

■ In my opinion



CLAYTON JONES
SEVENTH INNING STRETCH

Redlands, for the love of basketball, play defense

Usually I step to my computer with opinions to share about the world of sports.

Red Moss did this, Oregon did that, and so on.

But the other day one of our sports copy editors brought to my attention one of the oddest statistical anomalies I have ever seen in sports.

He showed me the University of Redlands men's basketball team's Web site and I was amazed.

This team is averaging 141.4 points per game. I had to look twice.

These guys had to be playing longer games or with each basket counting for 5 and 10 points, right?

Nope. Twenty minute halves by twos and threes.

To put this in perspective, North Carolina leads the nation in scoring at the Division I level with 92.9 points per game. Same 20 minute halves, same scoring system.

And the more in depth I looked at this team, the more amazing it became.

They have hoisted 943 three-point attempts in 13 games, making 317 of them (an average of 24.4 per game). The Bulldogs have made more three-pointers than any other team in their conference — the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference — has attempted.

I became transfixed the more I read and researched. It was intoxicating looking at all the ordinary stats.

This team uses what its Web site calls a "frenzied" defense to press the whole game. It has 21 men on its roster and hardly any of the players play over 15 minutes per game, meaning fresh, well-rested players are coming into the game all the time.

The Bulldogs' leading scorer is Amir Mazarei, who averages 23.9 points per game. Their second leading scorer is Carson Soforo, who in their 172-107 defeat of La Sierra, scored 34 points in 13 minutes of play. He made 10 of 18 three-pointers.

How do you shoot 18 three-pointers in 13 minutes?

In that same game, Redlands scored 93 points — in one half. La Sierra put up 53 points and was down by 40 at the half. Heck, Oregon only scored 55 points the entire game in its victory over Washington State on Saturday. What does the La Sierra coach say after a half like that?

"Well guys we put up good offensive numbers in the first half, but has everybody forgotten how to play defense?"

Redlands leads the conference in steals per game with an eye-popping 18.2.

Six Bulldogs are averaging double figures in points and eight players are averaging more than eight points a game.

The numbers go on and on.

Now you wonder if this team has even lost a game.

Oh yeah. Redlands is a 9-4 team. How do you lose four games when you average more than 140 points a game?

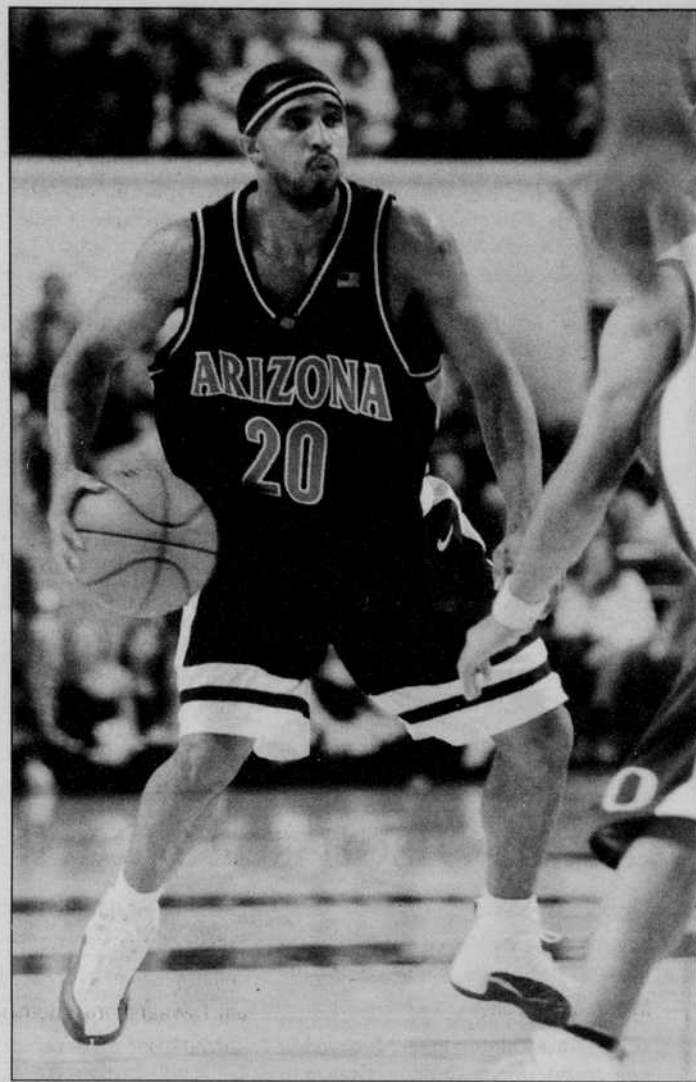
Easy. When you are giving up 129.3 points per game.

The team's opponents' combined field goal percentage is close to 62 percent.

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■ Men's basketball

Oregon gears up for No. 13 Arizona



DANIELLE HICKEY | PHOTO EDITOR

Arizona guard Salim Stoudamire, seen here last season, leads the Wildcats' offense, averaging 15.7 points per game. As of Tuesday, he ranks in the top 10 nationally in three-point shooting percentage at 56 percent.

Head coach Ernie Kent hopes his Ducks can slow down Salim Stoudamire and the potent Wildcats

BY JON ROETMAN
SENIOR SPORTS REPORTER

Ernie Kent was determined to get his point across.

As the Oregon men's basketball team practiced at McArthur Court Tuesday, the Ducks' head coach was relentless in instructing his guards to fulfill their defensive responsibilities in transition.

Players like freshmen Malik Hairston and Bryce Taylor were told to defend the perimeter — more specifically the wings — at all costs and always know the whereabouts of a certain someone.

"You have to get out there," Kent yelled to his young guards. "If you don't, he will light you up."

No. 13 Arizona comes to Eugene tonight at 7:30 p.m., and that means Salim Stoudamire's scoring talents will be on display.

Yes, Stoudamire is the certain someone Kent wants the Ducks to keep an eye on. And yes, Kent's concern is warranted.

The senior guard torched the Ducks for six three-pointers and 37 points during last season's 100-87 Wildcat win at Mac Court and he doesn't appear to be cooling off anytime soon. The Portland native connected on 4 of 7 three-pointers and scored 32 points during Saturday's come-from-behind victory against UCLA. For the season, he's averaging 15.7 points per game and shooting an impressive 56 percent from behind the arc.

"To me, (Stoudamire) is the best shooter in the country when you look at his numbers," Kent said. "He has an incredible ability to take over a game and to dominate a game. We really have to work to limit his touches and his shots. If you don't find him quick in transition, he has the ability to shoot it beyond the NBA three-point line."

But limiting Stoudamire's touches doesn't guarantee much of anything. The Wildcats are loaded with talent at every position, including center Channing Frye (14.3 ppg), forwards Hassan Adams (12.2) and Ivan Radenovic (8.5) and guard Mustafa Shakur (8.5). Arizona (14-3 overall, 4-1 Pacific-10 Conference) can score from anywhere on the court and will push the youthful Ducks in every facet of the game.

"It's one of the teams you watch growing up," Taylor said. "Now we get our chance to go at them. We'll definitely be ready to play on Thursday."

Other than a slow start in Seattle last week, Oregon (11-3, 3-2) has received strong performances from its freshmen of late and will need more of the same tonight. Taylor dropped a career-high 26 points Saturday against Washington State, while Hairston added a solid 10. And while many of the Ducks struggled on Thursday against Washington, forward

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■ Women's basketball

Injury-depleted Ducks look for depth

After losing Chelsea Wagner to a season-ending injury, Oregon will rely on its bench in Arizona

BY STEPHEN MILLER
SPORTS REPORTER

Size has been Oregon's biggest advantage over opponents this season, but now the women's basketball team will rely on its depth to get through tonight's game at Arizona.

With the loss of junior Chelsea Wagner, the Ducks have called upon senior Brandi Davis, sophomore Cicely Oaks and freshman Kaela Chapdelaine to fill the void at the No. 2 guard position.

"Unfortunately, injuries are part of the game," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "But our depth and experience has really helped us weather it."

Even when Andrea Bills or Cathrine Kraayeveld just need a breather for Oregon (12-4 overall, 5-2 Pacific-10 Conference), freshman Gabrielle Richards is ready to come off the bench and see some action.

Smith said that every team must endure injuries and fatigue throughout the season, so usually no team is at a large disadvantage.

The Wildcats (12-5, 4-3) were just recently without junior

Shawntinice Polk for a couple games but she is back at full strength. The 6-foot-5 center leads the Pac-10 in blocked shots and is second in field-goal percentage (.611).

"She's one of the best post players in the conference," said Bills, a senior center looking forward to a matchup with Polk under the basket. "She's always a challenge and I'm really excited about it."

On paper, each team is represented by veteran players who lead or rank high in various statistical categories.

With 853 rebounds, Kraayeveld tops the active career list in that category and her nine rebounds per game is second in the conference this season. Bills graces the career lists at third in rebounds (715) and blocks (85). Corrie Mizusawa leads the Pac-10 in assists this season and for her career.

Polk is the conference's active career leader in blocks with 19 and second in rebounds (801) and points (1,292). Senior guard Dee-Dee Wheeler leads the Pac-10 in two career categories:

points (1,717) and steals (264). She is second in the conference averaging 18.5 points per game this season.

"They're extremely talented basketball players and they know each other very well," Smith said. "I don't think you can stop two players of that magnitude, but you can limit and challenge them."

"Our team is up for it and it will be an interesting measurement of how we can play two very dominant players like that."

Oregon's depth also shows with players like Richards, who has already faced Polk in international play.

"I played against her in the World Championships where she represented the U.S.A.," said Richards, a native of Australia. "She's really strong and really tough. She's a big force down low so it's going to take a lot to stop her."

Chapdelaine is confident that her team will be able to contain Arizona.

"They're definitely strong players but I think our team defense will be able to hold them," she said.

Smith said that along with defense, her team has to focus on ball control, which it lacked in

Los Angeles earlier this season, leading to 40 turnovers in two losses.

"We have revisited those two things and we are doing a much better job," Smith said. "Now the opportunity presents itself to go down and test how far we've come."

The Ducks have not beaten the Wildcats since 2001, but they lead the all-time series 22-16. Arizona has won seven straight meetings Oregon and its last four meetings at home against the Ducks.

Last year in Arizona, Polk scored 23 points to go with nine rebounds in the Wildcats' 84-58 rout of the Ducks in front of 5,003 fans at the McKale Center. Oregon was done in by 25 turnovers in the game.

The Ducks haven't held a road record above .500 since going 10-5 in the 1999-00 season. Oregon is 3-3 away from home this season.

Arizona is 7-1 at home this season with its only home loss coming from then-No. 8 Stanford, 78-66, Jan. 9.

Oregon is 17-25 on the road in Smith's four-year tenure and holds a 22-29 all-time road record.

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