

# Oregon throws last home game to ASU, 58-48

By Dave Charbonneau  
Emerald Sports Reporter

It was Oregon's last home game of the season, and nobody was complaining.

A dismal crowd of 5,346 watched the Ducks throw away a chance at a rare Pacific-10 Conference victory as Arizona State stormed back from a 10-point second-half deficit and defeated Oregon 58-48 on Sunday.

The Ducks did not score a point in the final three minutes of the game and were outscored 31-13 in the final 12 minutes to keep them at the bottom of the Pac-10 with a 2-13 league record and 6-18 overall mark.

Oregon used a couple of different delay offenses to control the tempo of the game for the entire first half and picked up where it left off to start the second half.

As the Ducks ran the clock down and hit their shots, Arizona State struggled to get a decent look at the hoop. And when the Sun Devils did get a good look at the bucket, Oregon big men Jeff Potter and Chuck Patterson were there to turn them away.

Freshman Orlando Williams hit a 20-foot bank shot for three, and then he and junior Antoine Stoudamire connected on three straight free throws to put the Ducks up 35-25 with 13 minutes left to play.

Oregon seemed to have the upper hand.

"We felt pretty much in control," said Stoudamire, who led all scorers with 22 points. "If we could've made some lay-ins and free throws, we could've been up by 14 or 16."

"Could've." That seems to be a word the Ducks have come to know all too well. The scenario that followed has also become quite familiar to Oregon.

The Ducks missed easy shots, made bad passes and couldn't hold onto the ball, and the Sun Devils climbed back into the game.

Freshman forward Mario Bennett started the Arizona State comeback with a dunk. A three-point play by Wan Versher and a fast break lay-in by Stevin Smith cut the Duck lead to 35-32.

The Devils marched on and eventually took the lead when Smith hit a three-pointer that gave Arizona State a 41-39 lead with 7:20 left.

Stoudamire and Potter both hit one of two free throws to knot the count back up at 41-41, but then the Ducks received their biggest blow of the game as Potter picked up his fifth foul with just over six minutes left to play.

Oregon coach Don Monson knew he was in trouble.

"When Potter went out," Monson said, "it really hurt us. We got soft underneath."

With Potter out, the Sun Devils' big men had no trouble getting the ball inside for easy bas-

kets. Lester Neal's three-point play was followed by another trey by Smith as Arizona State pulled ahead 51-46. Patterson's dunk brought Oregon back within three with three minutes left, but that was the last time the scoreboard would change for the Ducks.

It was a hard loss for the Ducks and a game they "could've" won. Especially considering the Sun Devils were without leading scorer Jamal Faulkner, who was benched by coach Bill Frieder for violating a curfew Friday night.

Williams said the season the Ducks are having could have something to do with the loss.

"When you have the kind of season we're having," he said, "sometimes you forget what you have to do to win a ball-game."

Oregon led 12-7 to start as Potter scored six of those points. Arizona State came back and tied the score at 12 midway through the half.

The two teams swapped leads for the rest of the half, and Oregon led 25-23 at half-time.

Potter had 10 points and five rebounds in the first half but finished with only 13 points and 7 boards.

Patterson, playing in his final game at McArthur Court, scored Oregon's first bucket of the game but scored only once more and had five rebounds.



Photo by Jeff Haskay  
Jeff Potter goes up for a shot in Sunday's home game against Arizona State.

Smith tallied 15 points for Arizona State, and Bennett and Neal added 12 apiece.

The win kept the Sun Devils' postseason hopes alive as they

climbed to .500 in the Pac-10 (7-7) and 16-11 overall.

The Ducks will face Oregon State Saturday

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