



OSU men's basketball: Beavers happy to still be playing

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Oregon State has a litany of answers as to why to keep its season going.

The Beavers have lost seven of their last 10 games to go from 13-8 overall and 5-4 in the Pac-12 men's basketball standings to falling all the way to the College Basketball Invitational and a home game against Radford at 7 p.m. Wednesday.

The disappointment has been plenty of motivation, even if the 16-team CBI is a third-rate tournament. Continuing the season gives OSU's seniors a chance to continue their careers. It also allows the younger players a taste of postseason play.

"You could pick a reason. I'm just glad they wanted to play," coach Craig Robinson said Monday before his team's third practice following last Wednesday's loss to Oregon in the first round of the Pac-12 tournament in Las Vegas.

"Sometimes you feel like you're done playing with a group when the season's over. With this group I really didn't feel that way. I wanted to keep playing, still keep playing and enjoy these guys before they're gone."

The Beavers (16-15) defeated four of the six Pac-12 teams selected to the NCAA tournament and went down to the wire before losing to Arizona, which was given a No. 1 seed.

But OSU also lost twice to Washington (17-15). The Beavers had a 12-point second-half lead in a road loss to the Huskies and got blown out at home.

"We felt like we fell short of our goal. Now we feel like we're just as good as the teams that made the tournament," senior Angus Brandt said.

Brandt is the lone OSU player to be competing in his third CBI, with the Beavers having played in the tournament in 2010 and 2012. OSU won the CBI in 2009, Robinson's first season as head coach.

Brandt says the experience, regardless of the level of competition, is good for his younger teammates. Eight will be on a collegiate postseason tournament roster for the first time.

"You're still playing postseason ball. You're still playing games down the stretch. You're still learning to play with tired legs," Brandt said.

Robinson says getting up for such a game could be an issue. But he doesn't expect it to be one for his team.

He's more concerned about his players being tired from studying for and taking semester finals this week.

Junior forward Eric Moreland could be in his final stretch in the program, should he opt to leave school early and test the NBA waters.

It's a path he considered last year but ultimately decided to return to Oregon State.

Moreland is taking a positive outlook on the rest of the season, knowing he and his teammates can do nothing about the past.

"This is what we earned and we've just got to deal with it," he said. "None of us wanted to be in it, the CBI, we all wanted to be in higher tournament. We're just going to go out and play hard and give it what we've got."