

After this kind of game, a need for parental advice

CORVALLIS —

Correspondence with my parents after Oregon's uglier-than-a-buck-toothed-beaver win over Oregon State on Saturday night...



Peter Hockaday
Two minutes for crosschecking

win for the Ducks, in every sense. Lots of fouls, lots of missed shots. But they won, and they're leading

the Pac-10, and that's all that matters, right?

Leading the Pac-10. That seems weird. I always thought that last year's team, with Bryan "20 points-a-night" Bracey, would be the team to be leading the Pac, but it never did. Instead, the 2002 Oregon players have come together like they never did last season, and the result is an explosive, dominating team. It'll be fun to watch this team down the stretch, they could be capable of miracles like the 2000, 20-win wonder boys.

Anyway, I hope all is well up north. Huskies vs. Ducks on Thursday. Are you going? You should.

Love, Peter

Dear Peter,
Great to hear from you. We love your e-mails.

Well, you guessed we'd sure try

to listen to the Ducks last night, and we finally did — on the Beaver Sports Network, gulp. The dreadfully depressed Beaver announcer couldn't keep his sadness and distress to himself.

Drat — the Oakland Raiders football game and then the Portland Blazers game both preempted the Duck game on the so-called Duck Sports (radio) Network in Portland. Why on earth broadcast a professional basketball game which fans can hear any night of the week and discard the Civil War game? Doesn't seem right, since we get so few honest-to-goodness amateur and college basketball games to listen to on the radio.

That's my opinion — try asking in a column if Ducks sports should get priority on the Ducks Sports Network, especially when they're playing the Beavers (in anything).

Love to you,
Mom and Dad

Dear Mom and Dad,

That's too bad about the Beaver Sports Network. But I don't really agree with you about the Oregon radio.

I would have rather listened to an overtime snow-battle play off football game than the ugly Ducks on Saturday night. I mean, that game was truly dismal to watch. Maybe it sounded better on the radio but in person it was like a bad nightmare. Beaver fans behind us yelled at their players and coach, and Duck fans didn't have much to cheer about themselves.

The game started out all right, with the Ducks controlling tempo and all that in the first few minutes. Then the fouls started, the post play heated up and the game turned from electric to extremely boring.

But there was a group of dunking acrobats that performed during a time-out. And that football game on television at halftime. Those were pretty much the highlights because the second half of the basketball game was almost as bad as the first.

But, as I said before, the Ducks are leading the Pac-10, and that's what's important. They withstood Oregon State's best effort. UCLA couldn't withstand Arizona's run on Saturday, so they fell behind in the Pac-10 race. We'll see on Thursday whether the Ducks truly eliminated their road jitters.

So, that's about it. Again, I hope all is well. Ducks vs. Huskies Thursday. Time to let the always-interesting Pac-10 season unfold a little more.

Love, Peter.

E-mail reporter Peter Hockaday at peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com.

Men's basketball

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That's our main goal. As long as we keep taking care of business, it'll all take care of itself."

Jones led Oregon's workmanlike victory against Oregon State with a solid 16-point outing, while Luke Jackson contributed 15.

But the real spark for Oregon, continuing its trend of balanced scoring, came from forward Robert Johnson, who helped set the tone early by scoring six of the Ducks' first 10 points. Johnson finished with 12 points, 11 rebounds and three blocks, giving him an early birthday present as the junior celebrated his 21st Sunday.

"It was a great team game," John-

son said. "We neutralized them in the beginning and kept going."

Johnson's hot start was followed by a Jones reverse alley-oop dunk off a pass from Luke Ridnour. On Oregon's next possession, Jones knocked down two free throws to give the Ducks a 14-2 lead with 13:20 to play in the first half that the Beavers could never fully recover from.

"We were ready to play this game from the beginning and it showed," Jackson said. "From beginning to end, we controlled the tempo."

Even when that tempo didn't involve running the fast break.

Oregon State, like California and Stanford the week before, slowed the game down and forced Oregon to play in the halfcourt. And like

the games against the Bay Area schools, the Ducks adjusted to the different style of play and found a way to win.

The Beavers kept up the slower pace throughout the second half and made runs to close the lead to single digits, but the Ducks always kept them at arm's length.

"Yes, we like to run, that's our forte, but we want to show people that we are a very versatile team that, when we need to play halfcourt, we can play halfcourt," Kent said.

Oregon's biggest advantage in the game was a 50-34 lead, but the Beavers closed to within 51-44 with eight minutes to play, which turned up the volume among the 9,479 fans at Gill Coliseum.

From there, though, the Ducks

made key defensive stops and outscored the Beavers 12-7 to "grind out the win," as Kent would say later.

Oregon State's Philip Ricci was the only Beaver scoring double digits, with 12 points. Forward Brian Jackson only picked up six while dealing with foul trouble. The Beavers (8-9, 1-6) have been competitive in most of their games, but don't have the wins to show for their effort.

"We're not that bad a team," said Jackson, the Beavers' forward. "There's just been a few stretches in games that have hurt us. Wins will come."

For Oregon, the wins have been coming and they probably will continue to this weekend when the Ducks visit the Washington schools, which are a combined 1-15

in league play.

After jumping out to a 6-1 Pac-10 start for just the second time in 63 years, the Ducks aren't taking anything for granted. Their sights are set high and they don't want to slip, as they have already in their loss at Arizona State.

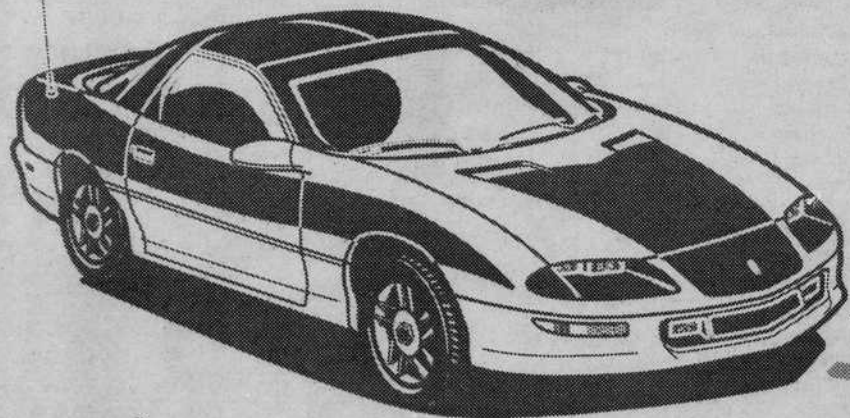
So the sight of a late-night video session aboard a bus on a freeway shouldn't be too surprising when realizing what potentially lies ahead in the coming months.

"I'm not saying we're there yet, but we're certainly on our way," Kent said. "We've got a target on us now, but that's OK."

"We want to run with this thing."

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