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SPORTS

Best bet
WCC Men's Tournament Final:
Gonzaga v. San Diego
9 p.m., ESPN

Monday, March 10, 2003



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Andrea Bills scored 15 points, but the Ducks lost to UCLA and ended their season early.

Women end season at Pac-10 tourney

Oregon misses the postseason for the first time in 10 years as its season ends with a loss to UCLA in the Pac-10 Tournament

Women's basketball

Hank Hager
Sports Reporter

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Just like that, they're done. Oregon, facing a must-win situation Saturday against UCLA, headed into the game with the hope of winning the Pacific-10 Conference Tournament.

The Bruins convincingly dashed that possibility. UCLA freshman Nikki Blue scored 30 points, had a tournament record eight steals and grabbed five rebounds as the Bruins upended Oregon, 71-58, in front of 4,188 fans in Silicon Valley.

The loss ends Oregon's (12-16 overall) season and ensures the Ducks will miss the postseason for the first time in nine years.

"Certainly, a disappointing and frustrating way to end the season," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. Sophomore Andrea Bills had 15 points to lead the Ducks, who lost for the third time this season against the tournament's fourth-ranked team. It's the first time the Ducks have lost three times in a season to a Pac-10 squad.

The loss capped off Oregon's worst season — record-wise — since the 1992-93 season, a year before former head coach Jody Runge took over the team. That was also the last time the Ducks missed the postseason.

The loss also ended a year that was abound in turmoil, from Shaquala Williams' dismissal, to junior Cathrine Kraayeveld's staph infection that kept her

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UO softball falls, 6-0, to No. 8 Cal in tourney final

Oregon went undefeated on the weekend before losing to the defending national champion Golden Bears in the NIST championship game

Softball

Mindi Rice
Freelance Sports Reporter

In its first battle against a Pacific-10 Conference opponent this season, the Oregon softball team lost to defending national champion California, 6-0, on Sunday.

No. 23 Oregon (16-6) faced the No. 8 Golden Bears (19-6) in the title game of the National Invitational Softball Tournament. Cal won the College World Series last year and is currently the fourth-highest-ranked Pacific-10 Conference team in the country.

The Bears scored once in the second inning, twice in the fifth and added three runs in the seventh. Oregon was held to three hits — singles by freshmen Beth Boskovich and Jackie Eliades and a hit by senior Lynsey Haij.

Sophomore Lindsey Kontra was named to the all-tournament team. Kontra went 2-0, allowing two runs in nine innings and striking out nine batters. In a win against Santa Clara, Kontra struck out a career-best seven batters.

"I'm proud of the way we played in this tournament," head coach Kathy Arendsen said. "Lindsey pitched well, and I'm happy that she received the honor. Obviously we would have liked to finish undefeated, but sometimes things don't go your way."

Oregon opened the tournament Friday with a 2-1 win over Georgia Tech. The Yellow Jackets scored their lone run in the third, but the Ducks answered with one run in the fifth and one in the sixth.

Freshman Amy Harris pitched a complete game, giving up one hit and striking out 11 batters.

"This is the best pitching performance we've had all season," Arendsen said. "Amy did a nice job with her change up and was really just on all day. I'm also pleased with what a team effort the win was."

The Ducks faced tournament-host San Jose State in their second game on Friday. Three Oregon pitchers combined to hold the Spartans scoreless, giving up only four hits in a 3-0 win.

Senior Alyssa Laux and freshman Breanne Sabol each stole a base during the Ducks' win. The two stolen bases give Oregon 21 on the season, one more than the team had during the entire 2002 season.

In the third inning, Laux hit her first home run of the season, scoring Sabol and giving Oregon the lead.

"I thought our pitching was very solid in the second game and we had some nice offensive efforts from Alyssa and Breanne," Arendsen said Friday.

The Ducks opened against No. 24 Minnesota on Saturday. The game began as a pitchers' duel and ended in extra innings, with Oregon pulling out a 3-2 victory.

Harris struck out 10 in six innings, but Kontra finished

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UA beats up Ridnour, beats UO

The No. 1 Wildcats put away the final regular-season game for both teams with a second-half run

Men's basketball

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

If you can't beat 'em...
Beat 'em up.

That was Arizona's philosophy Saturday afternoon in Tucson, where the No. 1 Wildcats played physical defense on Oregon star Luke Ridnour in the second half and eventually beat up the Ducks, 88-80, in front of 14,589 fans at the McKale Center.

The Wildcats converted on Oregon's only sloppy stretch of the game, a four-minute run midway through the second half that lifted the Wildcats to the win. A hounded Ridnour missed shots and couldn't generate any offense for his teammates during the critical stretch.

"They beat the crap out of Ridnour out there," Kent told KUGN-AM after the game.

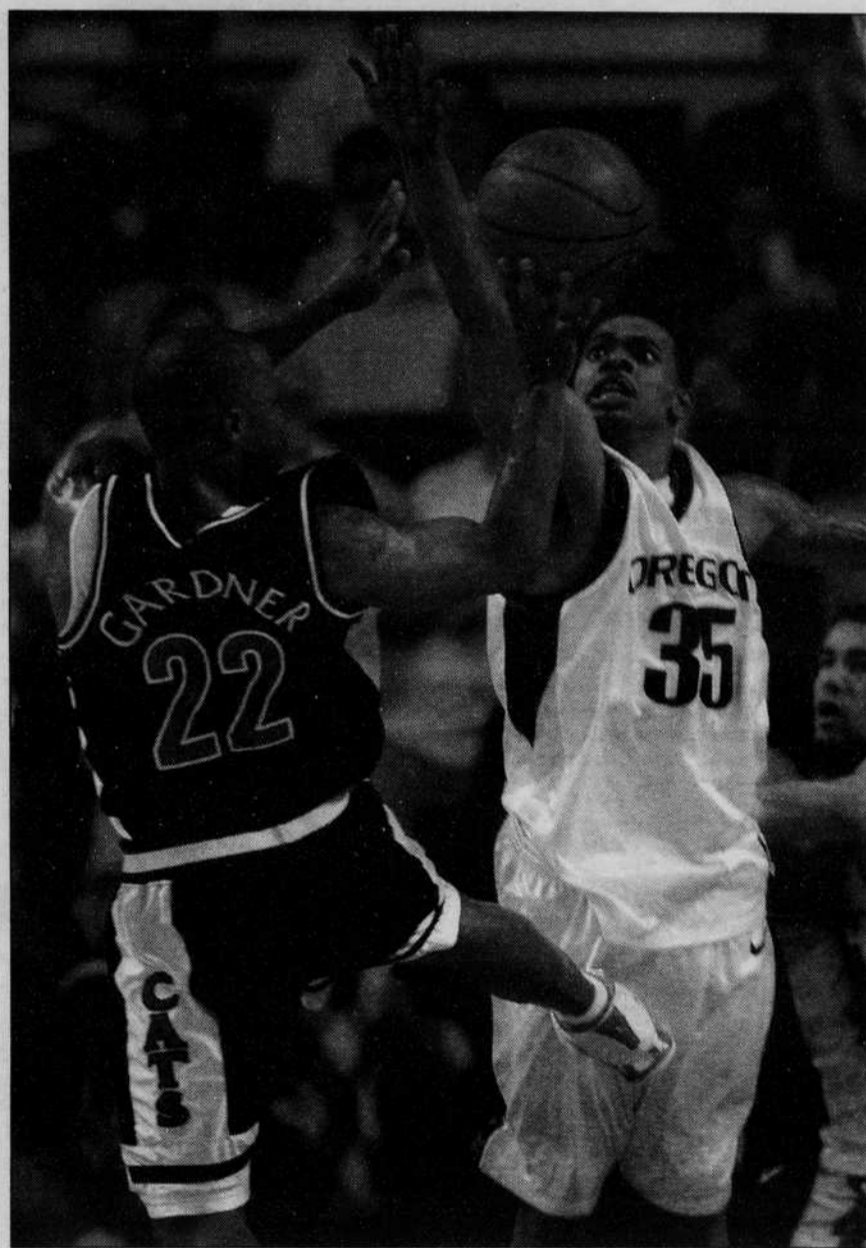
By Sunday, Kent had settled down and said bumping and shoving are things Ridnour "will have to get used to."

"Both (Arizona games) were very physical basketball games," Kent said. "Their game plan in both of these games was similar to Washington's game plan, which was to bump (Ridnour) everywhere he goes without the ball so he has a hard time cutting, and crowd him when he has the ball to take away his drives."

"But as physical as the games were, he still scored points and carried us at times in those games and didn't lose his cool. Which I wouldn't blame him if he did."

The loss leaves Oregon with 20 wins on the regular season, which should still put the Ducks in the NCAA Tournament, though a win Saturday in the opening round of the Pacific-10 Conference Tournament would strengthen Oregon's position. And Saturday's loss didn't do much to hurt Oregon's March Madness seed, because the Ducks were able to hang with Arizona for most of the contest.

Oregon (20-9, 10-8 Pac-10) held the lead as late as 9:30 into the second half. But Arizona (25-2, 17-1) went on a run — as top-ranked teams tend to do — to effectively put Oregon away. The Wildcats' run was 17-2 before Oregon's Ian Crosswhite hit two free throws to make the score 69-58 in Arizona's favor with 6:29 left. Wildcats Salim Stoudamire and Jason Gardner hit their free throws down the stretch to keep Oregon from



Adam Amato Emerald

Jason Gardner, seen shooting over Andre Joseph in January, scored 27 points in Saturday's win.

getting any closer than the final margin of eight points.

"We did everything right in this game, I thought," Kent said. "We had four guys in double figures; we out-rebounded them; I thought it was a great defensive effort on our part. But the game got away."

Before Arizona's run, the Ducks had the Wildcats on the proverbial ropes behind Ridnour's leadership.

The junior guard broke Oregon's single-season assists record with his third assist of the game, which gave him 185 on the season. He fouled out, but ended

the game with seven assists and a team-high 26 points.

On Arizona's Senior Night, Gardner, a senior who has played the most minutes of any Wildcat ever, spearheaded the Arizona attack. He bested Ridnour with 27 points, and several of those points came in the key 17-2 run. His long three with 11:10 remaining was the second basket in the run, tied the game at 54, and tipped off the crowd that the Wildcats were ready to streak. The crowd responded accordingly, and two minutes

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