

Local boy makes good, propels Duke to title

By Eddie Pells
The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Before Mike Dunleavy's dad became a coach, he was a shooter — an unabashed, unrelenting shooter, who never saw a long-range jumper he didn't like.

So when the Duke sophomore looked as if he really didn't belong in the first half of the national title game Monday night, he reacted the way any son of a coach, or son of a shooter, would.

He just kept shooting. "I was thinking I wanted to stay aggressive," Dunleavy said.

The tall, gangly swingman with the baby face and the shooter's touch was the star of Duke's 82-72 victory over Arizona because, quite simply, he excelled at what both he and his team do best: Making three-pointers.

He scored 18 of his team-high 21 points in the second half, including an amazing stretch of

three three-pointers in 46 seconds to give Duke a double-digit lead the Wildcats couldn't overcome.

"I was feeling it, and it was good timing, too," Dunleavy said. "To do it in the championship game. Wow. I'm sure some of these guys were thinking it was about time."

Dunleavy earned his never-say-quit shooting mentality honestly. As early as age 3, he would stand on the sidelines and watch the Milwaukee Bucks practice, his dad working off picks, looking for open outside jumpers.

Early in the second half, he looked like a kid testing things out in the driveway, spotting up three straight times and draining the open threes to give the Blue Devils a 49-39 lead. It was a welcome break from their ice-cold shooting from behind the arc (4 for 15 in the first half).

"It gave us a big dose of confidence," Duke coach Mike

Krzyzewski said.

Down 10, Arizona rallied, but Dunleavy answered.

He made a lay-up, a dunk, a nice little 8-foot jumper and then, of course, another three-pointer —

“I had a long talk with coach yesterday about staying aggressive, and I didn't change my mindset. Then I hit one from pretty deep, and that got me going.”

Mike Dunleavy
sophomore,
Duke

and Duke had staved off the initial Arizona comeback to stay ahead 61-51.

Later, All-Americans Jason Williams and Shane Battier began

playing to their potential, and Dunleavy slipped back into the key supporting role he has grown accustomed to during this championship season.

"He hit a couple threes in a row, a couple times I missed my assignment," Arizona's Richard Jefferson said. "We did a good job defending the threes overall, but we just couldn't get to him a couple times."

That's the method to Duke's outside-shooting madness. Stop Battier or Williams, and they'll simply swing it around the perimeter to another teammate. Dunleavy has taken pride in being one of four Dukies with the reputation of being able to hit a shot from anywhere on the court.

This team set the NCAA record for three-pointers made in a season, and Dunleavy was a big part of it, making 52 on the road to the Final Four.

Which begs the question: Exact-

ly who was that in the first half?

It sure didn't seem like the son of the Portland Trail Blazers coach and former Bucks, Lakers and 76ers sharpshooter, who sat stonically in the stands wearing a black turtleneck, maybe wishing he hadn't made this quick trip to Minnesota.

In the first half, Dunleavy shot 1 for 6 — an ugly 1-for-6 that included misses that barely drew iron, as Duke basically abandoned its outside game and pounded it inside.

But it's that old shooter's axiom — keep shooting it, baby — that kept Dunleavy from zoning out too soon, and helped the Blue Devils to the championship.

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free safety Rasuli Webster did not participate in the first practice of the year.

Despite all the questions, the Ducks are looking to one-up last season's campaign with an even better 2001 effort.

"One game put us from the Rose

Bowl to the Holiday Bowl," Howry said. "We wanted to be in the Rose Bowl. If everyone comes out this spring and practices hard, I think we can accomplish that."

Bellotti is just as confident as his players.

"We've won eight, nine and 10 over the past three seasons," Bellotti said. "Yeah, we'd like to take it the

next step and try to get to the best bowl game possible. Obviously, it would be nice to get to the Rose Bowl this year and represent the Pac-10."

The 2001 Rose Bowl will determine a national champion because of a rotating system in the Bowl Championship Series bowls.

Howry said it's just a matter of time before the Ducks return to top form.

"It comes down to gettin' our groove back," Howry said. "We want to get a lot of the chemistry back that we had at the end of the year and get ready for fall."

The Ducks have 15 spring practices and will conclude the spring workouts with the Spring Game April 28 at Hillsboro Stadium near Portland.

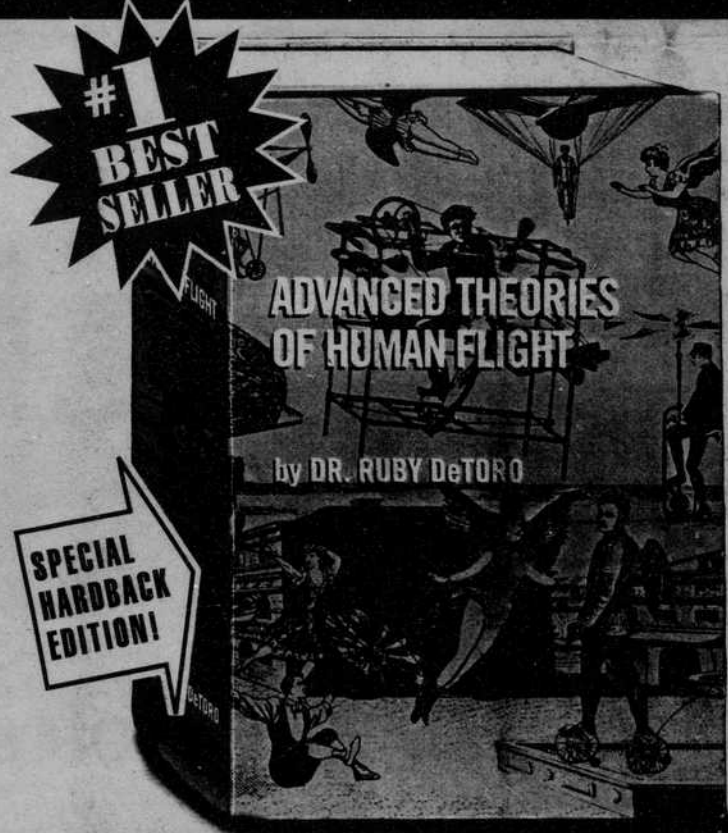
Softball

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home runs (5) and RBIs (24).

The Ducks will be looking for their first doubleheader sweep all season. From Portland, Oregon will hit the road for the Bay Area for Pacific-10 Conference games against Stanford and California.

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