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Best bet
Super Bowl:
Carolina vs. New England
3:25 p.m. Sunday, CBS

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Women's defense bullies Bruins

Oregon uses a strong start and quality defense to win a 'very important' game at UCLA

By Jon Roetman
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's basketball team pulled out a much needed road win Thursday, defeating UCLA 61-55 at Pauley Pavilion in Los Angeles.

Oregon (11-9 overall, 3-7 Pacific-10 Conference) led by as many as 16 in the second half in its best conference road performance of the season.

After the Ducks built a 29-18 half-time lead, UCLA (9-10, 4-6) opened the second half on a 7-0 run to pull within

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four. Oregon responded with a basket by Andrea Bills and a pair of three-pointers by Chelsea Wagner to regain control of the contest at 37-25.

Oregon lead by no less than six the rest of the way, avoiding the type of second-half meltdown that had hampered it lately.

"This is a very important victory for our team," Oregon head coach Bev Smith told KSCR (1320 AM) Radio after the game. "As close as we came to the Arizona schools, we just could feel it. We knew that we had it in our capabilities to put teams away."

UCLA used a full-court press to overcome a 14-point second half deficit to win the season's first meeting with the Ducks on Jan. 4 at McArthur Court. Oregon handled the Bruin's pressure much better Thursday, closing out a confidence-building win.

"I thought we did what we needed to do in terms of the press," Smith said. "I think we've turned the corner and (players) understand that they have to be disciplined and make the little things happen rather than make a big play."

Wagner overcame a 1 of 7 first-half shooting performance to finish with a team-high 17 points. The Springfield native connected on a game-high five three pointers and has led the team in scoring in three consecutive games.

"We talked about being aggressive," Smith said. "You need to know your strengths. Chelsea is a shooter and shooters are going to go through phases where maybe the ball isn't dropping like it should, but you have to keep shooting."

Oregon also had one of its best defensive performances of the season. The Ducks held UCLA sophomore Nikki Blue — a first team All Pac-10 selection last season — scoreless for the first 36 minutes of the game. The 5-foot-8 guard entered the game averaging 14.8 points per game, but could only muster six against the Ducks Thursday.

Bruin sophomore Lisa Willis lead all scorers with 20 points and freshman Noelle Quinn added 11 points and grabbed 15 rebounds for UCLA.

Blue, Willis and Quinn combined to shoot 15 of 48 from the field.

"Absolutely just an amazing defensive job by our perimeter players," Smith

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Danielle Hickey Photo Editor

James Davis had 13 points for the Ducks and fought through leg cramps in the second half of Oregon's win.

Ducks hold off California, move into tie for second

The Ducks grind their way to the team's fifth win during Pac-10 play

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

The game that was expected to be for third place in the Pacific-10 Conference ended up meaning just a little bit more Thursday at McArthur Court.

It was an important win for Oregon, one that gives the team a tie for second place in the Pac-10 after Arizona lost to Washington in Seattle. That's especially heartwarming for Oregon head coach

Ernie Kent and the Ducks, who lost to the Wildcats less than a week ago.

"I think that's a compliment to these guys,"

Crosswhite, Anderson plague Cal's low-post offense in win

Oregon's big men held Amit Tamir to two points on the night and kept Leon Powe at bay in the Ducks' 12-point win

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

Cal's Amit Tamir is the second-leading scorer and rebounder for the Golden Bears, averaging 11.4 points and 5.2 rebounds per game.

He's the sole senior and veteran of the starting lineup and was shooting 42.5 percent from the

Kent said. "For this team to be battling for second place (is great)."

Luke Jackson scored a team-high 17 points, and Oregon held off a late California surge for a 68-56 win over the Golden Bears. With the win, the Ducks improved to 5-3 in conference play.

"It was great to get through this game," Kent said.

Winning the game meant battling a late California charge that pulled the Golden Bears (8-9 overall, 4-4 Pac-10) to within six points with 3:04 left in the second half. The Ducks (10-5) scored nine of the next 12 points en route to the win, their 36th in the last 38 games at McArthur Court.

That was a slight letdown after a first half that saw Oregon jump out to a 37-20 lead at halftime. The Ducks kept California from shooting from the perimeter, and for the most part, kept the Golden Bears from cycling the ball down low.

Oregon shot 60.9 percent in the first half and was

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three-point line entering Thursday's matchup with Oregon.

The Oregon big men forgot to look at Tamir's statistics.

Tamir didn't make a single field goal in Oregon's 68-56 win. He shot 0 for 8 on field goals and was 0 for 3 from the three-point line. The center scored only two points off of free throws.

"That was my main assignment, Tamir," senior Jay Anderson said. "Anywhere he caught the ball, couple feet past the NBA three-point line, just not let

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Swinnen, Spencer lead UO in victory

The Oregon men's tennis team stays undefeated at home behind strong doubles and singles play

By Alex Tam
Freelance Reporter

The men's tennis players can let their emotions get the best of them and, at the same time, inspire them to a new level.

This time, Oregon players (2-0 overall, 0-0 Pacific-10 Conference) took advantage of their emotions en route to a 5-2 victory over Brigham Young (1-2) at the Student Tennis Center Thursday.

Oregon swept the doubles side to earn the first point of the dual match after being led by the No. 1 team of junior Sven Swinnen and sophomore Arron Spencer. The duo came back from a 2-4 deficit by winning six of the next seven games to defeat Brigham Young's Erik Nyman and Nima Roshan 8-5 in one of several emotional matches throughout the night.

Head coach Chris Russell said he likes what he has seen from his team at the start of the 2004 regular season.

"The guys are (playing) better than last week," Russell said. "We definitely made some progress. Our guys are doing a good job in doubles right now."

At the No. 2 position, Switzerland natives junior Manuel Kost and sophomore Thomas Bieri started their doubles match by winning the first five games, including two break points to carry them to an 8-2 defeat.

"We played very well in doubles," Kost said. "We had good returns and

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Danielle Hickey Photo Editor

Sven Swinnen defeated Brigham Young's Erik Nyman in straight sets, 6-4, 7-5, on Thursday.