

Hungarian women's team sprints past Ducks

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Signs of a changing world. Capitalism in the Soviet Union, German reunification, a woman from Mississippi on a Hungarian basketball team.

She was Ruthie Bolton, the former All-American from Auburn who drove through the Oregon defense for 32 points in Tungsram's 90-87 victory over the Ducks Saturday night at McArthur Court.

"After I finished my career at Auburn, I wanted to continue playing basketball," Bolton said. "Since there is no professional league for women in the United States, I chose to move to Europe. Currently, I'm the only American woman playing in the Hungarian league."

Besides playing for Tungsram, Bolton also plays on international teams for the United States, such as the one that appeared this summer in the World University Games.

Bolton wasn't the only impressive "Hungarian" as the entire Tungsram squad displayed great team speed while running their wide-open, fast-breaking offense. In addition to speed, Tungsram had a slight size advantage, with all five of starters checking in at over six feet.

The Ducks found themselves in a hole from the beginning, quickly falling behind 10-2. Oregon tried to slow Tungsram down with a full court press, but the strategy backfired as Tungsram was able to break the press and score some easy lay-ups.

Oregon used some impressive three-point shooting by Missy Stowell and Peggy Swadener to draw even at 24-24, but a series of Duck turnovers allowed Tungsram to post a double-digit lead. For the game, the Ducks committed 25 turnovers, nearly all of which led to easy transition points for Tungsram.

Debbie Sporcich, the Ducks main offensive threat, scored the last five points of the half to pull Oregon to within six at 52-46. Sporcich, who has the ability to lose her defender underneath the basket, finished the night with impressive figures, scoring 23 points on 61 percent shooting.

The Ducks continued to sputter in the second half, falling behind by as many as 14. Staci Wallenborn came off the bench to spark the offense with 18 points and was also effective in stopping Tungsram point guard Dana Nagy, who had frustrated the Ducks all night with her playmaking skills.

With five minutes remaining, the Ducks still found themselves down by 10 points, but the deficit was quickly cut to four on baskets by Kelly Blair, Cindy Murphy and Wallenborn. With 53 seconds remaining, Wallenborn hit a ten-foot jump shot to close the gap to just two points, sending the Mac Court crowd into a frenzy.

After a missed free throw by Magdolna Csak with 39 sec-

American helps lead Tungsram to 90-87 victory

onds remaining, the Ducks found themselves with the ball and a chance to win the game. Wallenborn took a 12-foot shot from the corner that rolled out.

A wild scramble for the rebound ensued with the ball eventually rolling back to Wallenborn. She passed the ball back to Peggy Swadener, who took a last second three-point shot that just missed, insuring Tungsram of the victory.

After the game, Oregon coach Elwin Heiny said he wasn't surprised with the result.

"About three years ago, I took a Pac-10 All-Star team to Europe and we played Tungsram," Heiny said. "At halftime, we were down by 30 points. Sure, I knew they would be a tough team. Ruthie Bolton was a awesome player, probably the best player we will see all

year. I think she has a chance to make next year's Olympic squad.

"We have been practicing for only four weeks, while Tungsram has already played 30 games this year. I think that was the primary difference between the two teams; they have more seasoned players. I think if we were to play them again at the end of our season, I believe we would win," he said.



Photo by Kim Nguyen
Duck basketball player Staci Wallenborn scored 18 points against the Tungsram, Hungary team Saturday night at McArthur Court. The Ducks lost 90-87.

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