

Webfoots switched to zone defense for victory

By Jack Millikin
Emerald Sports Reporter

There's one thing for certain about the Duck women's basketball team after a roller-coaster-ride of a month: The webfoots are sitting on a powder keg.

The Ducks hold in their possession the firepower to turn fellow Pacific-10 Conference teams to dust as they performed a surprise sweep of USC and UCLA last week. And yet sometimes that same destructive capability tends to blow up in their faces.

Thursday's game against Arizona at McKale Center gave the Arizona faithful the chance to see the Ducks in their self-destruct mode as the Webfoots all but took themselves out of the game in a 92-78 loss to the Wildcats. The loss, in addition to deflating the self-confidence

built up by the sweep of the California schools, placed a sizeable question mark between the Webfoots' record (14-7 after the loss) and their post-season tournament hopes.

The Ducks, in Friday night's contest against Arizona State, appeared dangerously close to point zero once again when the Sun Devils led 51-40 with 15:43 remaining in the game. But Duck center Stephanie Kasperski sparked the offense with a career-high 34 points (20 first half). The Ducks turned the tables on ASU to break a three-game road losing streak.

The Webfoots now stand at 15-7 overall and are tied for third place (at 7-4) with Oregon State in the Pac-10, three and a half games behind 10-0 Stanford and one and a half games behind Washington. The Huskies will battle the Ducks next Saturday at MacArthur Court.

Coming into the game, the Ducks had won only one of three games against the Sun Devils on the road, and knew

Pac-10 Women

	Conf	Overall
Stanford	11-0	19-2
Washington	9-2	16-8
Oregon	7-4	15-7
Oregon St.	7-4	13-8
UCLA	5-5	9-11
Washington St.	4-6	11-9
Southern Cal	4-6	8-12
California	3-8	8-13
Arizona St.	2-9	8-13
Arizona	2-9	7-14

that this year's contest at the Activity Center would be no exception.

"Arizona State's key player appears to be (sophomore guard Karen) O'Connor," head coach Elwin Heiny said before the game. "We found out (in the Jan. 14 Ducks/Devils meeting) she's a very complete play-

er and tough to defend. I'm sure (junior center Fran) Ciak will be wanting to do more this time than she did last time against us (9 pts., 6 rebounds in Eugene)."

Indeed O'Connor proved to be the one to stop for the Sun Devils, knocking in a team-high 23 points on 9 of 13 from the field, including four of five from 3-point range. Ciak, in addition, pulled down a game-high 14 rebounds and contributed 9 points to make things difficult for the Ducks. Rosalind Senior, a junior guard, hit six of seven 3-pointers to maintain her conference lead in 3-point percentage (30-52, 57.6 percent) for 22 points.

The Webfoots, given the chance to take advantage of Kasperski's "hot hand", appeared about as close to being a one-dimensional offense as they have all year, as the 6-foot-

7 West German accounted for 45 percent of her team's offense by hitting 14 of 22 shots from her low-post position. Kasperski's weekend performance (55 pts., 21 rebs., 24 of 45 shooting from the field) will undoubtedly make her a candidate to repeat as Pac-10 Player of the Week.

Kasperski continues to lead the Pac-10 in field goal percentage with an even 58 percent. In addition, Kasperski ranks among the conference leaders in scoring (third at 19.2), rebounding (second at 10.1), and blocked shots (leads nation with 4.1 per game).

The key to the Ducks' improved second half play, with help from Kasperski, forward Trina McCartney (5 of 7 from the floor, 12 pts) and guard Brooke Allen (4 of 6, 11 pts.), was a change from a man-to-man defense to a zone.

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