



UO loses in another wild ending at The Pit

■ Washington came away with a big road win when Oregon's last-second shot was ruled too late

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

McArthur Court, a building that has hosted its fair share of frantic endings, was again the venue for an unbelievable finish — one that sent Oregon fans home in shock and dejection.

The Ducks fell to their Northwest rival Washington Huskies 72-71 in overtime on a controversial final play that left the crowd of 8,786 wondering exactly what had transpired.

"I'm not sure what happened," Oregon forward Luke Jackson said.

The scene: Oregon trailing by one with six seconds left in overtime after Washington freshman Curtis Allen banked in a clutch spinning layin.

After a timeout, Freddie Jones dribbles the length of the court, and then loses control of the ball amidst a double-team of Husky defenders.

Jones grabs and tips it to freshman teammate Luke Ridnour, who instinctively flicks up a shot almost simultaneously with the sound of the buzzer.

The ball slides down the net, but is emphatically waved off by referee

Bobby McRoy.

"I just got it and shot it ... it's too close to tell," Ridnour said.

Oregon fans beginning to storm the court are stopped in their tracks by the reality that Washington has won the game.

The game was not televised and, therefore, there were no replays for the referees to review.

But at 10 p.m., Oregon head coach Ernie Kent was able to view the play for the first time through the eyehole of KMTR-TV's camera in the media room.

"You bet it was, absolutely," Kent said, believing that Ridnour's shot should have counted. "As you can see clearly, the shot was good to me."

Washington head coach Bob Bender wasn't sure if the shot was late, but didn't want that to diminish his team's win.

"I just knew that it was going to go in — that's just the type of game this was," Bender said. "I looked for an official and saw they called it off. This was really an emotional win for us."

The heartbreaking defeat was Oregon's third straight loss. It dropped the Ducks to 10-4 overall and 1-3 in the Pacific-10 Conference, making the road to the NCAA Tournament an uphill climb. Washington (8-9, 2-3), on the other hand, snapped the Ducks' nine-game home winning streak, which coincidentally began after the Huskies beat them in Eugene last season.

Oregon knows it can't look back

on that final play because its own poor shooting was its real downfall. The Ducks made just seven field goals in the first half and finished with 34.5 shooting percentage from the field. Even worse, Oregon converted on only three of its 22 three-point attempts.

"We were out-played and out-energized," said Kent, whose players held a lengthy closed-door meeting following the game. "We made key mistakes and didn't match their intelligence level. We definitely weren't ready to play."

Oregon was led in scoring by Bryan Bracey, who scored eight of his game-high 23 points in the final 1:12 of regulation to send the game to overtime. Washington was paced by South Salem High graduate Thalo Green, who couldn't stop smiling after scoring 22 points in his final game at Mac Court.

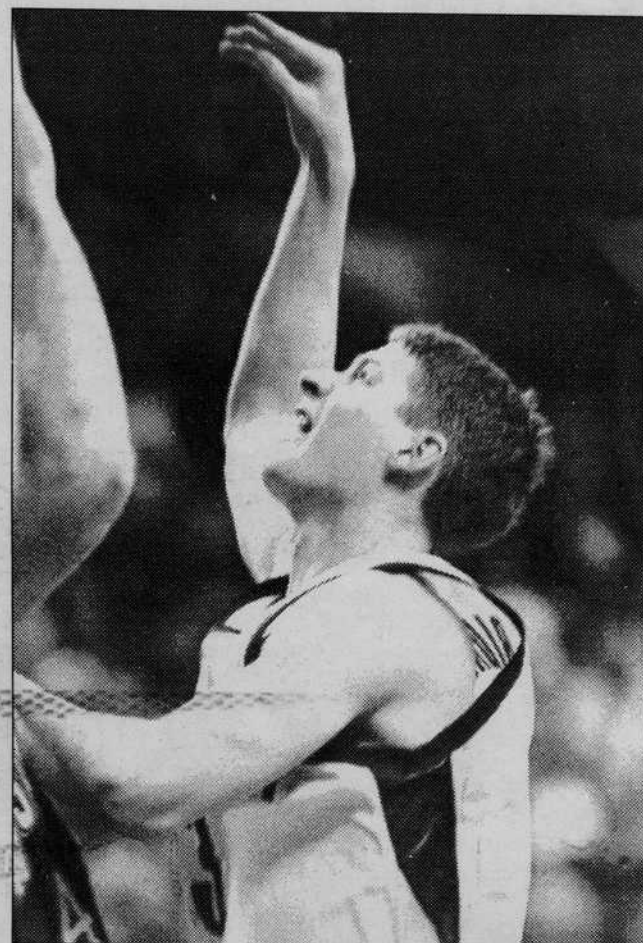
"I'm going to miss this place incredibly," Green said. "I love the hostile environment. They expect you to lose."

As Green said good-bye to The Pit, Washington's Allen greeted it with a game-winner.

"It feels good, especially here in Oregon, and to send those fans home sad-faced," said the freshman from Tacoma, Wash.

As for Oregon, it must regroup in a hurry for Saturday's 3 p.m. contest with Washington State.

"We have to come out like our life is on the line," Jones said.



Tom Patterson Emerald
Oregon freshman point guard Luke Ridnour nearly won the game for the Ducks, but his overtime jumper was released just after the buzzer.

Rivals Ridnour, Allen face off in overtime shocker

■ Key shots came from rival freshman guards Luke Ridnour and Curtis Allen in a back-and-forth battle

By Robbie McCallum
Oregon Daily Emerald

Fate must have driven it.

The Washington Huskies, down 71-70 with 24 seconds in overtime, call backup freshman point guard Curtis Allen's number to make what would be the go-ahead layup.

The ball kisses the backboard before falling in.

"I was anxious," Allen said, higher than life. "I knew I had to get the ball up."

The Oregon Ducks, down 72-71 with six seconds left in overtime, lose the ball and scramble for it. The ball ends up in freshman point guard Luke Ridnour's hands. Ridnour flings the ball upward as the buzzer sounds.

The ball falls in ... an instant too late. "I just flicked it up to the basket," a dejected Ridnour said. "I didn't know how much time was left. It just came to me."

This was not the first time Ridnour and Allen have clashed. Ridnour, a three-time Washington state class 2A player of the year from Blaine, Wash., was considered the best recruit to come out of Washington last season. Allen, the Washington state class 4A player of the year out of Tacoma, Wash., was considered the second best.

"Me and Luke have been playing each

other since sixth grade," Allen said. "He's a great player — more power to him. It was fun to compete against him tonight."

"[Allen] stepped it up tonight," Ridnour said. "He kept them in the game. He played really good."

Allen jump-started his team in the second half, making layup after layup and scoring a career-high 12 points and six rebounds for the victorious Huskies.

In the second half, Ridnour played almost flawlessly, scoring eight points, making a key steal and committing zero turnovers.

But where were the freshman counterparts in the first half?

The two combined for zero points, one assist and seven turnovers.

Ridnour struggled as the Ducks fell be-

hind by as many as 13 points in the first half. Allen carried his team through the second half as the Huskies squandered their lead.

But both players found their groove and the ball when it counted.

"Curtis had a great game," Washington head coach Bob Bender said. "He had the space to put the ball through comfortably."

Bender went up to Ridnour following the hectic finish.

"I told Luke, 'Keep your head up. You did good,'" Bender said. Allen and Ridnour will no doubt meet many more times on the court in the next four years, although they may never play in a Pacific-10 Conference game more exciting than their first against each other.

Win streak continues, but UO loses key players in Seattle

■ The Ducks score 14 unanswered points to defeat rival Washington, 67-53

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon women's basketball team won its seventh straight game Thursday night in Seattle — but at a hefty price.

Just five minutes into the contest, Oregon's Angelina Wolvert left the game with a second-degree sprain of the medial collateral ligament (MCL) in her left knee.

Wolvert returned to Eugene to begin treatment immediately, which will force her to miss Saturday's game at Washington State — if not more.

And then, to top it all off, senior scrapper Lindsey Dion went down with an ankle sprain at the 3:30 mark of the second half. Her status is unknown for Saturday's game.

Whatever the cost, in the end, it added up to a 67-53 victory for No. 18 Oregon (11-3, 4-0), which is in sole possession of first place after Arizona lost to Southern California Thursday.

"We're wounded," Oregon head coach Jody Runge told KNRQ. "Obviously it's a tough loss with Ange going down."

The Ducks have won 10 straight against the Huskies, and hold a 30-

28 all-time series lead.

Senior forward Brianne Meharry started the second half in place of Wolvert, and even with three fouls, she proved to be just what the Ducks needed.

The 6-foot-2 Meharry scored Oregon's first seven points of the second period, igniting the Ducks to a 10-4 run, before picking up her fourth foul with 15:28 remaining. After sitting for more than 10 minutes, Meharry returned to score on a spin move in the post to break a 53-53 tie and start another Oregon run. This time, the Ducks went on a 14-0 spurt to finish the game, holding the Huskies scoreless for the final five minutes.

Prior to Oregon's final run, the game had been tied nine times, with

Washington holding a five-point lead midway through the second. "I was just very pleased that we were able to get our composure and poise back," said Runge, who improved to 13-2 against Washington in her eight years at Oregon. "We did a good job of settling down and executing the things we try to do every day."

The wholehearted rivalry between the Ducks and the Huskies has never looked so gory. In addition to Wolvert and Dion's injuries, senior post Jenny Mowe left the game on several occasions with blows to the face, and Washington freshman Giuliana Mendiola had to step off the court late in the game. Additionally, a total of 36 fouls were committed (16 by Oregon, 20 by Washington).

Junior Jamie Craighead, the Pac-10 Player of the Week last week, was looking to retain her crown with another spectacular performance on her homecoming. The Elma, Wash., native tallied a career-high 16 points on 5-for-10 shooting (3 for 6 from three-point range).

Entering Thursday's game, center Jenny Mowe averaged just 20.9 minutes per game, but with Wolvert out and Meharry in foul trouble, Mowe was the key for Oregon. She played 35 minutes against the Huskies, tabbing a double-double — 10 points and 10 rebounds.

The Ducks, the worst rebounding team in the league prior to the game, out-boarded the league's best rebounding team 44-38.

