

Women beat UCLA, break streak

By Steve Mims
Emerald Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's basketball team saw an opportunity for its first Pacific-10 Conference win this year and refused to let it slip away.

The Ducks connected on 14 consecutive free throws in the final three minutes and outscored UCLA 19-7 during the final 2:56 to beat the Bruins 89-78 at McArthur Court Saturday night. The win snapped Oregon's 11-game losing streak this year and 14-game Pac-10 losing streak.

"A weight has definitely been lifted off of our shoulders," Oregon head coach Elwin Heiny said. "The feeling that we can't win a game is gone. I believe this team can still win some more games."

Oregon took the lead for the final time at 72-71 when Missy Stowell made two free throws with 2:56 left in the game. With 2:07 remaining in the game, UCLA's Laura Collins was called for a flagrant foul when she shoved Oregon's Debbie Sporcich on a fast break.

Sporcich made both free throws, and Sara Wilson hit a turnaround jump shot on the ensuing possession to give the Ducks an 80-73 lead.

UCLA responded with a 6-2 run and pulled within 84-78 when Nicole Anderson hit one of two

free throws with 42 seconds left in the game. Oregon came back to score the final seven points of the game, culminating with Karen Healea's lay-up with six seconds left in the game.

Sporcich led the Ducks with 27 points and added 10 rebounds, eight in the second half. Jessica Schutt hit four three-pointers for the Ducks and finished with 20 points, and Wilson scored 17 points and pulled down a team-high 11 rebounds. Stowell scored 14 points and dished out a career-high 10 assists.

Oregon trailed by as many as eight points in the first half, but cut UCLA's lead to 36-32 at halftime when Healea hit a three-pointer with three seconds left in the half. The Ducks scored the first nine points of the second half to pull ahead 41-36 with 17:38 left in the game. The lead changed hands 13 times during the second half.

The win gave the Ducks new hope for the season and lifted the pressure not to be the first team to go winless in the Pac-10. At 1-10, postseason is not a possibility, but Heiny said his team still has goals to accomplish.

"We are getting better," Heiny said. "We just need to continue to improve. We have our first win, and now we want the second one. We must come back and do it again."

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