

Women fall to Mizzou

Ducks have unfit ending to otherwise great year

By Steve Turcotte
Of the Emerald

It's not the way the script was supposed to end. It was supposed to end with victory, celebration and a last-game win for Bev Smith at Mac Court.

But somebody forgot to tell that to the Missouri Tigers.

The Tigers, a tough squad from the Big 8 Conference, came calling to McArthur Court Saturday night for an NCAA rendezvous with Oregon's Ducks. Before a crowd of more than 5,000, Oregon lost to the Tigers 59-53.

"My heart really goes out to the community," said Smith, who played her last game at McArthur Court in a Duck uniform. "It's a tough way to go out, especially losing in Mac Court."

As a result of the loss, Smith's record as a Duck in Mac Court dropped to a still-incredible 40-1 vs. collegiate teams.

After the game, a couple of people were quick to take responsibility for the loss.

"I don't think I got everybody prepared enough," said Oregon Coach Elwin Heiny. "I'll take the blame. I thought we were going to win. We might have been overconfident. I don't think we were excited enough all last week."

"I take a lot of the responsibility," said Smith, who suffered through one of her worst nights, going 2-for-16 from the floor. "If some of my shots would have fallen things would have been different."

Two aspects of the game which cost the Ducks were field goal shooting and turnovers. In the first half alone, the Ducks shot just 6-of-21 from the floor and committed 19 turnovers. But Missouri was not overwhelming either. The Tigers hit on only 12-of-45 from the floor but had only nine turnovers and 10 steals.

The lifeline to Oregon's winning and losing is the Bev Smith-Alison Lang connection — a connection which did not appear Saturday night.

Lang managed 24 points and 20 rebounds, but Smith scored only nine points — only the second time in her career where she has dipped below double digits. Smith managed eight rebounds.

In the first half of the playoff game, Oregon took the first lead at 2-0 on a Smith jumper, but that was to be their last lead for a long time, while Missouri, behind offensive rebounds, quickly got ahead and maintained that advantage throughout the first half.

"We didn't shoot well at all," moaned Missouri coach Joann Rutherford. "Both teams shot poorly."

"I think the key to the game was that we stopped Bev Smith at key times. We also stopped Alison Lang at key times I thought."

Missouri, midway through the second half,



Oregon senior Bev Smith's final game was the first counting contest in which the all-American played and lost in Mac Court, as the Ducks lost their first round NCAA tournament game to Missouri, 59-53.

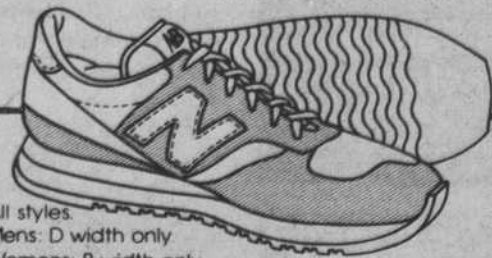
looked as if they may blow the Ducks out of the gym.

Leading 36-33 with 12:48 left in the game, the Tigers proceeded to score the next four points. First Debbie Walker hit a jump shot to make it 38-33 and then Joni Davis scored on an offensive rebound to make it a seven-point Tiger lead.

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