

SPORTS

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Best Bet
Tennis: Australian Open,
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Bills leads Oregon with 10 boards against USC

■ The Ducks equal the Trojans on rebounding and stuff star forward Ebony Hoffman in the paint

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

All year, the focus for the Oregon women's basketball team has been on rebounding.

On Thursday night, the Ducks crashed the boards.

After getting outrebounded by 18 in the first meeting of the year in Los Angeles, Oregon stayed even with Southern California, the second-best rebounding team in the Pacific-10 Conference, and pulled out a 75-65 victory at McArthur Court on Thursday.

"Down there we got slaughtered on the boards," Oregon guard Shaquala Williams said. "That was a big focal point tonight. We wanted to rebound them and we tied them, but that's better than being outrebounded."

Freshman center Andrea Bills, making the first start of her career, led the way for the Ducks with a career-high 10 rebounds to go along with nine points on 4-of-5 shooting.

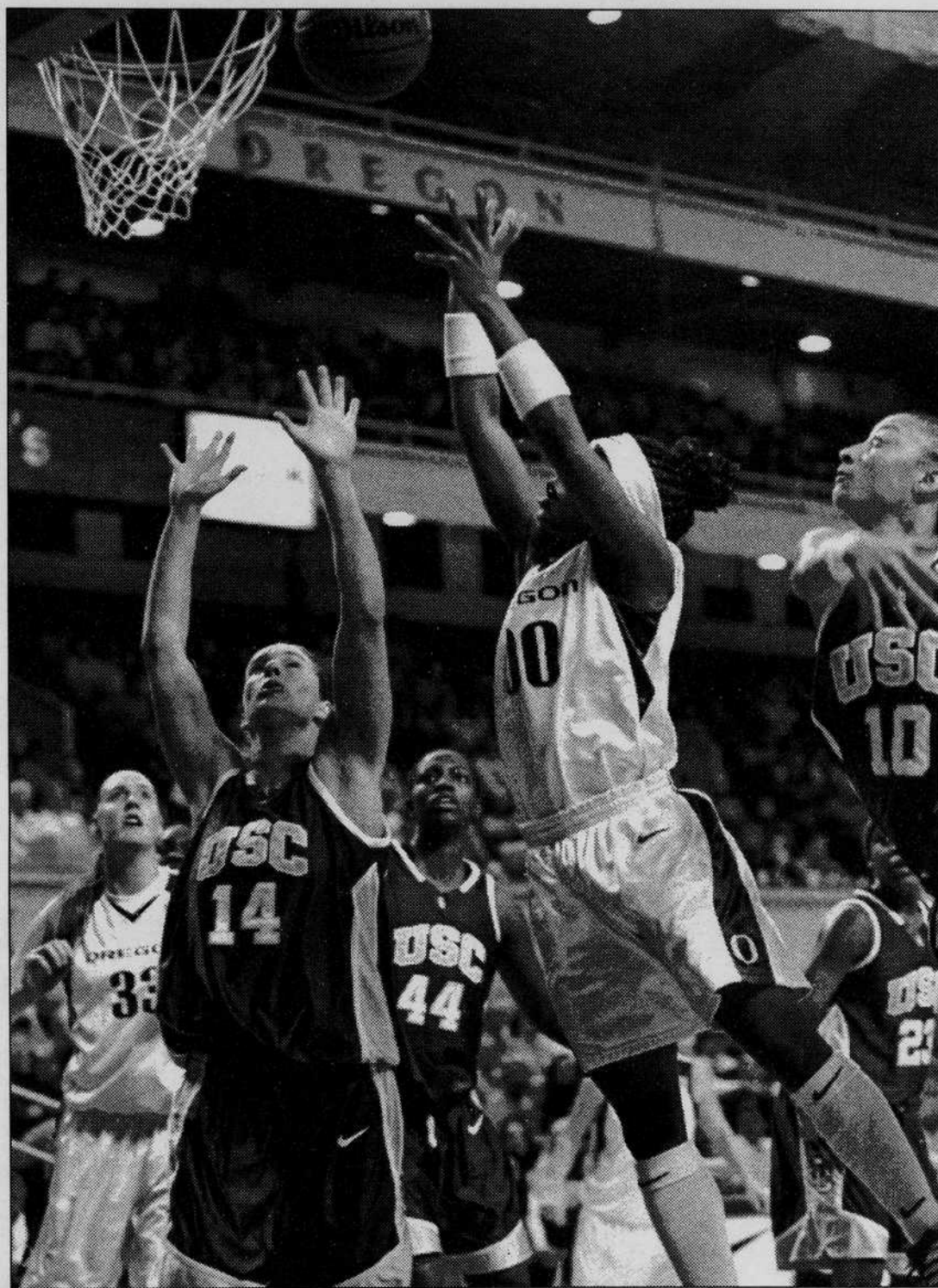
Bill made the start to counter USC's Ebony Hoffman, a 6-foot-2 forward who torched the Ducks for 27 points and 11 rebounds in the Trojans 83-73 win on Dec. 22.

The adjustment worked to near perfection.

After picking up two quick fouls, Hoffman went to the bench at the 16:44 mark of the first half and did not return until 3:45. Hoffman finished with 27 points and 11 rebounds.

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Ducks' defense stymies USC in win



Senior guard Edniesha Curry (00) goes up for one of her five rebounds against the Trojans' Carmen Krause (14) and Jessica Cheeks (10) on Thursday. Curry added 14 points, five assists and three steals in Oregon's 75-65 victory.

■ The Ducks defeat USC at McArthur Court for the first time in three years

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon women's basketball team knew the consequences of Thursday's game against Southern California.

Win, and it puts the Ducks right back in the thick of the Pacific-10 Conference race. Lose, and the chances of a high seed in the conference tournament begin to slip away.

If nothing else, Oregon made a statement to the rest of the Pac-10.

With their 75-65 win over USC (10-9 overall, 6-4 Pac-10) at McArthur Court, the Ducks ended a two-game losing streak, improving their record to 6-4 in conference play, and putting them back in the mix.

"I think we made a statement to the start the second half of the Pac-10s," senior guard Edniesha Curry said.

The Ducks were able to negate the play of USC sophomore Ebony Hoffman, allowing the 6-foot-2 forward to post only 13 points and seven rebounds. Earlier this season against the Ducks (11-8 overall), Hoffman victimized them for 27 points.

Oregon freshman Andrea Bills started for the first time this season, and helped neutralize the focal point of the Trojans' offense, forcing Hoffman out early in the first half due to foul trouble.

"We talked about not letting her get established inside," Bills said. "Without her inside play as a bigger presence, they had to go to other people, and that worked well for us."

Bills nearly missed a double-double, posting nine points and a career-high 10 rebounds in 24 minutes of play.

"I think Andrea Bills did a great job," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "I thought she played a real smart and tough game considering she's a freshman. And quite frankly, I don't consider her that any more."

A week after shooting just 27 percent against Oregon State, the Ducks shot 55 percent from the field against the Trojans, but were still unable to make their

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Oregon men given wake-up call in surprising loss at Washington



Luke Ridnour gave his family and friends reason to cheer in his return to his home state, as the Blaine, Wash., native scored 23 points and had seven assists against the Huskies.

■ Four Ducks score in double figures, but a poor defensive effort leads to the Huskies recording the upset victory

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

Feeling flustered, depressed and confused, the Oregon men's basketball players spent 30 minutes Thursday night coming to grips with the reality that their place had slipped from their grasp.

The No. 19 Ducks had just been lowered off their pedestal in a humbling 97-92 loss to the less-talented Washington Huskies at Bank of America Arena in Seattle.

Oregon dropped to 14-5 overall and 6-2 in the Pacific-10 Conference and witnessed its Northwest rival Huskies celebrate a potential season-changing win that improved them to 7-11 and only 2-7 in league play.

But a half hour after the game, the Ducks slid right back to the top of the unpredictable Pac-10 thanks to California's 92-91 overtime victory over Southern California, leaving the Trojans tied with the Ducks at 6-2.

Still, first place status aside, Oregon's stumble

against Washington exposed the weakness of this Ducks team that had been kept hidden during the recent winning streak. In road losses at Massachusetts, Portland, Minnesota and Arizona State, the Ducks failed to turn a close game in the final minutes in their direction.

While Oregon showed it could do that within the comforts of McArthur Court, the Ducks couldn't follow their own advice and prove they could do the same on the road.

"We just talked about this in the locker room where I said, 'Fellas, I don't know if you realize this, but we're playing for a Pac-10 championship, we're playing for the number one seed in the West (bracket of the NCAA Tournament),' Oregon coach Ernie Kent said. "That's what's at stake. That should be enough of an urgency for us to come ready to play."

Oregon's last lead of the game Thursday was 81-80 with 3:00 to play. That was the 11th lead change since Oregon jumped ahead 60-59 for its

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