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Duck men, women win twinbill at Mac

By Steve Mims
Emerald Sports Reporter

Bob Fife scored 26 points and pulled down eight rebounds to lead Oregon past Alaska-Fairbanks 97-77, completing a Duck basketball sweep on Wednesday at McArthur Court.

The Oregon women's team beat Brigham Young 77-63 earlier in the evening.

The Oregon men struggled with the Nanooks in the first half and led only 40-37 at halftime over their NCAA Division II opponent. The Ducks shot 41 percent from the field in the opening half and made only 10 of 21 free throws.

"Fairbanks was hungry in the first half," Oregon head coach Jerry Green said.

Oregon (2-4) stretched its lead to 12 points four minutes into the second half on a lay-up by Bob Fife, but Alaska-Fairbanks did not give up. The Nanooks cut the Oregon lead to 74-65 with 5:20 left in the game on a three-point play by Kennedy Stephenson, but the Ducks responded with nine straight points to put the game out of reach.

Fife's 26 points was a career high for the 6-foot-11 center, and paced the Ducks. Fife started slowly, hitting only three of eight shots in the opening half, but he came on strong in the second half, hitting all eight of his shots.

"In the first half I missed a lot of shots down low," Fife said. "My teammates told me to take the ball up strong in the second half, and I made more shots."

Orlando Williams and Aaron Johnson each scored 13 points

for the Ducks, and Antoine Stoudamire added 10 points and eight rebounds.

The Ducks finished the game shooting 48 percent from the field, but struggled at the free throw line, hitting only 21 out of 41 shots.

The Oregon women also struggled in the first half, falling behind 37-36 at halftime, but they went on an 18-0 run early in the second half to pull away from the Cougars and raise their record to 2-1.

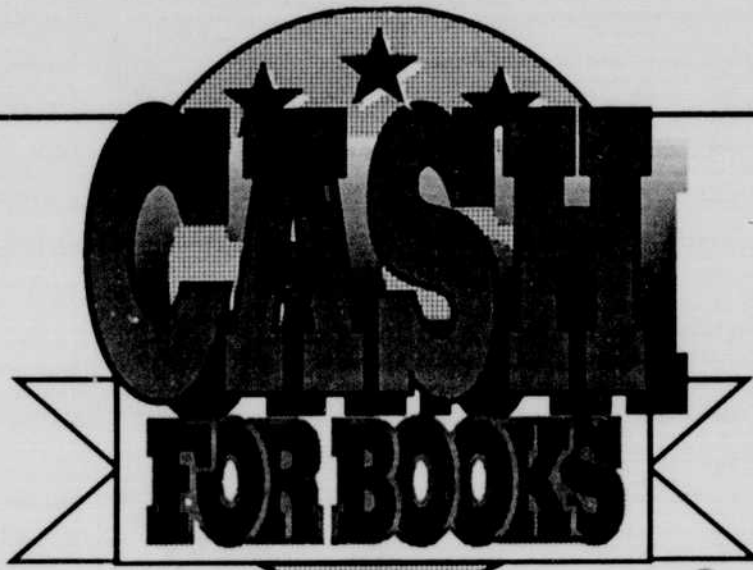
Trailing 41-38 one-and-a-half minutes into the second half, the Ducks held BYU scoreless for almost seven minutes to pull ahead 56-41. Debbie Sporcich and Sara Wilson scored seven and six points, respectively, during the spurt.

Sporcich had a big night for the Ducks, leading the team with a career-high 29 points to go along with 14 rebounds and six assists. She scored 17 points and grabbed eight rebounds in the second half.

Wilson started slow, scoring only five points in the first half, but finished the game with 15 points and nine rebounds. Point guard Missy Stowell added 18 points and four assists for the Ducks, but most importantly committed only two turnovers.

"Our help-side defense sharpened in the second half," Oregon head coach Elwin Heiny said. "We were able to get uncontested shots as they sagged on us. We switched our offense in the second half and went more to a high-low game."

The Duck women are back in action tonight against No. 24 DePaul at Mac Court, and the men are off until Saturday when they face Idaho at home.



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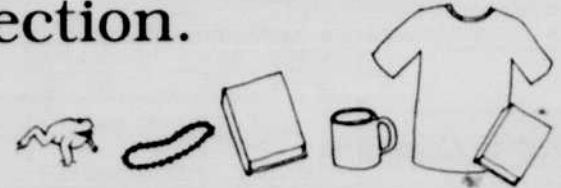


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