanon 0
	No. 3 Crescent Valley 4, No. 14 St. Helens 1
	No. 4 Sandy 4, No. 13 Silverton 0
	No. 5 Bend 3, No. 12 Churchill 0
	No. 6 Ridgeview 2, No. 11 Marist Cath. 1
	No. 7 Corvallis 5, No. 10 Ashland 1
	6A Second Round
	No. 1 Jesuit 1, No. 16 South Medford 0
	No. 2 Sunset 1, No. 18 Shelton 0
	No. 3 South Eugene 3, No. 14 Oregon City 2, OT
	No. 4 Cleveland 2, No. 20 Forest Grove 1
	No. 10 Grant 1, No. 26 Lake Oswego 0, OT
	No. 11 Glencoe 2, No. 6 West Salem 0
	No. 25 Tualatin 4, No. 9 Sherwood 2
Baseball	
MLB POSTSEASON	
WORLD SERIES (Best-of-7, x if necessary)	
All Games Televised by Fox	
Houston 3, L.A. Dodgers 3	
Game 1: L.A. Dodgers 3, Houston 1	
Game 2: Houston 7, L.A. Dodgers 6, 11 innings	
Game 3: Houston 5, L.A. Dodgers 3	
Game 4: L.A. Dodgers 6, Houston 2	
Game 5: Houston 13, L.A. Dodgers 12	

Football

NFL	
Week 9	Thursday's Game
	Buffalo at N.Y. Jets, 5:25 p.m.
	Sunday's Games
	Baltimore at New Orleans, 10 a.m.
	Tampa Bay at Tennessee, 10 a.m.
	L.A. Rams at N.Y. Giants, 10 a.m.
	Cincinnati at Jacksonville, 10 a.m.
	Indianapolis at Houston, 10 a.m.
	Atlanta at Carolina, 10 a.m.
	Denver at Philadelphia, 10 a.m.
	Arizona at San Francisco, 1:05 p.m.
	Washington at Seattle, 1:05 p.m.
	Kansas City at Dallas, 1:25 p.m.
	Oakland at Miami, 5:30 p.m.
	Monday's Game
	Detroit at Green Bay, 5:30 p.m.
NCAA	
College Football Playoff Rankings	
Released Oct. 31	
1. Georgia (8-0)	
2. Alabama (8-0)	
3. Notre Dame (7-1)	
4. Clemson (7-1)	
5. Oklahoma (7-1)	
6. Ohio State (7-1)	
7. Penn State (7-1)	
8. TCU (7-1)	
9. Wisconsin (8-0)	
10. Miami (7-0)	
11. Oklahoma St. (7-1)	
12. Washington (7-1)	
13. Virginia Tech (7-1)	
14. Auburn (6-2)	
15. Iowa State (6-2)	
16. Mississippi State (6-2)	
17. USC (7-2)	
18. UCF (7-0)	
19. LSU (6-2)	
20. NC State (6-2)	
21. Stanford (6-2)	
22. Arizona (6-2)	
23. Memphis (7-1)	
24. Michigan State (6-2)	
25. Washington State (7-2)	

AP Top 25 Schedule

Friday	No. 22 Memphis at Tulsa, 5 p.m. (ESPN2)
Saturday	No. 1 Alabama vs. No. 19 LSU, 5 p.m. (CBS)
	No. 2 Georgia vs. South Carolina, 12:30 p.m. (CBS)
	No. 3 Ohio State at Iowa, 12:30 p.m. (ESPN)
	No. 4 Wisconsin at Indiana, 9 a.m. (ABC)
	No. 5 Notre Dame vs. Wake Forest, 12:30 p.m. (NBC)
	No. 6 Clemson at No. 20 NC State, 12:30 p.m. (ABC)
	No. 7 Penn State at No. 24 Michigan State, 9 a.m. (FOX)
	No. 8 Oklahoma at No. 11 Oklahoma State, 1 p.m. (FS1)
	No. 9 Miami vs. No. 13 Virginia Tech, 5 p.m. (ABC)
	No. 10 TCU vs. Texas, 4:15 p.m. (ESPN)
	No. 12 Washington vs. Oregon, 7 p.m. (FS1)
	No. 14 Iowa State at West Virginia, 12:30 p.m. (ESPN2)
	No. 15 UCF at SMU, 4:15 p.m. (ESPN2)
	No. 16 Auburn at Texas A&M, 9 a.m. (ESPN)
	No. 17 USC vs. No. 23 Arizona, 7:45 p.m. (ESPN)
	No. 18 Stanford at No. 25 Washington State, 12:30 p.m. (FOX)
	No. 21 Mississippi State vs. UMass, 9 a.m. (ESPN)
Pac-12 Schedule	
Friday	UCLA at Utah, 6:30 p.m. (FS1)
Saturday	Stanford at Washington State, 12:30 p.m. (FOX)
	Oregon State at Cal, 2 p.m. (PAC12)
	Colorado at Arizona State, 6 p.m. (PAC12)
	Oregon at Washington, 7 p.m. (FS1)
	Arizona at USC, 7:45 p.m. (ESPN)
Soccer	
MLS Playoffs	
Conference Semifinals	
First leg	
Eastern Conference	
Oct. 30: Toronto 2, New York 1	
Oct. 31: Columbus 4, New York City FC 1	

Western Conference

Oct. 29: Vancouver 0, Seattle 0, tie				
Oct. 30: Portland 0, Houston 0, tie				
Second leg				
Eastern Conference				
Sunday, Nov. 5: New York at Toronto, 7:30 p.m. (CBS)				
Sunday, Nov. 5: Columbus at New York City FC, 2 p.m.				
Western Conference				
Thursday, Nov. 2: Vancouver at Seattle, 7:30 p.m.				
Sunday, Nov. 5: Houston at Portland, 4:30 p.m.				
Hockey				
NHL				
Tuesday's Games				
N.Y. Rangers 6, Vegas 4				
Detroit 5, Arizona 3				
Winnipeg 2, Minnesota 1				
Wednesday's Games				
Philadelphia at Chicago, 5 p.m.				
Pittsburgh at Edmonton, 5:30 p.m.				
Toronto at Anaheim, 7 p.m.				
New Jersey at Vancouver, 7 p.m.				
Nashville at San Jose, 7:30 p.m.				
Basketball				
NBA				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	5	2	.714	—
Toronto	4	2	.667	½
New York	3	3	.500	1½
Philadelphia	3	4	.429	2
Brooklyn	3	5	.375	2½
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Orlando	5	2	.714	—
Washington	4	2	.667	½
Charlotte	4	3	.571	1
Miami	2	4	.333	2½
Atlanta	1	6	.143	4
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	5	3	.625	—
Milwaukee	4	3	.571	1
Indiana	4	3	.571	1
Cleveland	3	4	.429	2
Chicago	1	4	.200	3

Western Conference

Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	5	2	.714	—
Houston	5	3	.625	½
San Antonio	4	3	.571	1
New Orleans	3	4		