

SPORTS

Oregon shoots cold but wins big

By Jake Berg
Emerald Sports Editor

Basketball teams don't win games shooting 36 percent from the field.

But don't tell that to the Oregon women's basketball team. The Ducks did shoot that, but Washington State shot 35 percent and lost, 69-54, to Oregon Thursday night at McArthur Court.

"It was pretty the whole game," joked coach Elwin Heiny, whose Oregon team missed lay-ups and committed 14 turnovers in the second half.

"We got sloppy, but the intensity was there. The main thing is a win."

Call it an upset. After all, Washington State (9-3 overall and 2-1 in the Pacific-10 Conference) garnered more votes in the latest national poll than the Ducks, whose 9-4 and 1-2 records are bettered by the Cougars.

Oregon looked sloppy, but

Washington State was far more messy. By game's end, the Cougars victimized themselves with 33 turnovers. At the half, the Cougars' mistakes showed on the 35-25 deficit they faced, but it changed quickly.

Washington State shocked the Ducks by starting the second half on a 13-2 run that gave the Cougars their only two leads of the game, but Oregon soon silenced them by going on a 16-6 run of its own. The Ducks cruised the rest of the way, leading by as much as 17 before the final score.

Cougar coach Harold Rhodes blamed himself for the loss.

"We didn't practice yesterday, and we played like it," Rhodes said. "We left late rather than pull them out of classes (in the morning). We played like a team that didn't play the day before. It was my fault."

It was also the fault of several Washington natives on the Oregon team. Four of the Ducks' top five scorers played high

school basketball in the state of Washington.

Freshman Jessica Schutt, a Washington native, started her first game as a Duck, finishing with eight points. Schutt's stomach entertained butterflies before the game, but after she scored four of Oregon's first six points, there was no problem, she said.

"I was a little nervous before the game," Schutt said, "but once I got on the court, everything was fine."

Kelly Blair, a fellow Washington native, led the Ducks with 14 points.

Ninth-ranked Washington visits Mac Court Saturday night at 5.

One player not seen on the court Thursday was Oregon's Iesha Smith. The sophomore has been hospitalized since Tuesday in intensive care with a bacterial infection and high fever, but she will likely leave in three to five days, Heiny said.



Photo by John Stoops
Washington State's Kathy Weber blocks a shot by Oregon's Kelly Blair Thursday in the Ducks' win.

UCLA too much for Ducks' good effort

By Jayson Jacoby
Emerald Sports Reporter

Oregon's young and inexperienced men's basketball team didn't play like they were intimidated against second-ranked UCLA Thursday night before an announced crowd of 12,102 in Pauley Pavilion.

But the Ducks did play like a 5-7 team against the undefeated (11-0) Bruins, putting on a gutsy performance before falling 99-71 to the Pacific-10 Conference's most talented team.

The loss, Oregon's fifth in six games, dropped the Ducks' Pac-10 record to 1-2. UCLA improved to 3-0 and gained a share of the conference lead with Stanford.

"They're so confident and they're shooting the ball well," Oregon coach Don Monson said. "It was just too much firepower."

Antoine Stoudamire again led the Ducks, finishing with 20 points and six rebounds.

Tracy Murray paced the Bruins with a game-high 21 points, including 16 points and three three-pointers in the first half.

Oregon was about as overmatched as it is likely to be this year, but the Ducks proved again Thursday night that they won't back down from anyone.

UCLA came out looking like the team that has already beaten the likes of fifth-ranked Indiana and seventh-ranked Arizona this season, scoring the first eight points, including treys from Murray and Darrick Martin.

The Ducks didn't give up, though, and

Stoudamire's three-pointer brought Oregon back to within three at 13-10.

The Bruins then embarked on a 15-3 run to lead 28-13, and Oregon never got within 13 after that.

The Ducks did play with intensity in the first half, forcing several turnovers and handling UCLA's aggressive pressing defense without much trouble.

Oregon just couldn't take advantage of the turnovers, though, and it was the Ducks' unforced giveaways that led to several easy UCLA baskets and a 48-28 halftime deficit.

The Ducks were as close as 16 points in the final half after Stoudamire's three-point play brought the score to 71-55, but Oregon never made a serious run.

The Bruins did a lot to help their own cause, as well, hitting 62 percent from the field for the game, including eight of 18 from three-point range.

Oregon, meanwhile, managed just 42 percent from the floor, and only seven of 23 three-pointers.

Monson knew the odds his team faced coming into Thursday's game.

"The way they were playing, no matter how well we played and how hard we tried we would have had trouble beating them tonight," Monson said.

And he knows the Ducks will have to come back with equal — or better — intensity Saturday afternoon against USC, which whipped Oregon State Thursday night.

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