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# Washington wins first-ever Pac-10 Tournament title

BY BETH HARRIS  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — If momentum heading into Saturday's Pacific-10 Conference title game was the deciding factor, top-seeded Arizona had the obvious edge against Washington. After outscoring its first two Pac-10 Tournament opponents by a combined 56 points, the Wildcats, with the help of sharpshooting senior Salim Stoudamire, seemed too hot to cool off.

But despite another outstanding performance by Stoudamire, Nate Robinson and the 14th-ranked Huskies, managed to shift that momentum in their own direction.

Washington outscored Arizona 19-4 over the final 5:12 after trailing by six points and pulled off the 81-72 victory over the No. 8 Wildcats.

The Huskies (27-5) earned the conference's automatic bid to the NCAA tournament, although Arizona (27-6) is guaranteed a berth, too.

"It feels great," said Robinson, who scored six points — his only ones of the second half — in the final 1:07 of the game. "We're proud of the whole University of Washington because we did it for them."

Washington coach Lorenzo Romar compared the game to a prize fight.

"One punch after another," he said. "Arizona brings out the best in us because for so long they have been the best."

The Huskies won their three tourney games by a total of 17 points.

The Huskies dominated the boards, 41-26, including a 17-8 offensive edge. All but two of Washington's nine players grabbed rebounds, with Robinson getting five.

"No question the team that played the hardest won the ballgame," Arizona coach Lute Olson said. "They're one of the few teams that can send five people to the offensive boards and are quick enough to recover defensively."

Robinson and Tre Simmons led the Huskies with 18 points each and Jamaal Williams added 16.

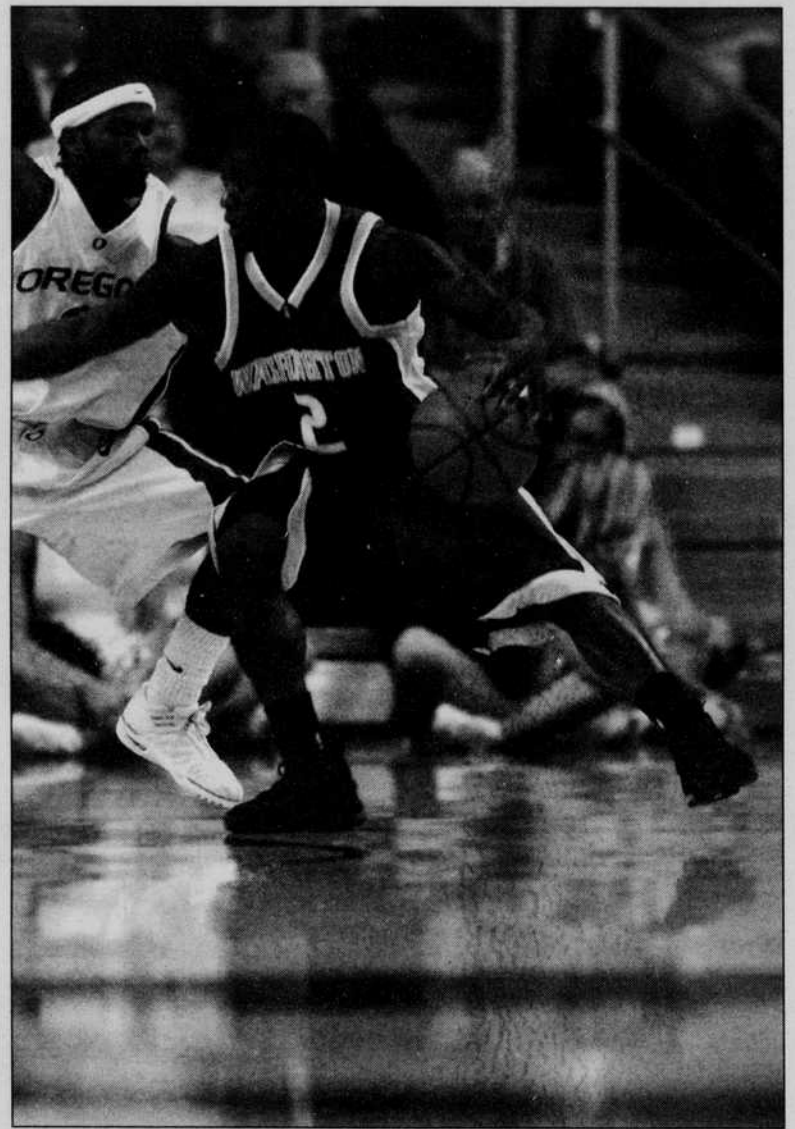
Stoudamire led Arizona with 37 points — two off both his career high and Reggie Miller's tournament record. Stoudamire hit seven three-pointers and the teams combined for 17 three-pointers — both tournament records. He was selected the tourney MVP.

Stoudamire scored 17 straight to end the first half.

"You got to keep telling the other guys he doesn't want to pass you the ball and that's what we did," said Robinson, a sly smile on his face. "A couple whispers ... it kills the other team's confidence."

Robinson defended Stoudamire and compared it to playing without his hands. "You just got to run around and chase him," he said. "We said, 'He's going to score, but we can't let the role players get their 15 and 8.'"

Robinson joked that he told



DANIELLE HICKEY | PHOTO EDITOR

Washington guard Nate Robinson's late-game heroics helped lead the Huskies past Arizona on Saturday for the school's first-ever Pac-10 Tournament championship.

Stoudamire the Arizona star was going to have to score 100 points to beat the Huskies. Asked if he really said that, Robinson replied, "No, because he would have gone for 50."

Stoudamire set the Pac-10 career record for three-pointers with 329, breaking the mark of 323 by Arizona State's Stevin Smith from 1991-94. The senior finished with 107, joining Steve Kerr, cousin Damon Stoudamire and Jason Gardner as the only Wildcats to top the century mark in a season.

But he couldn't help the Wildcats to their record fifth tourney title. They are 4-1 in championship games.

"I wanted to be the guy that everyone looks up to, but at the same time, we got to stay within the team concept," Stoudamire said. "We got away from that."

The Huskies scored six straight and tied it at 70 on two free throws by Bobby Jones after Chris Rodgers was called for holding with 3:34 remaining.

Arizona's Channing Frye scored inside before Will Conroy hit his fourth three-pointer of the half for a 73-72 lead with 2:15 to go. Frye finished with 14 points.

With Frye and Stoudamire tightly guarded, Hassan Adams missed a jumper from the top of the key.

The 5-foot-9 Robinson fearlessly drove inside and scored to keep the Huskies ahead 75-72 with 1:07 left.

"Nate always comes up big when the game is on the line," Olson said.

Stoudamire tripped and fell in front of Arizona's bench, losing the ball out of bounds with 46 seconds left.

Asked if he was tripped, Stoudamire said, "I think so, but obviously the ref didn't. You can't let referees decide the game. We should've been ahead by a lot more."

A smiling Olson said he also believed Stoudamire was tripped. "But who am I to question that call? That one call didn't cost us the game," Olson said.

Then Stoudamire fouled Robinson, who made both free throws, for a 77-72 lead with 34 seconds left. Simmons made two free throws, then Stoudamire's jumper bounced off the rim with 26 seconds to go.

Robinson stole the ball at mid-court, got fouled and made both for an 81-72 lead with 19 seconds left.

## NCAA: UCLA grabs one of last at-large bids

Continued from page 3B

The No. 2 seed in the Albuquerque, N.M., regional was Wake Forest, which was considered a sure No. 1 seed candidate; but the Demon Deacons lost in the ACC tournament quarterfinals to North Carolina State. Gonzaga, the West Coast Conference regular season and tournament champion, was seeded third and Louisville, which swept the Conference USA titles, was No. 4.

North Carolina, which lost to Georgia Tech in the ACC tournament semifinals, has defending national champion Connecticut as its No. 2 seed with Kansas at No. 3. Florida, which beat Kentucky in the SEC title game, is at No. 4.

The Tar Heels will face the winner of Tuesday's play-in game in Charlotte on Friday. Oakland (12-18), which won the Mid-Continent Conference tournament, will play Alabama A&M, the Southwestern Athletic Conference champion, on Tuesday night in Dayton, Ohio. Oakland is the only team in the field with a sub-.500 record.

Duke, which won the ACC tournament Sunday for the sixth time in seven years, has Kentucky as its No. 2 seed with Oklahoma the third seed and Syracuse, the Big East tournament champion, the fourth seed. Duke will open Friday in Charlotte, N.C., against Delaware State.

The Big East and Big 12 each have

six teams in the field, one short of the record seven, while the Big Ten has five. The other multiple-bids leagues were Conference USA and the Pac-10 with four each, the Missouri Valley Conference with three and the Big West Conference, Mountain West Conference, West Coast Conference and Western Athletic Conference with two each.

The last of the at-large teams were all No. 11 seeds: Alabama-Birmingham (21-10), Northern Iowa (21-10) and UCLA (18-10).

Among the bubble teams that were not invited were: DePaul (19-10), Maryland (16-12), St. Joseph's (19-11) and Notre Dame (17-11).

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