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UO men

continued from page 7

you can't just go in there and throw up the ball against a guy who blocks like that."

The Ducks played passionately, they played relentlessly, but in the end they just didn't play smart basketball, as Kent was quick to point out.

"They played their hearts out, but there were segments in this game where we could have played a lot smarter," Kent said. "In the first half we had a 10-point lead and then just turned the ball over with bad decision making.

"And then in the second half we got up on them by five, and then had some unforced turnovers with bad shots and bad passes."

Despite all of that, Oregon was very much in this game until the closing seconds.

Norwood connected on a three-pointer with six minutes remaining to give the Ducks the 68-64 advantage.

After two free throws by Arizona forward Michael Wright, Gilbert Arenas drilled a wide-open three-pointer with four minutes left to give the Wildcats the one-point advantage.

Ten seconds later, Smith answered with a three of his own to reclaim the Oregon lead at 71-70, but they would be the final points the Ducks would score.

This is what happened next: Oregon turned the ball over three consecutive times. Scales fouled out of the game. And then the

Ducks missed five three-pointers in the final minute to secure the win for Arizona.

Just as glaring as Woods' 14 blocks was the differential in free throws. Oregon finished with a measly two-for-three showing from the line, while Arizona connected on 27-of-36. That proved to be the difference.

Leading the way for the Ducks in the loss — which snapped a four-game conference winning streak — was Scales with 18 points, Smith with 16 and Norwood with 11. Scales hadn't practiced all week due to a sore knee he suffered in the UCLA win, but he still came off the bench for 19 minutes of action.

Starting in his place was Norwood, who had previously only scored four points total in conference play. The Tucson native had a big game with 11 points and three assists in front of many family and friends.

"He did a pretty good job to come back here in this environment and play as well as he did," Kent said.

Junior David Jackson also saw action for the first time since Dec. 3, but he was ineffective in four minutes of play.

Oregon must now regroup and get ready for Eddie House and company when they visit the Arizona State Sun Devils at 4 p.m. on Saturday.

"We've got to look at this game as a learning process," Kent said. "Our job now is to focus in on getting the split and going to play a tough team at Arizona State."

Women

continued from page 7

biggest win of the season, narrowed the Pac-10 race, avoided a weekend sweep for the first time since the 1995-96 season and, most importantly, boosted team confidence.

Plus, the Ducks gets the Arizona schools in their house, starting with Arizona tonight at 7 p.m.

The Ducks own the nation's fifth-longest home winning streak, having won 19 straight at McArthur Court. They're averaging a conference-best 4,930 fans per game this season.

"We're glad to get them at home," Oregon head coach Jody Runge said. "They both played really well on Sunday, so [being at home] is a good thing right now as far as our confidence and playing in front of our fans."

During Runge's tenure, the Ducks are one up on the Wildcats, with a 7-6 advantage. But they've split the season series in each of the past five years.

This season Arizona bolted to a surprising 9-0 start, including wins against well-respected teams, including Santa Barbara and Colorado State.

It's a deep and experienced squad, with four starting seniors. And as usual, the 'Cats are explosive.

"They're really quick," Oregon center Jenny Mowe said. "They've always been like that: small and quick."

Oh, and they can shoot, too.

Led by Portland-native Lisa Griffith, Arizona is first in the Pac-10 in scoring offense, averaging more than 80 points per game. And it's second at field goal percentage and three-point percentage, behind Stanford.

Last week, Griffith became the all-time conference leader in three-point attempts (677); she was already the Pac-10 leader in treys made (257).

She's one of three Oregonians returning to her home state this weekend, joining the Wildcats' Michelle Mitchell, a 6-4 center, and Arizona State's Liz Paulson, a junior guard from Lake Oswego.

The Sun Devils' game plan is never too unlike Arizona's.

So the Ducks will spend the weekend countering quickness with size.

"They're very similar teams style-wise," Runge said. "Except that Arizona has a bit more quickness and a little bit more athleticism than Arizona State, but it's gonna be a tough challenge."

One for which the Ducks figure to be ready.

Mowe, the Ducks' 6-5 presence in the middle, already has blocked 19 shots in Pac-10 play, and 49 on the season — her 2.7 per game is 10th-best in the nation.

And like her teammates, she's eager for this weekend's games.

"Definitely," Mowe said. "They're going to be some good games this weekend."

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