

Sports

Struggle Continued from Page 12

Junior Anthony Taylor, the Ducks' leading scorer with a 21.4 average, was off target in the first half shooting an uncharacteristic one of nine.

"I tried not to let it get to me, and I just kept shooting," said the 6-foot-4 guard of his first-half performance. "At times I think I took good shots that just weren't falling, and at times I just didn't attack the basket and wasn't very aggressive."

But Taylor wasn't the only one who was lacking aggression. The entire team played "tentative and cautious in a lot of situations," Monson said after the game.

The only bright spot for the Ducks in that first half was forward Keith Balderston, who was two of three from the floor and grabbed seven of Oregon's 17 rebounds.

Then came the onset of the second half, in which Oregon showed its desire to take control of the game.

"We decided among ourselves that we had to get it done right at the start and jump on them...and not let them dictate how we were going to play," Girley said.

The Ducks scored the first 11 points of the second half, storming out to take a 38-29 advantage.

Taylor canned a jumper and then made a layup after a Jesse Nash steal and a Girley assist in the opening 55 seconds, forcing WSU to call a timeout.

The timeout didn't even phase the Ducks as Nash and Taylor converted two free throws a piece and then Nash stole the ball again and scored on an easy layup.

Greg Senior hit the front end of a pair of free throws before the Cougars' Brian Wright went all the way for a dunk that sparked a rally for the visitors.

WSU went inside to do the damage, with forward Dwayne Scholten and center Todd Anderson scoring four and three points, respectively, to bring the Cougars within two, 40-38.

Both teams exchanged buckets before Taylor went on a surge to score 11 consecutive points for the Ducks and keep the hosts on top, 56-48, for good.

Taylor finished the game with 22 points on the night, hitting

eight of 13 in the second half. He welcomed some help from teammates Girley and Nash, who scored 10 points each.

In the second half, Oregon improved on its shooting accuracy, making 10 of 21 for 47.6 percent. The Cougars, meanwhile, hit just 33.3 percent enroute to their sixth straight defeat after a 55 percent first-half effort.

"It wasn't the best effort we've had, but it shows you have a good team coming together when you're not play-

ing your best and you still win," Girley said. "Then we say 'what happens when we do play our best?'"

Monson pointed out that the Ducks have been having a tough time with the second game of the week, something "we've got to get over," he said.

Oregon will get that opportunity next week when they host the University of California at Berkeley Thursday night and Stanford University Sunday afternoon. Both games will be played at McArthur Court.

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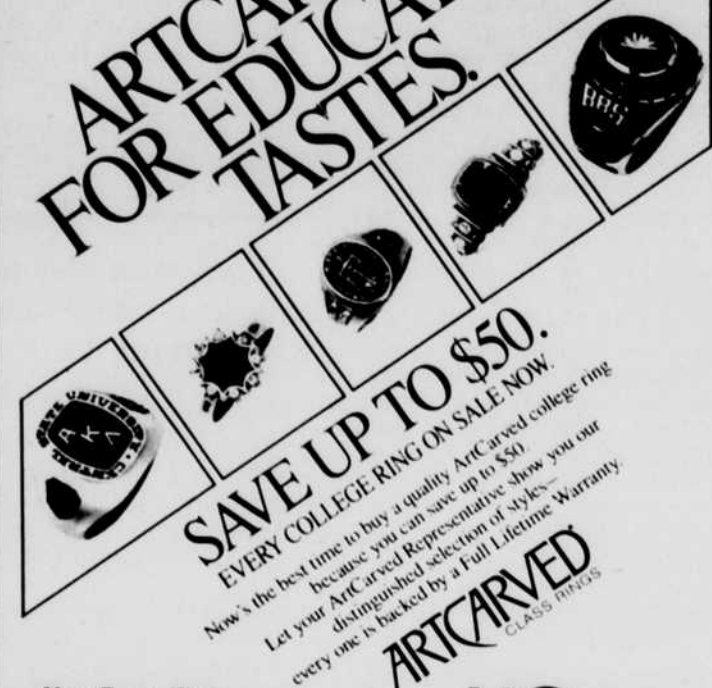


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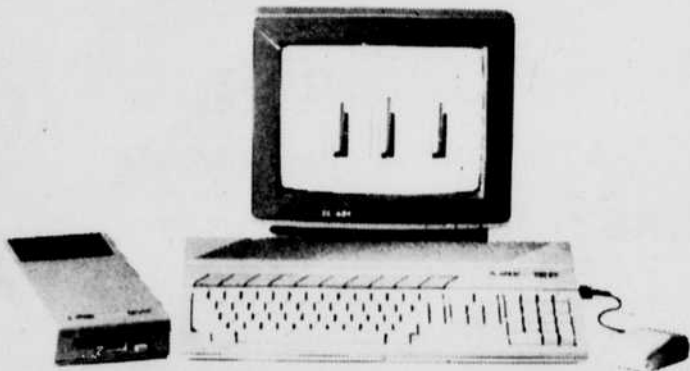
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