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# Ducks take split on road trip after UCLA outlasts Oregon

Oregon opens conference play at 1-1 after nearly beating UCLA, where it trailed by 22 at one point

By Jesse Thomas  
 Sports Reporter

Oregon nearly pulled off another miracle comeback at Pauley Pavilion on Sunday, but lost 81-74 for a 1-1 Pacific-10 Conference start.

It was reminiscent of last year's Pac-10 Tournament when Oregon (6-3 overall) pulled out the 75-74 comeback victory over UCLA in the semifinal game. On Sunday, the Ducks succumbed, but only after suffering through a 22-2 UCLA run.

It would have been a sixth-straight victory against UCLA (6-3 overall, 2-0 Pac-10) and Oregon's first 2-0 start on the road since the 1976-77 season, when Oregon defeated UCLA and USC.

At the 3:57 mark in the first half, UCLA opened it up. Oregon led 31-30 and proceeded to score just one field goal in the next 10 minutes, continuing into the second half.

The Bruins beat Oregon at its own game by scoring in transition offense. UCLA went on a 16-2 run to end the first half and scored the first nine points of the second half.

"Once they got their energy going they kept coming to the glass every single time," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent told KUGN (590 AM) Ra-

dio. "We did not execute our game plan in the first half of keeping this team off the boards."

After beginning the game shooting 4 of 6 from the three-point line, Oregon was looking to keep pace with the 14-of-23 showing in the 92-74 victory over USC on Friday night.

Oregon missed its next 10 attempts. The Bruins did all the little things to hold off Oregon. UCLA's 17 second-chance points helped lead it to victory.

The Ducks shot 40 percent for the night and 81 percent on free throws. Oregon's 28 percent from the three-point line was sub-par of its 45 percent average, which led the nation entering the game.

Oregon did a lot of things right, except allowing the Bruins to get ahead by 22 points.

The Ducks began to execute their game plan in the second half and brought the pressure defense.

It worked. "This is a team (UCLA) that isn't a very skilled team at breaking you down," Kent said. "We definitely can do some things there, it looked good with Jordan (Kent) at the point. We did not do a good job in the first half and they made us pay."

Oregon would have its run. At one point, senior Luke Jackson scored six of his 28 points and then caused turnovers on the next two Bruin possessions, allowing senior Andre Joseph to get a quick five points.

Jackson's 28 points in his 37 minutes pushed him over the 1,500 career point mark at Oregon. Joseph was Oregon's second-leading scorer with 16.

Oregon trailed 63-54 at the 8:41 mark. Redshirt freshman Jordan Kent then reached for a steal and dunked the ball in the backcourt to bring Oregon within seven.

With the chance to cut the deficit to three points, Oregon missed out. Jackson missed a reverse layup. Kent made only one of his two free throws off an intentional foul and Oregon couldn't convert on the ensuing possession.

Oregon managed to get within six points before having to repeatedly foul the Bruins, who made nearly every shot.

UCLA shot 25-for-32 from the free throw line for 78 percent. The Bruins were 58 percent entering the game — the worst in the Pac-10.

The Ducks forced UCLA into 17 turnovers compared to Oregon's eight. Oregon was outrebounded 38-27 in the game.

Oregon fought the entire comeback without their rookie point guard Aaron Brooks. Brooks only played the first six minutes before he got knocked out of bounds on a rebounding play, injuring his right hand.

The extent of the injury is still unknown. Brooks had his hand wrapped around a pop can for the remainder of the game and X-rays will be conducted when Oregon returns to Eugene.

Sophomore Brandon Lincoln played the extra minutes. Lincoln only had three points but did not turn the ball over. Freshman Mitch Platt played 15 minutes in the game and earned six points before fouling out in the second half.

Contact the sports reporter at [jessethomas@dailyemerald.com](mailto:jessethomas@dailyemerald.com).

# Harless, McBee lead Oregon, but Ducks shut out by 'Huskers

Oregon is again stymied by a Big 12 Conference foe, this time in a 41-0 loss at the hands of Nebraska

Scott Archer  
 Freelance Reporter

Although University students are just returning from vacation, the Oregon wrestling team has had anything but a break during the past three weeks.

## DUCK WRESTLING

Oregon's lessons moved from the classroom to the mat, with matches against then No. 1 Oklahoma State and No. 5 Nebraska — both Big 12 Conference powerhouses — over the winter break.

The Ducks' most recent loss came Saturday in a 44-0 decision to Nebraska. Oregon dropped to 0-3 on the season.

## HAGER

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Maroney was pivotal on two scoring drives. When Minnesota ran a drive of more than seven minutes in the second quarter, he was the catalyst, using 3 and 5-yard runs to break down the Oregon defense.

In the fourth quarter, he provided those same runs again, but at that point, they were far more important. Had he not gained 5 yards on the play

It was the second time in 20 years that the Ducks failed to score a single point in a match.

Coincidentally, Oregon was also held scoreless against Oklahoma State two weeks prior, 41-0, but before that, the team hadn't been held scoreless in a match since 1983.

"Nebraska is a tough team and they came out and wrestled hard," Oregon head coach Chuck Kearney said. "We came out a little tentative and again we made some beginner mistakes that we will need to work out."

Patience is being preached with a young Oregon squad this season, but the Ducks still feature several experienced wrestlers, including No. 16 Jason Harless.

Harless is the only Duck ranked nationally and provided one of Oregon's most closely contested matches Saturday, facing off against No. 18 Matt Keller in the 133-pound weight class. Harless lost a 9-3 decision.

prior to the final field goal, Lloyd would have been looking at a 47-yarder.

Who knows what five more yards would have meant. Maybe Junior Siavii's forearm would have gotten the ball just enough to give the Ducks the last-second victory. Maybe Keith Lewis' hand would have kept the ball from clearing that crossbar by no more than a few feet.

There were enough maybes from the game to last a lifetime and there's no doubt the Oregon coaches and players will think about

Sophomore Chet McBee proved to be the toughest Oregon wrestler for the Cornhuskers. McBee was edged out by James Pummel in the 174-pound match, 10-7.

"(The Cornhuskers) are a No. 5-ranked team and tonight they showed us why," Kearney said. "We will get back in the practice room and get ready for next week's tournament."

If Oregon hopes to use the lessons it learned from a tough December schedule, it will need to do so soon. The Ducks travel to Redmond on Jan. 9 for the Oregon Classic.

Oregon will face off with Army, Air Force and Cal State-Fullerton next week. The Ducks have five matches between Jan. 9 and Jan. 23.

In the meantime, Oregon hits the books along with the mats, hoping to show that its biggest lessons came not during finals week, but during winter break.

Scott Archer is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

them at times until the Ducks take on Indiana in the 2004 season opener on Sept. 11. For the time being, though, they can take solace in the fact that Minnesota, a team many expected to do far better things this season, needed the final seconds of the game in El Paso to subdue the Ducks.

So close.  
 Contact the sports editor at [hankhager@dailyemerald.com](mailto:hankhager@dailyemerald.com). His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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