

Kasperski performance paces women

Last-minute free throws ice Sun Devils

By Cam Sivesind
Emerald Sports Reporter

Stefanie Kasperski's 28 points and 12 boards paced Oregon past Arizona State in McArthur Court Thursday in a 83-72 victory.

Kasperski broke Alison (Lang) Robertson's career school blocked shot mark in the process, rejecting three attempts, and giving her a career total of 391. Robertson, now an assistant coach at Oregon, held the previous mark of 390.

Key free throws down the stretch sealed the victory for the Ducks. Oregon hit eight free throws in the last minute of the game, half of those going to forward Trina McCartney.

The Sun Devils were within three at 69-66 with 3:32 left to play, but a couple of free throws and another basket from Kasperski put the Ducks up 73-66 at the 2:47 mark.

A pair of free throws by Arizona State was erased by a jumper by freshman guard Vanessa Selden, and Oregon held a seven-point lead with 1:50 to go. A wide open layup from the Sun Devils closed the gap to five at 75-70 with 1:09 remaining.

"We couldn't put them away even though I felt we should have," Oregon coach Elwin Heiny said. "But I think it's a credit to their game. We would have a brief lapse, and they would throw the ball down the floor and score an easy bucket."

Oregon capitalized on one-and-one free throw situations to grab its biggest lead of the game at 11, a margin they would finish with.

Senior Jacquie Semeniuk put in her usual hustle-all-game effort scoring 16 points on 4-6 shooting, while dumping in 8 of 11 free throws. Semeniuk pulled down 11 boards as well.

McCartney shot a near perfect 8-9 from the free throw line, including the key shots down the stretch, to finish with 12 points. Peggy Swadener, a freshman out of Marist High School in Eugene, came off the bench to contribute seven points.

Senior guard Michelle Eble came off the bench as well to toss in two three-pointers. Eble

is the all-time Oregon leader in the recently added three-point statistical category.

The score was tight throughout most of the contest, with Oregon's largest lead of six coming at 17-11 at the 13:56 mark, and at the break where the Ducks lead 40-34.

The Sun Devils knotted the score six times in the first half, but led only twice with a 32-30 edge at 4:33, and a 34-32 lead at 4:12. The Ducks scored the final eight points of the half for the 40-34 margin.

"They're a good team," McCartney said. "They kept coming at us, and they didn't give up."

The Ducks shot 28-51 from the field for a 54.9 shooting percentage. A 63.2 percent mark resulted from 24-38 shooting from the free throw line.

The game was of vital importance to Oregon for keeping hopes alive for post-season play. The Ducks, now 17-9 overall, still have an outside chance of an NCAA bid, but most likely will get an NIT offer.

"We really want to go to post-season play," McCartney said. "But right now we're trying to take it one game at a time. We really need to do that, because we need to get our continuity and our consistency back."

Heiny was impressed with Kasperski's play. The 6-foot-7 center grimaced up and down the court, playing on a very tender right foot. Kasperski injured her foot against UCLA two weeks ago.

"She'll be hurt for the rest of the season," Heiny said. "She'll probably continue to

play in pain."

If there was a lapse in Kasperski's game Thursday, it was her 4-11 shooting from the free throw line. Heiny believes that is due to the foot injury, since that is the foot she shoots off of.

For the Sun Devils, senior center Fran Ciak pumped in 21 points on 10-14 shooting and grabbed five boards. Freshman forward Jovonne Smith added 12 points, and senior guard Carolyn DeHoff chipped in with 10.

Arizona State made 33 of 68 field goal attempts to post a 48.5 percentage mark, while making just four of 10 free throw tries for a 40.2 percent mark.

The Sun Devils drop to 12-13 overall, and 4-11 in the Pacific 10 Conference.

Oregon faces Arizona Saturday night at 7:30 in Mac Court. This will be the final game in The Pit for three seniors, Semeniuk, Kasperski and Eble.



Stefanie Kasperski shoots over ASU's Jovonne Smith (32) and Fran Ciak during the Ducks' 83-72 victory Thursday night at Mac Court.

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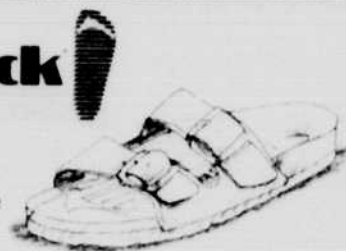


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