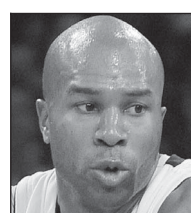


GamePlan

TODAY'S
BEST
BETS

Watch: St. Louis at Ducks
The Ducks will shoot for back-to-back victories when they play the Blues, who are formidable on the power play. The Prime Ticket telecast starts at 7 p.m.



Go: Phoenix at Lakers
Center Shaquille O'Neal returns to Staples Center with the Suns for their game against guard Derek Fisher, left, and the Lakers. The opening tip will be at about 7:30 p.m.

TALK BACK



'Francisco Rodriguez could have had similar money with the Angels playing for a better organization in a better environment. Have fun being scrutinized in New York, Frankie.'

ROB ROHM
ORANGE



Talk online

We want your comments on sports personalities, games and news. Please send your thoughts to sports@ocregister.com or fax to 714-796-6765. Please keep comments to 25 words.

THE LINE

NCAA Football
Jan. 1
Rose Bowl
At Pasadena
Favorite Open Today Underdog

USC 9½ 10 Penn St.

Orange Bowl
At Miami
Cincinnati 11 Virginia Tech

Jan. 2
Sugar Bowl
At New Orleans
Alabama 10½ 10½ Utah

Jan. 5
Fiesta Bowl
At Glendale, Ariz.
Texas 11½ 10 Ohio St.

Jan. 8
BCS Championship Game
At Miami
Florida 1½ 3 Oklahoma

NFL
Thursday
Favorite Open Today Underdog

at Chicago 3 3 New Or.

Sunday
Green Bay 2½ 2½ at J'ville

at Indy 17½ 17 Detroit

Wash. 7 6½ at Cin.

at Atlanta 3 3 Tam. Bay

at Miami 6 6½ San Fran.

at St.L. OFF OFF Seattle

at NYJ 7 7 Buffalo

Tenn. 3 3 at Houston

at Balt. Pk 1½ Pitt.

at Carolina 7 7½ Denver

San Diego 4½ 5 at Kan. City

at Arizona OFF OFF Minn.

New Eng. 8 7 at Oakland

at Dallas 3 3 NYG

Monday
at Philadelphia 14 14 Cleveland

NCAA Basketball
Favorite Line Underdog

at Xavier 14 Ohio

at Utah 7 Cal

at Arizona 5½ San Diego St.

Gonzaga 2 at Wash. St.

NBA
Favorite Line Underdog

at Lakers 11 Phoenix

at Toronto 5 Indiana

at New Jersey 7½ New York

Cleveland 6 at Phila.

at Okla. City Pk Memphis

at New Orleans 13 Charlotte

at San Antonio 9½ Atlanta

at Denver 13 Minnesota

at Golden St. 2 Milwaukee

TOP OF THE 2ND



JOSHUA SUDOCK, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

'I would like to see them increase the distance of 3-pointers,' former UCLA coach John Wooden said about today's college game. He'd also like to see the rims raised a bit.

Wooden still floating ideas

What do you ask the greatest college basketball coach in history, a living legend who has graced our planet for nearly a century?

John Wooden probably has heard and answered more dumb questions than he would care to remember, so I was hoping one of mine Tuesday — though admittedly off the wall — didn't fall into that category.

So, very carefully and reverentially, I framed the question during a conference call with Coach Wooden to promote Saturday's 15th annual John Wooden Classic, a college basketball doubleheader at Honda Center again featuring the UCLA Bruins, the team Wooden guided to a mind-boggling 10 national championships in a 12-year span.

Noting that college basketball is still tinkering with the 3-point line, demonstrating it is not totally resistant to change, I asked Wooden if he thought there is any merit to someday raising the 10-foot height of the baskets. (Thank goodness in my nervousness I didn't call them peach baskets.)

I figured it was worth a shot, because Wooden's disdain for dunking has been well-documented and because there are many more 7-footers — and 6-footers who actually can out-leap centers — than there used to be.

To my great relief, he answered without hesitation.

"I have thought a little about that," Wooden said, mentioning the "increased physical abilities" and jumping skills of today's athletes. "I'd like to see it tried. Don't know how much they should raise them, but I think it (elevating the rims) would be better than it is today."

How about raising them to 11 feet?
"Not a full foot," he said. "That would be too much."

Wooden also made an unsolicited recommendation to move the 3-point line even farther from the basket (currently, it's at 20 feet, 9 inches).

"I've always thought it's too close," he said. "I would like to see them increase the distance of 3-pointers."

At 98, the Wizard of Westwood — oops, he doesn't like that nickname — still has strong opinions about the game his teams dominated, winning seven consecutive NCAA titles (1967-73) and presiding over

an NCAA-record, 88-game winning streak. Nor does he shy away from controversial topics. When I asked his thoughts on star players who leave college after one year to turn pro — UCLA's Kevin Love and USC's O.J. Mayo did it after last season — Wooden did not mince his words.

"For a vast majority of players, it's a great mistake," he said, saying he preferred the old NBA rule that stipulated a player couldn't turn pro until four years after his high school class graduated.

"If players stay in school, the college (teams) will be better off and the pros will be better off. The players will be more mature and more fundamentally sound (when they enter the NBA). But that's not going to happen again, just because of the money involved. Money rules."

Wooden does not live in the past. He still watches the Bruins every game, either on TV or in person, and he is impressed by what Ben Howland has accomplished during his five years in Westwood, especially "proving how important defense is" for a national contender.

And given the parity in college basketball these days, Wooden emphasizes that the Bruins advancing to three consecutive Final Fours is impressive.

"Definitely, it's an achievement," Wooden said. "I don't think it's happened very often in the history of the NCAA, going (to the Final Four) three times in a row."

Not surprising, Wooden knows his history. Just two other schools have had longer Final Four streaks than the current Bruins. UCLA has the record, with 10 (1967-76 with Wooden and Gene Bartow), followed by Cincinnati with five (1959-63) and Duke with five (1988-92).

As always, he answered all the questions. **2008 JWC:** In this year's doubleheader, St. Mary's (6-1) meets San Diego State (7-1 going into tonight's game against Arizona), and UCLA (5-2) meets De Paul (4-2 going into tonight's game against Morgan State) in the main event.

Tickets are available in various price ranges, including some in the lower level, at www.hondacenter.com.

Wooden said he again will attend the games, practices and the Friday night coaches' dinner at the Hilton Anaheim, emphasizing he lent his name to the event "because it raises a lot of money for charity."

Charity beneficiaries are the Orange-wood Children's Foundation and Special Olympics Southern California.



RANDY YOUNGMAN
REGISTER
COLUMNIST

ON THE AIR TODAY

Sport	Time	Event (D-delay; T-tape)	TV	Radio
College basketball	5 p.m.	TCU at Indiana	ESPN2	
	10 p.m.	San Diego St. at Arizona (D)	PT	
Hockey	7 p.m.	St. Louis at Ducks	PT	KLAA/830
Horse racing	Noon	Hollywood Park	PT	
Pro basketball	5 p.m.	Cleveland at Philadelphia	ESPN	
	7:30 p.m.	Phoenix at Lakers	ESPN FSN	KLAC/570 KWKU/1220 KWKW/1330
Rodeo	7 p.m.	PRCA National Finals	ESPN	
Soccer	11:30 a.m.	Champions League: Real Madrid at Zenit St. Petersburg	ESPN2	

For complete listings, please see TV Register. Satellite times might differ. Check with your service provider.

5 GAMES OUT

Ducks					Kings				
Wed 12-10	Thu 12-11	Sun 12-14	Tue 12-16	Fri 12-19	Thu 12-11	Sat 12-13	Mon 12-15	Wed 12-17	Fri 12-19
STL 7:05 PT	SJ 7:30 PT	MIN 5:05	NYR 7:05 PT	EDM 6:00 KDOC	STL 7:30 FSN	HOU 1:00 FSN	SJ 7:30 FSN	CHI 7:30 FSN	BUF 4:30 FSN
Information: 877-945-3946					Information: 888-546-4752				

Lakers					Clippers				
Wed 12-10	Fri 12-12	Sun 12-14	Tue 12-16	Fri 12-19	Fri 12-12	Sat 12-13	Tue 12-16	Wed 12-17	Fri 12-19
PHX 7:30 FSN	SAC 7:30 FSN	MIN 6:30 FSN	NY 7:30 FSN	MIA 5:00 KCAL/9 ESPN	POR 7:00 PT	HOU 7:30 KTLA/5	OKC 5:00 KTLA/5	CHI 5:30 PT	IND 4:00 KTLA/5
Information: 310-426-6031					Information: 323-224-1448				

USC basketball					UCLA basketball				
Mon 12-15	Sat 12-20	Mon 12-22	Sun 12-28	Fri 1-2	Sat* 12-13	Wed 12-17	Sat 12-20	Tue 12-23	Sun 12-28
PEP 7:30	N.D. ST. 7:30 FSN	GA.TECH. 7:30 FSN	ORU 2:00	ORE 1:00	DePAUL 4:00 KCAL/9	LMU 8:00 PT	MERCER 7:30 FSN	WYO 7:30 PT	L.A.TECH. Noon PT
Information: 213-740-4672					Information: 310-206-3302 * Wooden Classic at Honda Center				

UC Irvine basketball					CS Fullerton basketball				
Tue 12-16	Sat* 12-20	Sun* 12-21	Mon* 12-22	Sat 12-27	Sat 12-13	Mon 12-22	Mon 12-29	Sat 1-3	Thu 1-8
SEATTLE 7:05	MD. TEN 3:35	MO. ST. 6:05	NOR. ST. 3:35	UTAH 7:05	CS BAK. 6:05	MON. ST. 7:05	CSUN 7:05	UCI 7:05	CP SLO 8:00
Information: 949-824-9467 *Missouri St. Tournament, Springfield, Mo.					Information: 714-278-2783				

USC football				
Thu* 1-1				
PENN ST. 2:00 KABC/7				
Information: 213-740-4673 * Rose Bowl at Pasadena				

ALSO TODAY

- Horse racing: Thoroughbreds at Hollywood Park, first post 12:30 p.m.
- Men's college basketball: CS Los Angeles at Biola, 7:30 p.m.

BOXING

Induction into Hall seals Lewis 'legacy'

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CANASTOTA, N.Y. • Three-time heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis says he's proud that enshrinement in the International Boxing Hall of Fame will secure his place in the sport's history. "Everybody, when they start something ... always wants to leave some kind of legacy behind," Lewis said. "I've been able to accomplish that. To be put in the Hall of Fame is an accomplishment that seals my legacy. It will always be there in history. People can read about it. It gives me great pride."

Lewis headlined the 2009 induction class announced Tuesday and will enter in the modern era category, along with American bantamweight champion Orlando Canizales and South African junior-lightweight champion Brian Mitchell. Posthumous honorees included middleweight champion William "Gorilla"

Jones, welterweight champion "Mysterious" Billy Smith and middleweight champion Billy Soose in the Old-Timer Category. Nineteenth-century American heavyweight champion Tom Hyer was recognized in the Pioneer Category.

Inductees were voted in by members of the Boxing Writers Association and a panel of international boxing historians. The induction ceremony will be held June 14.

Lewis, 43, retired in 2003 with a record of 41-2-1, including 32 KOs, and enters the hall in his first year of eligibility.

"He definitely belongs in the top six heavyweights of all-time and would have been a threat to any heavyweight champion in history because of his size, his balance and his all-around skill," said Hall of Fame trainer Emanuel Steward, a 1996 inductee. "Lennox Lewis could do whatever he had to do to win a fight. He was a very diversified heavyweight champion."

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