

Oak Ridge's Ryan Anderson lifts weights next to trainer Patrick Gallagher at Pure Athletics in El Dorado Hills. The 6-foot-10 forward led the Trojans to the state Division II title last season.

Sacramento Bee/  
Kevin German

# HIS PHONE IS RINGING OFF THE HOOK

## Oak Ridge's Anderson draws attention of major college programs

By Jimmy Spencer  
BEE SPORTS STAFF

The phone is ringing. Over and over again.

Just as it has all summer.

Another salesman is calling for Ryan Anderson.

"How are you doing?" the voice asks. "How's school going?"

Quickly, the salesman makes his pitch.

"We're interested in you."

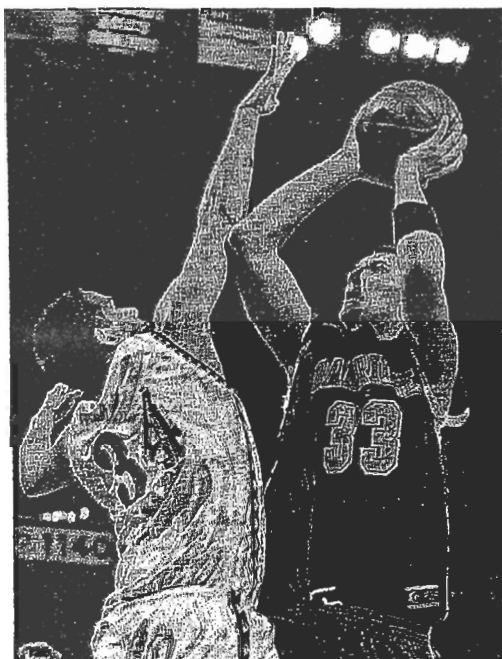
College basketball coaches from across the nation have been calling for Anderson, each making his own pitch to sell the 6-foot-10 Oak Ridge power forward on his program.

"A lot of coaches have been calling. It's pretty overwhelming," Anderson said with a laugh.

Anderson's stock skyrocketed last season, when he led Oak Ridge to the California Interscholastic Federation Division II state title. The Trojans finished 31-4, with Anderson leading the way with 17.4 points and 9.1 rebounds per game. The barometer continues to climb after an exhaustive summer of hoops.

Now a senior, Anderson has received scholarship offers from 17 colleges, including Arizona State, Cal, Miami, Pacific, St. Mary's, USC, Vanderbilt and West Virginia. Many other programs told Anderson that a scholarship wouldn't be offered until Anderson makes his official visit to the school.

Other phone calls have come from big-name programs, such as Arizona, Connecticut, Maryland and Wake Forest. Anderson said the call from Arizona coach Lute Olson most caught him off guard and that the gifted teen is still a little star-struck.



Ryan Anderson (33), who averaged 17.4 points and 9.1 rebounds last season, has received scholarship offers from 17 colleges.

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Brian Baer

"It was just really cool," said Anderson, who follows the Wildcats. "It was just awesome that such a high-status coach would want to talk to me."

As a big man with the ability to run and shoot, Anderson has always received attention.

But it really began after Oak Ridge's run to the Division II state title last season. In the championship game at Arco Arena, the Trojans pulled off a 60-44 upset of Mater Dei, the seventh-

ranked team in the nation by USA Today entering the game. Anderson scored 15 points, had 12 rebounds and dominated the inside defensively.

As a result, Anderson was named the Division II Northern California Player of the Year by the NorCal Preps Web site.

The recognition continued to grow as Anderson participated in basketball camps throughout the summer, including college camps at Pacific, UCLA

USC and USF. He also participated in the Sacramento Professional Developmental League, the Big Time Tournament in Las Vegas, the Double Pump West Coast All Star Camp in Los Angeles and the Best of Summer Tournament in Los Angeles.

"It was really cool to play against amazing players," Anderson said. "I felt like I kept up with them, and they treated me like I was just another player like them."

The summer has been hectic, but even as Anderson flew from camp to camp, he always remained grounded. Despite all the accolades and compliments in each coach's sales pitch, Anderson has not let it go to his head.

In that he has some help.

"Part of my role as a dad is to look at what kind of person he is," Jack Anderson said. "I have been remarkably pleased at how humble he is at this whole thing. I don't sense any kind of an ego or arrogance."

He doesn't enjoy talking about himself; he'd rather let his game take care of that. Even when asked which NBA player's game he best resembles, he stutters with the slightest bit of nervousness and then throws out Dirk Nowitzki, the Dallas Mavericks' big man with perimeter skills.

His Nowitzki comparison might be right on. Oak Ridge coach Steve Scott touted Anderson's ability to play strong around the basket but also as a guy who can slow down on transition and hit a perimeter jumper.

"I think that's what has helped me in getting noticed by colleges. A lot of big men can't shoot very well," Anderson said.

Not bad for someone who was



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Ryan Anderson joins, from left, Alicia Jenkins, Anna Schoener and Dianne Nelson for workouts with trainer Patrick Gallagher, right.

## Anderson: He takes pal's barbs seriously

► FROM PAGE G8  
picked on in junior high for having such a funky-looking shot.

"I remember I couldn't shoot at all," he said. "I had bad form."

It was Ryan Moya, Anderson's teammate from last season's championship team and a junior high classmate, who let him know how ridiculous he looked shooting the ball from his chest.

"He just totally made fun of my shot. So I changed it. Because of him, I changed it."

It was emblematic of Anderson's future — always listening and adjusting to any type of advice. After all, his ability to be coached is part of the package that makes him so desirable to colleges.

So there would be no reason

to expect things would be any different while he decides where to go to school. Anderson, whose GPA is 3.0, will listen to all of life's different advisers: friends and teammates, parents and coaches.

He won't make a decision until he has visited the various campuses and begins to weigh playing time, program prestige and location. He'll start his visits in early September with trips to Cal and USC.

But for now he'll just sit back and smile, listening to all of his many options.

They're all interested in the product, so it's just matter of who makes the best pitch.

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The Bee's Jimmy Spencer can be reached at (916) 326-5549 or [jspencer@sacbee.com](mailto:jspencer@sacbee.com).