



Washington State's Shamon Antrum dives to save a ball in Saturday's blowout of the Ducks. Antrum's efforts paid off as he scored 27 points.

LOSS

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gon was tightly contested on each shot, the Ducks missed wide-open opportunities. As the Washington State lead got bigger, the Oregon rim seemed to get smaller.

The Cougars streaked to a 19-4 advantage to start the game and kept the pressure on Oregon until the first half mercifully ended with Washington State on top, 35-23.

The humiliation continued in the second half as the Cougars advantage peaked at 24 points and the end result was never in doubt. Try as he might, Green couldn't find a combination of effective Oregon players to help control the damage done by an extremely composed Washington State squad.

But, unlike common perceptions, Oregon's season is not over. The loss on Saturday was a lost battle by the Ducks, but the war is still not over. Oregon is tied with Stanford for fifth place in the Pac-10 Conference — still within range of a NCAA tourna-

ment berth.

The Ducks have the rare pleasure of controlling their own destiny, with four of their final six games against teams ranked above them in the league standings. Even with time running out, Oregon merely made it more difficult for itself by losing to the Cougars.

"We have a team that has been through a lot of lulls and loses," Oregon forward Damon Runyon said. "I think if anything, this is going to motivate our team to work even harder and come back because now every game is twice as important as it was, maybe even three times more important."

Eastman agreed with Runyon's assessment of the Oregon team and offered his own advice to the Duck fans.

"This is a helluva year for Oregon and I hope one game for the local people doesn't take away from some tremendous accomplishments that have been already gathered," Eastman said. "This team is pretty resilient, they've dropped a couple but come back strong."

Shooting woes kill Ducks in the end

Mark McTyre
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Ducks put on a show no one could have imagined Saturday. They were not only handed their worst defeat since last season's 20-point blowout against California, they also displayed the ugliest shooting performance in a half — maybe in a game — by a Duck team during the Jerry Green era.

After the tipoff, the Ducks came out of the blocks shooting poorly, as they have in many other games. While the Cougars jumped out to an early 4-0 lead, Oregon was unable to convert on its first five possessions. The Ducks couldn't manage any points until three minutes into the game. And, they wouldn't see another bucket for six minutes.

"Our offense wasn't clicking tonight very well, and we just came out flat," Oregon's Damon Runyon said. "I don't know if it was because we weren't ready to play or what. We have no excuses for ourselves. We went out there and took all of our shots."

While the Ducks stayed ice cold, Washington State kept on scoring. The Cougars did everything right offensively, penetrating to the basket with guards Shamon Antrum and Isaac Fontaine, while pounding the ball inside to Mark Hendrickson. Defensively Washington State attacked the ball on the outside and blocked shots on the inside.

"Oregon feeds a lot from the top, so we concentrated on attacking them from there," Washington State head coach Kevin Eastman said.

After the 13-point surge by the Cougars, the Ducks were finally able to find the basket again, but not until their 17th possession. Oregon head coach Jerry Green had shuffled 11 different players off and on the court before Runyon hit a 15-foot straight up jumper.

With the Cougars holding their biggest lead of 15 points, Oregon finally strung together some hope. Jordy Lyden hit a three-pointer, then Runyon made both sides of a one-and-one, and Henry Madden pulled the Ducks within 10

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— DAMON RUNYON
forward Oregon Ducks

points with a six-foot bank shot. The string of consistency ended there, however, as the Ducks once again were unable to make a field goal in their next six possessions.

"It wasn't their [Oregon's] night to step up," Eastman said.

The Cougars holding a 29-14 lead, with 3:34 remaining in the half, let up a bit on the defensive end in the closing minutes allowing the Ducks to score nine points including three field goals. Two of the field goals made by the Ducks were shot by Orlando Williams and Kenya Wilkins. Williams was held to five points in the half, not making a shot from the floor until the final 1:19. Wilkins was held to no points until he made a bank shot with :02 remaining.

"Just wherever he is, you're no more than six inches away from him," Eastman said of his team's defense of Williams. "Shamon Antrum did a heck of a job and then when you go to your bench you usually lose something. And I thought Chris Griffin was terrific when he came in on Orlando."

The Ducks statistics for the half, which led to their downfall for the game, proved just how bad it got. For the half, the Ducks shot 7-34 from the field (20.6 percent), some 25 percentage points below their average, while from the three-point arch the Ducks were 1-7 (14.3 percent), 28 percent below their average.

"I think it's the worst basketball game we played all year," Green said. "And again, I think Washington State had a lot to do with that."

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