



Oregon blocked nine Arizona shots Thursday night, including this Michael Wright attempt, in its 79-67 victory.

Adam Amato Emerald

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had a great first half," Bracey said.

Oregon expanded on its 32-25 halftime advantage and upped its lead to 56-40 on a Bracey jumper with 10:17 on the clock. Arizona wouldn't quit and had the Oregon lead trimmed to only nine points with just more than four minutes to play.

Then came the nail in the coffin.

Oregon point guard Luke Ridnour drove through the lane, drew a foul on Arizona center Loren Woods and spun in a bank shot that sent The Pit into a frenzy. The three-point play at the 4:10 mark proved to be the back-breaker, as the game soon turned into an Oregon free-throw exhibition.

"Ridnour will be one of the pre-

mier guards in the conference; there's no question about that," Arizona head coach Lute Olson said. "He's smart, he's competitive, he shoots the ball well."

Ridnour's 17 points were indeed important, but so was the early play of Oregon center Chris Christoffersen. Christoffersen continued his improvement with a solid all-around offensive and defensive game.

"It was an unbelievable crowd tonight and helped get my confidence going," said Christoffersen, who had five points and three blocks with his parents from Denmark in attendance.

The Oregon defense held Arizona, which came into the game averaging 83 points per contest, to a season-low 67. The Wildcats shot just 35 percent from the field, as the Ducks beat Arizona in consec-

utive games for the first time in 17 years.

"We got beat every way we could get beat," Olson said.

But perhaps the most shocking thing about the game wasn't even the win itself, but rather Oregon's reaction following it. The Ducks didn't act like a lower-tier Pac-10 team that had knocked off one of the nation's best. They presented themselves as league contenders who had just woken up from their slumber.

"Our philosophy has always been don't get too up and don't get too down," Kent said. "The season is a grind and we have to push through it. There are so many life lessons that are learned in athletics, and we learned a huge one."

Oregon takes on Arizona State at 1 p.m. Sunday at Mac Court.

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quest for a Pac-10 championship, the Ducks made a leap forward in their hopes to make it back to the NCAA Tournament.

"It does a lot for our confidence to finally get the big win," Oregon forward Bryan Bracey said.

The Ducks moved within two games of fifth-placed Southern California with the win. Oregon moved a game ahead of seventh-placed Oregon State, which lost to

Arizona State 73-58 Thursday night.

Almost more important than their improved record was the improved performance of the Ducks against the Wildcats. The Ducks hit 42.9 percent of their shots, while holding Arizona to just 35.2 percent. Oregon outblocked, out-shot and had more assists than the Wildcats.

"This is a good team," Woods said after the Ducks held him to 11 points and four rebounds Thursday night.

Olson's Wildcats have had an

up-and-down season.

Thursday night was another low point for Arizona, and Olson had a few parting thoughts about the loss as he left Mac Court Thursday night.

"If we're going to be a really good ball club, there are certain things we need to work on," Olson said. "We've got to do things game in and game out, not six games and stop."

That "stop," it seems, usually occurs when the Wildcats come to Eugene.

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said. "We didn't do that very well tonight at all."

Offense wasn't much of a problem for the Ducks. The green team shot 49.2 percent from the floor, the first time in three games when its shot percentage was better than 30 percent.

Guard Jamie Craighead scored a career-high 21 points on 7-of-16 shooting. All seven of her made shots were three pointers, which

was also a career high.

Forward Angelina Wolvert played her second game since spraining the medial collateral ligament in her left knee. She scored 18 points and blocked two shots.

Forward Lindsey Dion scored 12 points and Mowe chipped in 10.

But stealing the show was the Arizona tandem of Bristol and forward Elizabeth Pickney, who scored 26 points apiece. Bristol accompanied her point total with six rebounds and five assists.

The Wildcats aggressively tried to take the ball inside all game, result-

ing in 20 points from 25 free throw attempts.

"When they made their run in the second half, it was on the free-throw line," Runge said. "That's not something you can do on the road."

"You need to take some pride in not letting people score on you. Right now we're not doing that. We're satisfied with putting a hand on them in dribble penetration, which is a foul, or letting them go by us and foul them from behind, and that's not a good enough effort to let that happen."

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