

OREGON (68)

	Min	FG	FT	R	A	P
Hughes	36	4-12	1-2	4	3	10
Curtis	13	0-2	0-0	1	1	0
Wolver	21	1-5	2-3	5	0	4
Bowyer	29	0-2	0-0	1	3	0
McKnight	8	1-1	0-0	0	0	3
Piers	4	0-1	0-0	0	0	0
O'Brien	32	9-14	0-0	3	4	22
Strange	9	4-5	0-1	0	1	8
Dion	2	0-1	0-0	2	0	0
Benson	13	2-5	2-2	2	0	6
Meharry	33	7-15	1-1	8	2	15
Totals	200	28-63	6-9	30	14	68

Shooting: 44.4. 3-point: 6-17 (Hughes 1-7, McKnight 1-1, Piers 0-1, O'Brien 4-7, Meharry 0-1) *four team rebounds

OREGON DUCKS VS. ARIZONA WILDCATS

Thursday's Star

Natasha O'Brien, who was averaging just 2.2 points in Pac-10 games, hit nine of 14 attempts from the field for a career-high 22 points.

Play of the Game

Natalie Hughes hit a 15-foot jumper with 2.6 seconds left in the game to give the Ducks the 68-66 upset of the No. 7 Wildcats.



Quote of the Day

"I can't say enough about how proud I am of this group."

— Jody Runge, UO head coach

Up Next

Arizona State comes to town for a 1 p.m. game Saturday after defeating Oregon State in Corvallis on Thursday.

ARIZONA (66)

	Min	FG	FT	R	A	P
Bristol	28	5-7	0-0	1	1	11
Barnes	33	10-17	7-8	3	1	27
Alexander	30	5-7	0-2	6	0	10
Griffith	29	1-7	0-0	2	3	2
Crank	29	4-6	0-0	6	2	10
Willis	16	0-2	0-0	0	3	0
Minter	18	0-0	0-0	3	5	0
Giordano	17	3-6	0-0	5	0	6
Totals	200	28-52	7-10	30	15	66

Shooting: 53.8. 3-point: 3-12 (Bristol 1-2, Griffith 0-6, Crank 2-3, Willis 0-1) *four team rebounds

FRIDAY

January 23, 1998

SPORTS

Oregon Daily
Emerald

No. 7 'CATS SHOT DOWN

Reserves spark Oregon

By Alex Pond
Sports Reporter

Natalie Hughes, who hit the game-winning jumper with 2.6 seconds left, will go down in history as the hero of the Ducks' emotionally charged 68-66 win over No. 7 Arizona on Thursday night.

There is no doubt about that.

But fans can't forget that long before Hughes' 15-footer swished through the net, starting a wild celebration in McArthur Court, there were two other heroes of the night — two rather unlikely heroes.

First it was Natasha O'Brien, the 5-foot-11 junior forward from West Beach, Australia, who came off the bench and finished with a career-high 22 points on nine for 14 shooting from the field, including four for seven from three-point range.

O'Brien played with a confidence and fire long expected but rarely seen by Duck fans prior to Thursday night's performance.

She carried the Ducks offensively for much of the second half as they clawed back from an 11-point halftime deficit.

After getting eight first-half points, O'Brien scored seven of Oregon's first 15 second-half points.

The crowd of 3,620 fans erupted as her three-pointer from the left-hand corner tied the game at 42 with 14 minutes, 26 seconds remaining. It was her third triple of the night.

She was officially in what shooters like to call "the zone."

"She hit one and that was it, she was gonna look for every shot then," Hughes said. "She was the one that kept us in the game. She was the one that made us come alive."

O'Brien wasn't done yet, though.



NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

Natalie Hughes hit the game-winning shot with two seconds left

By Ryan Frank
Sports Editor

Being a senior, Natalie Hughes wanted the ball in her hands in the final seconds of a tied ballgame.

For Oregon, it's a good thing she got what she wanted.

Hughes nailed a 15-foot jumper with 2.6 seconds left to play Thursday night and left No. 7 Arizona just enough time for a desperation 55-footer that wasn't close.

Hughes' shot gave the Ducks the 68-66 win and sent the Oregon players, and the 3,620 fans at McArthur Court, into a frenzy that ended with a pileup at center court.

"This is a great win for us and these kids," Oregon head coach Jody Runge, whose Ducks won their third straight game and improved to 9-6 overall and 5-2 in the Pacific-10 Conference.

The Ducks, who had not defeated a ranked opponent since 1996 before last week, won their second game over a team in the top 13 in as many weeks and their first over an opponent ranked that high in at least 10 seasons.

"I just can't say enough about how proud I am of this group," Runge said. "They have worked tremendously hard."

The Ducks pushed their lead to seven points, their largest lead of the game, with three minutes, 13 seconds to play. But with the help of two Oregon turnovers that led to four points, the Wildcats used a 7-2 run to tie the game at 66 with 27 seconds left.

Arizona then called its final timeout, during which head coach Joan Bonvicini called the full-court press off. Runge did not draw up a play for the final seconds, but told her team to get a "good shot off."

Following the timeout, Hughes brought the ball down the court, passed off a couple of

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Brianne Meharry celebrates her basket in the second half of the Ducks' upset of No. 7.

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Oregon ready for pair of crucial home matches

The Ducks will face No. 25 Cal-State Bakersfield Friday and Fresno State on Saturday

By Joel Hood
Sports Reporter

Three weeks removed from their undefeated start, the Ducks will try to re-establish themselves as a Pacific-10 Conference title contender this weekend with a pair of critical home matches.

The Oregon wrestling team faces No. 25 Cal-State Bakersfield on Friday and defending Western Athletic Conference champion Fresno State on Saturday at McArthur Court. Both matches begin at 7:30 p.m.



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On tap

■ **FRIDAY:**
No. 20 Oregon vs. No. 25 Cal-State Bakersfield, 7:30 p.m. at McArthur Court
■ **SATURDAY:**
Oregon vs. Fresno State 7:30 p.m. at McArthur Court

Arizona runs wild over Ducks

The sixth-ranked Wildcats held Oregon to 20 first-half points and cruised to an 87-57 win

By Chris Hansen
Assistant Sports Editor

The streak continues. For the 13th season in a row, Oregon lost to Arizona in Tucson.

And it wasn't even close.

The defending national champion Wildcats jumped all over the Ducks from the opening tip and never looked back on way to 30-point victory, 87-57, before 14,538 at the McKale Center Thursday night.

Arizona, No. 6 in the nation, improved to 16-3 overall and remained tied with Stanford as the only two undefeated teams in the Pacific-10 Conference at 6-0. Oregon lost its

bid to get back to .500 overall, falling instead to 7-9 and 2-5.

Miles Simon led the way for the Wildcats, scoring a game-high 20 points on seven of nine shooting from the field and a perfect

five for five from the free-throw line. Mike Bibby scored 15 and Michael Dickerson had 13 — all in the second half — as Arizona shot 55.8 percent from the field.

Oregon's shooting couldn't have been much worse. Part of it was Arizona's stifling defense, which limited the Ducks to 20 first-half points on eight of 33 shooting.

Oregon improved only slightly in the second half to finish the game shooting only

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