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Pesznecker
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 er had few answers to Oregon's ferocious second-half play. Even a 39-point, career-high performance by Martin, possibly the Pac-10's best offensive player, couldn't stop the Ducks from rolling.
 And the implications resulting from Thursday's game are tremendous.
 To Oregon, the victory is a stepping stone. Winning out the season is nearly a must for the Ducks to repeat as Pac-10 champions, but after beating the Bruins, they are a little bit closer to their goal.
 For UCLA, the loss is likely a knockout punch. The Bruins have been successful in back-to-back NCAA tournament appearances, capped with last season's fifth-place finish in the Elite Eight.
 However, in terms of repeating as Pac-10 champions — which the coaches and media polls said they would do at the start of the season — the Bruins no longer control their own destiny.
 Oregon beat UCLA last season, and the two teams shared the title. This time around, the Ducks have probably eliminated the Bruins' chances altogether.
 So sad. Because regardless of how this season ends, the critics will probably say the power has shifted back north — to the Bay-Area.
 Wrongfully unranked Oregon has won its last six games. Before Thursday, it was No. 42 in the Ratings Percentage Index. And when UCLA and Arizona squared off last Saturday on national television, commentators talked about the two schools battling with Stanford — and only Stanford — for first place in the conference.
 Without question, Oregon lacks respect.
 But as they walked off the court after yet another win against the Bruins, the Ducks proved they have earned it.
 "They've got to take notice now," point guard Shaquala Williams said. "We've beat [UCLA] twice, and I think we've beat every team in the conference with the exception of Arizona, so now people know that we're real, and we can beat anybody at anytime."
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Men
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 won since Feb. 9, 1984. And despite their half-hearted effort, they still had a chance to end that streak after guard David Jackson swished home a three with 40 seconds left, cutting the Bruin lead to 70-66.
 But Oregon couldn't hit a big shot in the closing seconds. Five free throws were all the Bruins needed to snap a three-game losing streak and keep their NCAA hopes alive.
 UCLA made a strong case in front of a national television audience that it still has some fight in it. Junior point guard Earl Watson scored 18 of his team-high 22 points in the first half. Freshman sensation Jason Kapono picked up the slack in the second half, scoring all of his 15 points in the final 20 minutes.
 "UCLA is going to come out and play," Kent said. "They did a good job at attacking us with their athletes. Those are still excellent basketball players, and we did not do enough to neutralize their athleticism."
 Both teams came out of the gate flat, and after Anthony Norwood's lay-in with 13:09 in the first half, the Ducks had the 11-7 advantage.
 But then UCLA sophomore center Dan Gadzuric unloaded four straight powerful dunks to give the Bruins the 15-11 lead it would not relinquish.
 The closest the Ducks would get would be 17-16 with 9:15 to play. Then came the drought.
 More than seven minutes passed before Oregon scored again. And when Smith, who led the Ducks with 23 points, did convert the lay-in, it ended a 14-4 UCLA run.
 Perhaps the biggest key to the game was in the rebounding department, where the Bruins held a 45-29 advantage, including 16 offensive boards.
 "We gave them an opportunity to get second and third shots at point blank range," Kent said. "We've gone away from being the number one defensive rebounding team in the conference to about sixth or seventh place."
 Luckily for Oregon, it had the opportunity to block the past two games against USC at 5 p.m. on Saturday.
 "We're not in the tournament yet," Kent said. "Maybe this is a wake-up call."

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