



Lame Duck women lose on the road to Cougs

Oregon still holds a half-game lead in the Pac-10 race after Saturday's loss

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

Up north in the frozen Palouse, where locals experience Pacific-10 Conference women's basketball as often as a hot winter day, a small crowd erupted into Saturday night celebration inside Friel Court.



RUNGE

Brightly colored streamers fell from the rafters. By the magni-

tude of the party, one might think that Washington State had just won the Pac-10 title.

Well, it didn't ... but the Cougars did knock off the defending conference champions.

Forward Joanna Smith's three-pointer with 14.6 seconds left capped a dramatic, 67-64 Washington State victory in Pullman, Wash., over the injury-stricken Oregon women's basketball team.

A crowd of 730 fans — a huge turnout for a women's game in Pullman — watched the Ducks crumble down the stretch after leading through the first 30 minutes of play.

Oregon head coach Jody Runge said her team lost its composure.

"It was, individually for some players, a good effort," Runge told KEZI-TV, as the song "Celebration" echoed through the arena. "But I think as a team, it was not a great effort as far as executing and getting in sync, and clicking, and doing the things we do typically a lot better than we did tonight."

The loss snapped Oregon's 30-game winning streak against Northwest schools.

The Ducks (11-4 overall, 4-1 Pac-10), playing without injured starting forwards Angelina Wolvert and Lindsey Dion, were locked in a 62-62 tie with 1:56 remaining.

All seemed well when Oregon

center Jenny Mowe blocked a shot, followed by a jumper from Kourtney Shreve with just more than a minute remaining. Washington State (8-8, 3-3) couldn't respond on the offensive end, and the Ducks came up with the rebound and a two-point lead as seconds ticked away.

But starting at the 30-second mark, all that could go wrong for Oregon did.

Mowe was intentionally fouled in the backcourt and missed the front end of a one-and-one shooting opportunity, squandering a possible four-point lead.

Then, Smith's three-pointer, which bounced twice on the rim

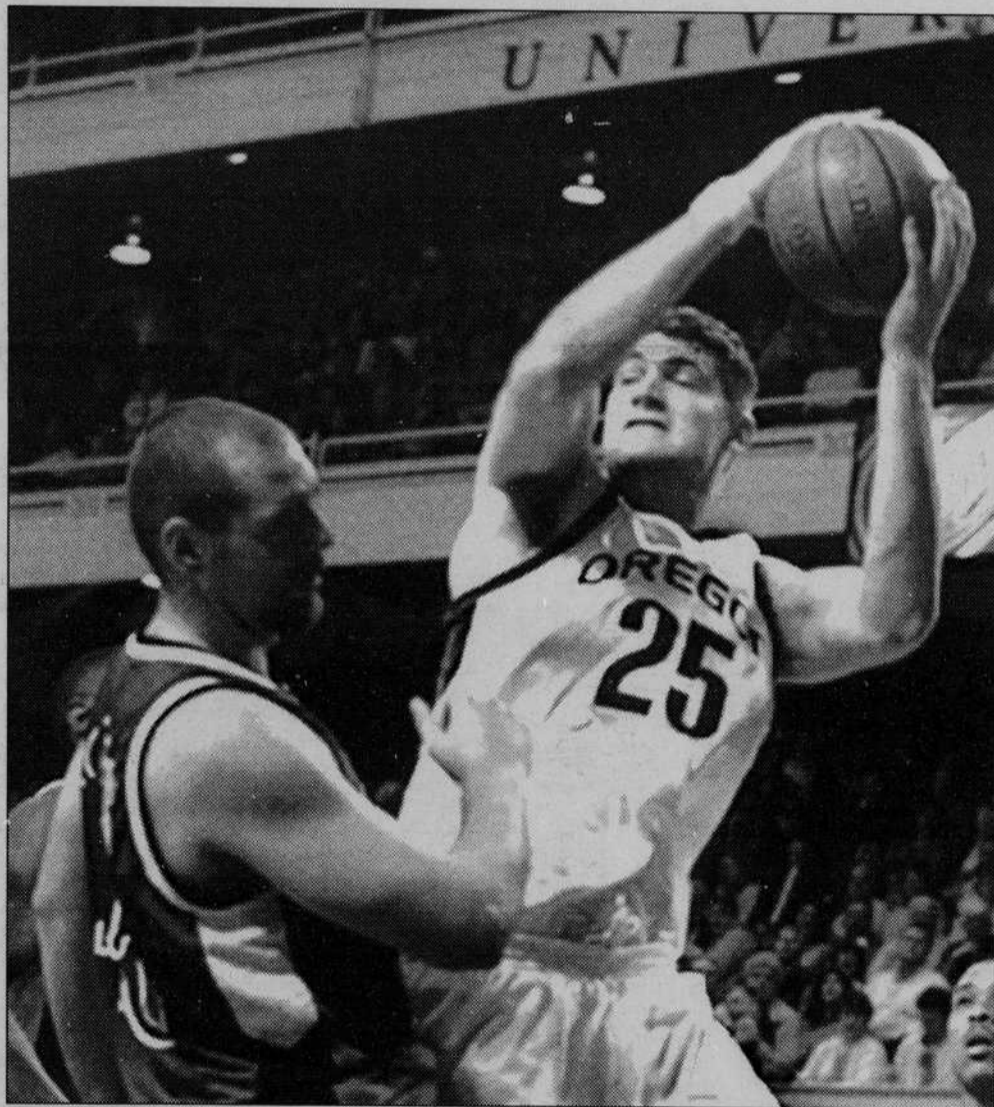
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“It was, individually for some players, a good effort.”

Jody Runge
Women's head coach



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL



Oregon junior center Chris Christoffersen was a key inside presence for the Ducks in Saturday's victory over WSU.

UO changes lineup, beats depleted WSU

■ Oregon doesn't start Jones and Bracey in its win against Washington State, which only suited up seven players

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

It was a day of lessons at McArthur Court. Washington State head coach Paul Graham suspended six players from the game against Oregon for a violation of team rules and sent them back to Pullman, Wash., Saturday morning.

Oregon head coach Ernie Kent didn't start his two best players in an attempt to light a fire under his team after three straight losses.

The results helped the Ducks and hindered the Cougars in Oregon's wire-to-wire 81-66 victory Saturday afternoon in front of a crowd of 8,861.

"This was a must-win," Oregon freshman Luke Ridnour said.

The Ducks improved to 11-4 overall and 2-3 in the Pacific-10 Conference and handed the Cougars (7-8, 1-5) their 29th-straight Pac-10 road loss.

The six suspended Cougars account for 40 percent of the team's scoring. So, maybe Kent was trying to level the playing field when he didn't start Freddie Jones and Bryan Bracey, who combine for 40 percent of the Ducks' scoring.

In their place was Oregon freshman Luke Jackson, who caused a jump ball with great defense on the first play of the game, and senior Flo Hartenstein, who scored the first points of the game on a layin.

The change in the starting lineup ignited the Ducks to an 11-5 lead and set the pace for a win that Oregon desperately needed after falling to Washington in overtime two days earlier.

From the time that Thursday's game ended and Saturday's

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KENT

Short-handed Cougars run out of gas against the Ducks

Washington State's bid for a win at Mac Court was shut down with just seven players

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

Before the game even started Saturday, the Oregon men's basketball team had a huge advantage against Washington State.

That's because the Cougars could hardly fill out the starting lineup card.

Six Washington State players — including head coach Paul Graham's son, Nick — were suspended prior to the game for violating a team rule, leaving just seven players to suit up in the 81-66 loss to Oregon (11-4 overall, 2-3 Pacific-

10 Conference).

"We are a team, and any time players' actions take away from what the program is trying to accomplish, those players must be held accountable," said Graham, who is in his second year as the Cougars' head man. "Sometimes young people don't do what they should do, and when they don't, they get punished."

The Cougars (7-8, 1-5) were given no breathing room against an Oregon squad that was looking to prove itself after a close loss to Washington two days earlier. Five

Cougars played more than 33 minutes, with three — Milton Riley, Marcus Moore and Mike Bush — resting for no more than two minutes the entire game.

"They played their ass off and never complained," Graham said. "They were out there fighting, and that's all I ask them to do, and that's the reputation I want our team to have."

"Let's not make any excuses. We got beat and our guys screwed up, and we might've got beat anyway, but at least we would've had some more horses to suit up."

Oregon head coach Ernie Kent knows what Graham is going through, and knows what it's like to establish that desired reputation.

"Paul is a great guy and a really good coach," Kent said. "And he's doing all the right things he needs to do to establish his program. I've been in that exact same situation. I've even had to let some guys go because of some serious problem, and he's done the same thing. And I understand that."

The six suspended players were

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Paul Graham
Cougars head coach