

PAC-12 MEN'S BASKETBALL

2 Ducks, 1 Beaver make first team

EUGENE — Oregon's Chris Duarte and Eugene Omoruyi were named first team all-Pac-12 by the league's coaches on Tuesday.

The senior duo, who led the Ducks to the Pac-12 regular season championship, were two of the 10 first-team honorees and 15 overall named on Tuesday. Duarte was also named to the all-defensive team.

Duarte leads UO and is fifth in the Pac-12 in scoring (17.3 points per game) and leads the conference with 2.5 three-pointers per game and ranks 10th nationally in three-point field goal percentage (44%). The Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, native is one of just three players nationally averaging 17.0 points and 1.8 steals per game while shooting 50% from the field and is the only major conference player to do so.

Omoruyi averaged 16.9 points, 5.3 rebounds and 2.1 assists.

Oregon coach Dana Altman felt Duarte should win Pac-12 Player of the Year and Omoruyi was also an all-conference performer.

"(Duarte)'s been the one guy, he and Eugene, that have been there every night," Altman said. "I think they're both all-conference players. ... There's a lot of good players in the league and I don't want to take anything away from them but I am bias because I've worked with Chris every day and I know how much he meant to our team."

Oregon State guard Ethan Thompson also earned first-team honors on the Pac-12's all-conference men's basketball team.

The 6-foot-5 senior has started 120 games during his career, tying Gary Payton for most starts in Oregon State history.

Also earning mention on the all-conference team is junior forward Warith Alatishe, who was among three honorable mention selection on the all-defensive team.

Oregon State has had at least one player on the first-team all-conference team four of the past five years.

Thompson leads the Beavers in scoring this season at 15.5 points a game. He was OSU's leading scorer in 15 of the team's 26 games. Thompson also led Oregon State in assists and steals.

Thompson, who scored a career-high 31 points against Portland in December, ranks eighth in OSU career scoring. He's among the school's top 10 in career three-pointers, free throws, assists and minutes played.

Alatishe, a 6-7 transfer from Murray State, leads Oregon State in rebounding at 8.4 per game, and blocked shots at 1.5 per game.

USC forward Evan Mobley swept the conference's top honors, winning Pac-12 player of the year, freshman of the year and defensive player of the year. USC's Andy Enfield was coach of the year.

Oregon State returns to action Thursday at 2:30 p.m. when the Beavers play UCLA in a Pac-12 tournament quarterfinal game in Las Vegas. Oregon will play the winner of Washington State and Arizona State at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday.

—The Oregonian

PREP SPORTS

New risk tiers a boon for Central Oregon teams

BY BRIAN RATHBONE
The Bulletin

The wait for Madras and Culver volleyball is finally over.

Tuesday it was announced that Jefferson County moved from the extreme risk tier down to the high risk tier. Meaning, the two volleyball programs can hold full-team practices and begin competing against other schools.

"This is huge — I am just so happy for the girls," said Madras athletic director Mark Stewart. "So many of the girls were still coming (to practices)

and stuck it out. I am excited that they are going to be rewarded for their perseverance."

Under the extreme risk guidelines, volleyball teams were only allowed to have six athletes at a time for 45 minutes. Now in high risk, normal volleyball activities can resume.

"Not totally back to normal," said Culver athletic director Shea Little. "But we are coming back. We are going to keep the remaining schedule, but now we can add some more games."

Much like the Crook County volleyball team experienced

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two weeks ago, it is a fast turnaround to return to contests. Madras and Culver can begin practicing fully as a team

on Friday, then start playing matches against other teams on Tuesday, March 16. Madras is scheduled to host North Marion in its opener while Culver is on the road against Sheridan.

Two weeks behind the majority of Oregon volleyball teams that began the first week of March, Madras will attempt to get the most out of its season, even though it is unlikely to play a full 11-game schedule.

"We will try and pick a few extra if we can," Stewart said. "We will get five and six in. But we are hoping for eight or nine

if we can fill in some slots."

While schools in Deschutes and Crook counties have been able to start their competitions on time, moving to the moderate risk tier on Tuesday brings benefits for those schools as well.

The outdoor maximum capacity rises from 120 to 150 for football and increases from 75 to 150 for soccer and cross-country.

The indoor capacity doubles from 25% capacity or 50 people to 50% capacity or 100 people — whichever is smaller.

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GOLF

A pandemic and a plan

PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan is ready for golf to keep moving ahead a year after COVID-19 shut down the sport

Phelan M. Ebenhack/AP file

Kevin Kisner tees off on the 13th hole during the final round of the Workday Championship in Bradenton, Florida, on Feb. 28. Kisner is among four players on the PGA Tour board who had to work through a plan for golf's comeback from the COVID-19 pandemic.

BY DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. —

PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan keeps the screenshot his daughters sent him as a tease one year ago. Now it's a reminder of how quickly celebration gave way to concern and uncertainty in a week like no other.

The photo is Monahan being interviewed by CNBC on Monday of The Players Championship to announce the tour's new multi-billion dollar media rights deal, while the ticker on the bottom of the TV shows stock prices in the biggest free fall since the 2008 recession.

The cause was Saudi Arabia slashing oil prices amid anxiety over the spread of the new coronavirus.

"Being in a business news environment, it was overwhelming the morning, and here we are announcing our longtime media partnerships," Monahan said. "So it was this juxtaposition of an incredibly exciting, momentous day for our players coupled with, 'Wow, we have something on the precipice of affecting what we're going to be able to do.'"

It didn't take long to go over the edge.

By Wednesday of that week, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. The next day, in rapid succession, the tour went from saying there would be no fans at TPC Sawgrass the rest of the week, to no fans at any PGA Tour event for the next month, and finally that there would be no tournaments at all.

No other sport has a longer season than golf.

"We play virtually every week. We don't shut down," Monahan said. "I was telling everyone that we canceled The Players and hope to return soon. And I had no idea what that was. That amount of uncertainty about when we'll play again is not something I've ever experienced. Nor have our players."

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MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL | PAC-12 TOURNAMENT

Oregon overcomes setbacks to earn top seed; improving Oregon State enters as 5th seed

BY JOHN MARSHALL
AP Basketball Writer

LAS VEGAS — Oregon had to battle through two COVID-19 pauses, injuries to two of its best players and a long stretch of inactivity.

Once the Ducks got rolling, it was tough for any team to stop them.

Oregon closed a difficult season with a flourish, winning its final five games to earn a second straight Pac-12 regular-season championship. The Ducks now head to T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas as the No. 1 seed in the Pac-12 Tournament.

"You know the guys have been through a lot, but they

"You know the guys have been through a lot, but they really came together."

— Dana Altman, Oregon men's basketball coach

really came together," Oregon coach Dana Altman said.

Oregon was picked to finish third in the Pac-12 and got the season off to a solid start, winning eight of its first nine games despite playing without point guard Will Richardson due to thumb surgery.

The COVID-19 issues hit not long after that and the Ducks played one game in a span of three weeks, a loss to

rival Oregon State. Richardson returned against Washington State on Feb. 3, but leading scorer Chris Duarte went down with an ankle injury and missed two games.

The Ducks beat Washington without Duarte and went on a run when he returned, winning 10 of their final 11 games. An 80-67 win over Oregon State on Sunday put them a half-game ahead of Southern California to win the Pac-12 title.

"This isn't the only goal we had; this is part of the journey," forward Eugene Omoruyi said. "We have our next goal now. Just keep cranking out goals, one at a time."

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Ashley Landis/AP file

Oregon's Will Richardson (0) drives to the basket for a layup against Southern California's Drew Peterson during a Pac-12 game last month in Los Angeles.