

Ducks triumph in Pac-10 opener

Hot-handed Stoudamire leads inspired team past Cal

By Dave Charbonneau
Emerald Sports Reporter

No matter what happens the rest of the season, no matter what the caliber of the team they played on Thursday, the fact remains: The Ducks are 1-0 in Pacific-10 Conference play.

The Oregon men's basketball team (5-5 overall) jumped out to an 11-0 lead and refused to let California take over as it defeated the Golden Bears (0-1 in Pac-10, 6-5 overall) 67-57 in its conference opener at McArthur Court Thursday.

In the beginning, Cal missed easy layups, made sloppy turnovers and committed stupid fouls, as Oregon crashed the boards, hustled for loose balls and freshman point guard Johnnie Reece went wild.

Reece, starting in his first game of the year in place of injured Andre Collier, scored nine of the Ducks' first 11 points including two three-pointers.

Reece said it was no mistake he came out firing.

"I knew I had to get my shots early," he said. "Jordan (Lydon) is out and he's the one who's usually taking those shots."

Just as the Mac Court crowd started to get rowdy, Cal went on a 6-0 run to make the score 11-6.

Oregon held off the Bears' surge as junior forward Antoine Stoudamire and freshman guard Orlando Williams scored 14 of the Ducks' next 17 points. Oregon went into halftime with a 28-23 lead.

The two teams exchanged baskets for much of the second half with Stoudamire, Reece and Williams continuing to do the bulk of the scoring for the Ducks, and forward Brian Hendrick lighting it up for Cal.

Oregon built a 12-point lead, only to see the Bears cut the lead to six at 53-47 with under



Antoine Stoudamire led the Ducks to a 67-57 win with his 26 points.

six minutes remaining. Stoudamire then hit what was the most important shot of the game.

With five seconds on the shot clock, Stoudamire launched a 25-foot bomb that hit nothing but the bottom of the net to turn stingy Cal away for good.

"I knew it was in as soon as it left my hand," Stoudamire said. "It was a big shot. We needed that bucket, and it got the crowd behind us."

Reece clutched up at the end, nailing 7 of 8 from the line in the final four minutes to secure the victory.

Reece (21 points),

Stoudamire (26) and Williams (13) combined for 60 of Oregon's 67 points. Center Chuck Patterson chipped in with nine rebounds, not to mention his most active game of the season.

"Chuck really flew around tonight," coach Don Monson said. "I don't know where he got all that tiger in his tank ... but that's the most aggressive game he's played."

Thursday's win may not have given Oregon more tiger in its tank, but at least it gave them some much-needed confidence.

The Ducks face off against Stanford tomorrow night at 7:35 at Mac Court.

CONFERENCE

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18-11 Cougars fell in the opening round, but the trip was coach Harold Rhodes' first in his nine-year stint.

A 6-4 record may have Arizona thinking big things right now, considering the Wildcats finished 6-25 last year. First-year coach Joan Bonvicini went 325-71 as 12-year coach of Long Beach State before leaving for Tucson last year.

Cross-state rival Arizona State has earned a

good amount of attention for the team's 9-1 start. Ryneldi Becenti, a junior transfer from Scottsdale Community College, is leading the Pac-10 in assists with nearly eight a game.

Along with Arizona State, California finished at .500 last season. Trisha Stafford, the conference's second-leading scorer with 22 points a game, hopes to change that with the Golden Bears beginning the season 8-2.

But, it seems, nothing in the Pac-10 will be easy this year.

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