**Ekpe Udoh pushes own book club**

MILWAUKEE -- Ekpe Udoh will leave one positive lasting impression from this dreary season with the Milwaukee Bucks, and it has nothing to do with basketball.

Few, if any, NBA players can say they've started a book club on Twitter. Fewer still probably cite entertainment magnate Oprah Winfrey as a role model.

Udoh, a four-year NBA veteran, is thinking big.

"I want to be like Oprah. I want to be like Oprah's book club," the Bucks forward said Tuesday. "I'll get there. It might take me a couple years, but I'll get some buzz going."

He's off to a decent start in a relatively short time.

Udoh, drafted by Golden State with the sixth pick in the 2010 draft out of Baylor, said he started getting into reading last summer. At one point, Udoh said, someone mentioned in passing to him about starting a book club. He got it going during training camp in the fall.

"It was a spur of the moment thing," Udoh said.

Udoh buys the book selections for the first 25 people who sign up through a link he distributes on Twitter. Others can still take part in the discussion on Twitter -- lately, it has taken place on Tuesday evenings, when the Bucks are usually idle -- by using "Ekpesbookclub" as a hashtag.

Discussion on the club's fourth selection, the best-seller "The Fault in Our Stars" by John Green, was scheduled to finish up on Twitter on Tuesday night. Selections are made in consultation with the public relations staff of the Bucks -- though Udoh said the book club idea belonged to him.

Once a selection is made, he asks readers to get through about 80 pages a week ahead of the next online discussion. Sometimes, Udoh starts things off with a question. Other times, he'll just let participants guide the direction of the dialogue.

"For the most part, it gets intense," Udoh said.

The thriving book club seems to be a welcome distraction for the well-spoken Udoh during what has been a difficult season. At 15-66, the Bucks have clinched the league's worst record headed into their finale Wednesday at home against the Atlanta Hawks.

Udoh has played in just 42 games, averaging 3.4 points. He has been bothered by knee and ankle injuries. He's headed to California for rest and relaxation after the season.

After decompressing, he'll get right back into the book club.

Udoh plans to spend the summer in Dallas, so he's thinking about taking his book club into a public high school. He's also pondering whether to organize an in-person book club meeting in which the most active participants would be invited, along with possibly one of the authors for his book club selections, or a related speaker.