

Men's basketball

Ducks hand New Mexico first defeat

Oregon pressures opponents into 25.8 percent shooting in the last half to grab their second win

BY CLAYTON JONES
SPORTS EDITOR

A strong defensive effort in the second half helped the Oregon men's basketball team hold off a tough New Mexico squad and hand the Lobos their first defeat of the season, 79-75 at McArthur Court Monday night.

Led by strong defensive efforts from freshmen Maarty Leunen and Ray Schafer off the bench, the Ducks (2-0 overall) held the Lobos (4-1) to 25.8 percent shooting in the second half.

"We thought defense would be the key to this game," Oregon head coach

Ernie Kent said. "Our goal was to keep them under 35 percent, and we kept them under 39 percent. I'm proud the way this team stepped up and played defense against a very good basketball team."

The defense, combined with Oregon's 50.0 percent shooting led by Aaron Brooks' career-high 22 points and eight assists, appeared to be the difference for the Ducks.

While Oregon never trailed after junior Ian Crosswhite, who had 12 points, hit a three pointer early in the second half, New Mexico was within striking distance to the end.

With less than 17 seconds left in the game and trailing 78-75, the Lobo's junior point guard Mark Walters sprinted up the court. Driving down the left side of the lane, his footing slipped out from under him and the ball trickled out of bounds, giving possession to Oregon.

Despite shaky free-throw shooting at the end of the game, the Ducks secured the victory.

In the first half, Oregon had troubles guarding New Mexico for-

wards Danny Granger and David Chiotti down low. They combined to score 22 of the Lobos 43 first-half points.

Kent said going to a zone defense in the second half was essential for the Ducks' to slow down Granger and Chiotti.

"We had a hard time shutting down their big guys, so we wanted to take the inside away and make them a one-dimensional team," Kent said. "When Ray (Schafer) was in the game, he caused them both some problems, and Maarty Leunen also gave us some serious minutes."

The Lobos struggled behind the arc all game, shooting

24.1 percent, a sharp contrast to their previous games. New Mexico was connecting 44.8 percent of three-point shots coming into the game, which is why head coach Ritchie McKay said his team hasn't faced a zone this year.

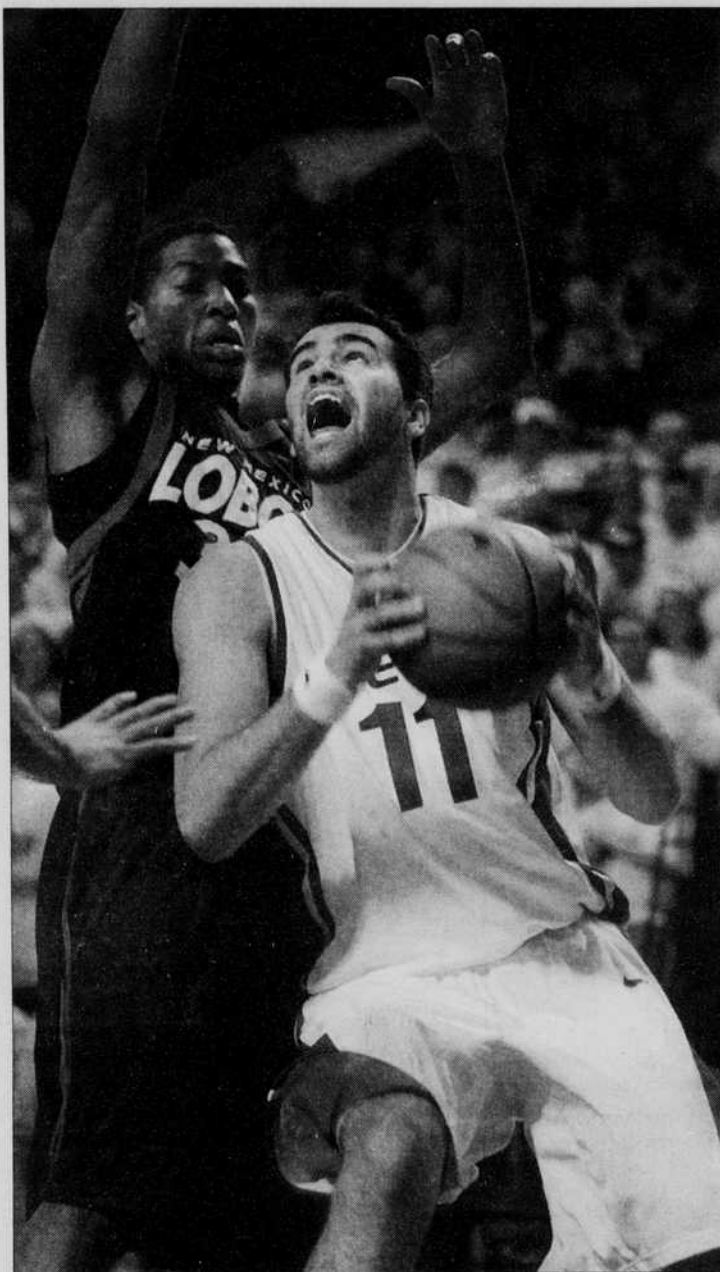
"Teams haven't zoned us because we've been shooting 44 percent from the three," McKay said. "I will promise you that we won't shoot 7 for 29 again."

New Mexico's main problem all night was slowing down the speedster Brooks.

"Aaron Brooks is like no other point guard in the Pac-10," McKay said. "He affects the game like Jason Kidd. His ability to get the ball from the free-throw line to the other end compromises so many defensive matchups."

Brooks' play of the game wasn't on offense, but on defense.

New Mexico's Tony Danridge, a 6-foot-5 guard, went up for a dunk when Brooks, listed at 6-foot, came out of nowhere to swat the ball away and get the crowd of



ERIK R. BISHOFF | PHOTOGRAPHER

Oregon forward Ian Crosswhite finished with 12 points Monday during the Ducks' 79-75 victory against New Mexico at McArthur Court. The junior's three-pointer two minutes into the second half gave Oregon a lead it didn't relinquish.

9,087 on its feet.

"It opened up and he looked at me like I as short or something," Brooks said. "He went soft, and I got the block."

The Ducks travel next to West Virginia to play Marshall Saturday.

claytonjones@dailyemerald.com

Jordan Kent vital force in victory over Lobos

Primarily a defensive stopper last season, Kent breaks out offensive game for New Mexico

BY JON ROETMAN
SENIOR SPORTS REPORTER

Jordan Kent the athlete took a huge step toward improving to Jordan Kent the basketball player Monday.

More known for his athleticism and accomplishments in track and field, Kent played the best game of his Oregon basketball career to help the Ducks seal a 79-75 win against New Mexico at McArthur Court.

The redshirt sophomore scored 14 points and swiped three steals while knocking down 6 of 8 field-goal attempts in 20 minutes.

The majority of Kent's prior contributions to the team came at the defensive end. That changed Monday when the 6-foot-5 swingman converted on several fastbreak layins and drained a big three-pointer with the Ducks down by six midway through the first half.

"(Kent) had a breakout game," sophomore point guard Aaron Brooks said.

While Kent did many things well, one play stood out above all the rest.

With less than 12 minutes remaining in the second half, Kent, who was isolated on the left wing against Lobo forward Sean Phaler, drove past the lanky freshman and sent the crowd into an uproar with a thunderous, one-handed dunk.

Kent said the play — which is called "21 rip" — was designed to isolate a slower defender on the wing.

"I put a move on him, and he bit more than I thought he did," Kent said. "I just figured I'd go to the hole hard. It just kind of opened up really big."

The move impressed one particular teammate, who teased Kent after the game.

"It really surprised me," Brooks joked. "I didn't know he could dunk."

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Senior Laura Harmon (615) tries to pass Colorado's Natalie Florence (170) at the 2004 NCAA Cross Country Championships Monday. Harmon placed 31st and became Oregon's 32nd female All-American runner since 1974.

GEOFF THURNER | OREGON MEDIA SERVICES

Duck cross country

Harmon steadily races to capture All-American honors in Indiana

Senior finishes 31st out of 255 female racers from across the nation in NCAA Cross Country Championship race

BY BEAU EASTES
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

Laura Harmon saved her best race of the season for just the right time. The senior from Vancouver, Wash., took All-American honors Monday at the NCAA Cross Country Championships in Terre Haute, Ind.

"It's exactly how I wanted the season to end," Harmon said.

Oregon's top runner all season, Harmon finished 31st (21:08) at the LaVern Gibson Championship Course against the nation's best 255 female harriers.

"She ran an awesome race," cross country head coach Marnie Mason said. "Everything played out how we

planned."

Harmon started off the race with her usual patient approach, waiting until the last 800 meters to make her move.

"I ran pretty conservatively," Harmon said, but added that "it felt aggressive for me."

After the first mile, Harmon was near 70th place, moving up to around 60th by the half-way mark. With a little less than a mile left, she positioned herself in the 38th spot. To finish the race, Harmon picked off several more runners in the final 400-meter stretch, securing an All-American end to her cross country career.

"She had an awesome finish," Ma-

son said. "When I saw her with a half-mile to go, I knew with her speed she would be in the All-American hunt."

Harmon had additional motivation for the NCAA meet after a sub-par performance at the West Regional.

"She wasn't super pleased with regional, but it gave her fuel to do well here," Mason said.

Mason was also happy with Harmon's composure at her first individual national race (Harmon competed as a freshman with the 2000 Duck cross country team at nationals).

"The impressive thing was how intelligently she competed in her first time at the national level and wasn't shaken during the race," Mason said. "It shows her maturity and how big a goal being All-American was."

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