

Van Exel blazes in fourth, lifts Blazers over Warriors

The 11-year veteran scores 13 fourth-quarter points and helps the Blazers defeat his former team 78-75

BY JANIE MCCAULEY
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OAKLAND, Calif. — Nick Van Exel scored 13 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter against his former team, leading the Portland Trail Blazers past the Golden State Warriors 78-75 Wednesday night in the season opener for both teams.

Mike Dunleavy missed two 3-pointers in the final seven seconds, including one at the buzzer, spoiling

the NBA debut of Warriors coach Mike Montgomery.

Shareef Abdur-Rahim added 18 points, five rebounds and four assists for the Blazers, whose mid-season shakeup last season wasn't enough to keep them from missing the playoffs for the first time in 22 years.

Zach Randolph, who signed an \$84 million, six-year contract extension Monday, had 13 points and 10

rebounds for Portland.

Van Exel, injured for much of his only season with the Warriors a year ago, was booed during pregame introductions and again when he entered the game with 2:15 left in the first quarter. Fans hollered at him again whenever he touched the ball.

When Van Exel made his second 3-pointer of the fourth quarter with 8:16 remaining to give Portland the lead for good, he nodded his head to taunt the crowd.

Dunleavy led the rebuilt Warriors with 17 points. Troy Murphy had 15 points and 11 rebounds.

Golden State's Dale Davis missed two free throws with 54 seconds left, then Murphy missed a long jumper moments later.

Montgomery took over the Warriors after 18 successful seasons at Stanford, and this game marked the start of the latest Chris Mullin era. Mullin, who spent 13 of his 16 NBA seasons with Golden State, is the team's new executive vice president of basketball operations and insists this club has the talent to end a 10-year playoff drought.

Portland scored seven unanswered points to start the final period. Van Exel did all his damage in 23 minutes, shooting 8-for-16. He also had five rebounds and four assists.

Jason Richardson and Murphy shot a combined 4-for-17 in the first half, two days after both received six-year contract extensions from the Warriors — Richardson for \$70 million and Murphy for \$58 million.

The game's opening minutes were ugly for Golden State.

The team started 1-for-9 from the

floor, Dunleavy shot an airball, a jumper by Richardson clanged off the front of the rim and Golden State committed three turnovers. The Warriors responded with a 23-point second quarter to take a 39-37 halftime lead.

Murphy missed his first five free throws.

Notes

Blazers C Joel Przybilla will miss about 10 days with a sore arch in his left foot. ... Portland has won 13 of the last 19 against Golden State in Oakland. ... The Warriors fell to 15-28 in season openers since moving to the West Coast. ... The game drew 15,351. ... Notorious Warriors fan Mark Anthony Jones, a season ticket holder the last nine seasons who is well known around the league for his heckling, finally renewed his seats for a 10th year last week. He had considered taking his money elsewhere when the team missed the playoffs again. "I'll give it a shot and see what happens," he said. "I'll give Mullin at least one year."

Volleyball: Ducks aim to block Wildcat win

Continued from page 13

(Westendorf) and Sarah," Ferreira said. "Outside hitters get the most attempts and score the most points out of anybody on the team. When you lose your top two point scorers, it definitely throws you into a bit of a bind.

"Our core players deserve a lot of credit. Kelly (Russell) and Katie (O'Neil) have been the anchors and some of the younger players have been gaining experience match after match."

Both Russell and O'Neil posted career-highs in each of their positions' most important statistic against Washington State. Russell, an outside hitter, landed a match-high 25 kills. O'Neil, a libero, collected 43 digs, also a match-high and good for third on the Pacific-10 Conference all-time

list for one match.

Oregon (9-12 overall, 1-10 Pac-10) faces off against No. 22 Arizona today in Tucson, Ariz. The Wildcats (13-8, 5-6) extended their streak to 12 consecutive wins and their all-time record to 32-8 with a sweep of the Ducks one month ago.

"Arizona has one prime player in Kim Glass and as a team they take their cues from her," Ferreira said. "I think we have a higher level of ball control than Arizona and we need to serve well."

Ferreira believes if the Ducks can contain Glass with a double block or other situational defensive adjustments and force Arizona to resort to other attack options, they will have a good chance of finishing on top. Glass, a junior, recorded 15 kills in the last contest against Oregon.

Arizona State (8-12, 3-8) earned its

first league win by defeating Oregon in four games after starting 0-4 in conference play. The Sun Devils have won 13 straight against Oregon, but they find themselves in another four-match skid going into their home-stand against the Oregon schools.

"Last time we played Arizona State, I thought they served well and took us a little bit out of our own offense," Ferreira said. "They block well and they serve well. I think that is what their two primary factors are."

Ferreira explained that Oregon will have to offensively outplay Arizona State's entire squad of young players devoted to its system.

"If we can reach our kill percentage and attack error percentage goals, we'll win both matches," Ferreira said.

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Soccer: Duck injuries cause negative scoring margin

Continued from page 13

then-No. 5 Portland.

For her career, Mintz has 19 shots, two shots on goal, two goals, four assists and eight points.

In the backfield with Mintz is fellow senior Baird. Despite battling numerous injuries throughout her career, Baird has played in 65 matches and has started 43 of those.

"(Baird) has always had injury-related challenges," Steffen said. "She never really had a year like she had envisioned and she had to work hard to overcome (the injuries)."

Baird suffered a serious ankle injury this spring but has returned to play in 13 matches this season for the Ducks, tallying 614 minutes and two shots — both of them on goal.

For her career, Baird has 18 shots, nine shots on goal, one goal, one assist and three points.

The Ducks also have one other senior on the team but after a spring knee injury, Elise Minvielle redshirted this season and will return in 2005.

Oregon's defense struggles with injuries

Because of all the injuries this year, the Ducks have been unable to make up deficits during matches. Only once this season has Oregon been able to

come back and tie a match. While this problem can be directly related to the fact that Oregon ranks last in every statistical category in the Pac-10 because of injuries, the lack of defense compounds the problem. The Ducks are the only team to have a negative scoring margin (-1.76).

Oregon is last in goals allowed (43) and shutouts (1). Conversely, they are ranked first in saves (94). Goalkeeper Dominique Lainez is third in the conference in saves (78) and is second in saves per game (4.88).

Arizona goalkeeper named player of the week

In the Pac-10, Arizona freshman goalkeeper McCall Smith was named the conference's player of the week for Oct. 26 - Nov. 1.

Smith led the Wildcats' defense to a pair of shutout wins against Southern California and then-No. 5 UCLA last week. Smith had six saves against USC which gave her nine shutouts on the season. She repeated her performance against UCLA, posting four saves against the team that leads the conference in goals scored with 37 for the season. Her 10th shutout marked the first-ever win for Arizona against UCLA in the 10-game series.

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The Other Coast

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