

Pac-12 Women



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson
Washington’s Kelsey Plum, left, grabs Oregon State’s Jamie Weisner during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game Friday in Seattle.

Washington upsets No. 7 Oregon State

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Jazmine Davis scored 21 points, Aminah Williams added a career-high 20, and Washington beat No. 7 Oregon State 76-67 Friday night.

Kelsey Plum, the Pac-12’s leading scorer, had 17 points for the Huskies, although the Beavers’ defense made her scoring chances tough to come by. Chantel Oshahor added a career-high 13 rebounds to help Washington (17-6, 6-5) snap a two-game skid.

The Huskies also beat a top-10 team at home for the second time this season.

OREGON 70, WASHINGTON STATE 69 — At Pullman, Wash., Jillian Alleyne had 20 points and 19 rebounds and Oregon held on to defeat Washington State Friday night.

Lia Galdeira’s jumper with 13 seconds left pulled

Washington State within one but the Cougars missed four free throws and short jumper before the clock expired.

ARIZONA STATE 53, STANFORD 52 — At Tempe, Ariz, Quinn Dornstauder scored a career-high 22 points and blocked a key shot down the stretch as No. 10 Arizona State rallied from a 12-point second-half deficit to beat No. 12 Stanford 53-52 on Friday night.

Pac-12 Standings			
	Conf	Ovr	Str
Arizona St.	10-1	21-2	W3
Oregon St.	10-1	20-2	L1
California	9-2	17-5	W6
Stanford	9-2	17-6	L1
Washington	6-5	17-6	W1
UCLA	5-6	9-13	W1
Washington St.	4-7	13-9	L3
USC	4-7	12-10	W1
Oregon	4-7	11-11	W3
Colorado	3-8	10-12	L1
Arizona	1-10	8-14	L3
Utah	1-10	7-15	L2
Sunday’s Games			
Colorado at USC, Noon			
California at Arizona St., 1 p.m.			
Oregon St. at Washington St., 2 p.m.			
Stanford at Arizona, 2 p.m.			
Utah at UCLA, 2 p.m.			
Oregon at Washington, 6 p.m.			

Pac-12 Men

Kent prepares for Eugene return

Albany Democrat-Herald

EUGENE — Dana Altman has been in Ernie Kent’s shoes before.

During his first season at the helm of the Oregon men’s basketball team, Altman returned to Creighton — where he coached for 16 years — for the finals of the College Basketball Invitational.

Altman’s Ducks dropped the opener of the three-game CBI finals, but won the final two at home to claim the tournament title.

Kent, who is in his first season at Washington State, played for Oregon and was Ducks’ head coach for 16 seasons before he was relieved of his duties in 2010.

Sunday’s matchup at Matthew Knight Arena will be Kent’s first trip to Eugene as a head coach since his firing.

“It becomes a different scenario altogether, having to come back into Eugene where you spent half your adult life,” said Kent, who coached the Ducks to five NCAA Tournament appearances and two elite eights. “It will be a different set of emotions, but once the game gets going it becomes just another game where you have to do the things you need to do to have an opportunity to be successful.”

Kent also noted that he called several games at Matthew Knight as a color analyst for Pac-12 Networks. But facing his former team on the road will be a much different experience.

The surprising Cougars (10-12, 4-6 Pac-12), picked to finish 11th in the conference, edged the



AP Photo/Greg Wahl-Stephens

Washington State coach Ernie Kent speaks with Ike Iroegbu during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game against Oregon State in Corvallis on Thursday. Oregon State won 55-50.

Ducks 108-99 in overtime three weeks ago.

Altman said returning to Creighton a year after leaving for Eugene was difficult because of the relationships he left behind.

“It’s probably similar. I was at Creighton for 16 years and Ernie was here for 13. Those are long periods of time,” Altman said. “But I have such great feelings for Creighton, and a lot of those guys were my guys that I recruited. So that’s what made it tough there. The fans were great to me for 16 years, and

they were great to me that night. But it was a lot different because my players were still there. Coach Kent’s guys are long gone.”

Altman also praised Kent for the job he’s done at WSU.

In the last meeting, Oregon (16-7, 6-4) couldn’t slow the Cougars down in a loss on the Palouse.

Senior guard Joseph Young poured in 32 points, but WSU shot 59 percent from the field (33 for 56) and 58 percent from 3-point range (14 for 24).

“They didn’t stop us, we didn’t stop them,” Altman said. “We are going to have a heck of a time stopping them, because our zone isn’t anywhere near where it needs to be, and that has given them some problems at times. But our zone hasn’t been effective against many people. So we’re just going to have to guard them and do a lot better job than we did last time.”

Junior forward Elgin Cook had a breakout performance on the Palouse, grabbing 10 rebounds to go along with a season-high 26 points.

In Pac-12 play, Cook is averaging 15.3 points per game.

“It’s just execution, we are executing the plays,” Cook said. “Every time I set a screen, every defender is collapsing on Joe, and I guess it’s giving me room to work.”

“He’s become really consistent in practice,” Altman said of Cook. “His mental focus has gotten better. He’s more in tune with things ... and because of that, his consistency in ball games has gone way up.”

Pac-12 Standings			
	Conf	Ovr	Str
Arizona	8-1	20-2	W6
Utah	7-2	17-4	W1
Oregon	6-4	16-7	W2
Oregon St.	6-4	15-7	W1
Stanford	6-4	15-7	L2
UCLA	6-4	14-9	W3
Colorado	4-5	11-10	L1
California	4-6	14-9	W3
Washington St.	4-6	10-12	L1
Arizona St.	3-6	11-11	L1
Washington	3-7	14-8	L4
USC	1-9	9-13	L7
Saturday’s Games			
Arizona at Arizona St., 1:30 p.m. (FOX)			
UCLA at California, 5 p.m.			
Utah at Colorado, 7 p.m. (PACN)			
Sunday’s Games			
Washington at Oregon St., 1:30 p.m. (FS1)			
Washington St. at Oregon, 4 p.m. (PACN)			
USC at Stanford, 5:30 p.m. (ESPN2)			

NBA

Warriors, Hawks big part of NBA’s new golden era

The San Antonio Spurs showed the way.

Yes, a true team can beat a handful of superstars.

Now, the Atlanta Hawks and the Golden State Warriors are following the same path with stunning results, signaling a change in the league’s power structure and, from all indications, a new golden age in the NBA.

Certainly, the game is as good as it’s ever been.

And, as more teams follow this inevitable trend toward a style built on ball movement and getting everyone involved, it’s only going to get better.

“It’s how you want to play. It’s how the game of basketball should be played,” Atlanta All-Star forward Paul Millsap said Friday before a highly anticipated matchup against the Warriors. “It looks better. It’s fun. Guys enjoy it.”

It’s certainly paying huge dividends in Atlanta, where a perennially middle-of-the-road (or worse) franchise has suddenly become the talk of the NBA. The Hawks are coming off a 19-game winning streak and hold a commanding lead in the Eastern Conference — without anyone averaging close to 20 points a game.

The West-leading Warriors aren’t quite as



PAUL NEWBERRY
AP Sports

Still, they play a San Antonio brand of hoops, with three other players averaging in double figures and a deep bench to share the load.

Curry and Thompson are their biggest outside threats, to be sure, but five of their teammates have attempted at least 50 3-pointers, demonstrating Golden State’s commitment to always finding the open man and having confidence that, whoever that is, he’ll hit the shot.

“It’s beautiful to watch,” Golden State coach Steve Kerr said.

While the Spurs have been relying on this team-first philosophy for years with great success, many stuck to the idea that a team had no chance of winning a title if it didn’t have one or two of the league’s best players.

Then came last year’s NBA Finals.

Miami had the best player on the planet,

LeBron James, and two pretty good sidekicks, Chris Bosh and Dwyane Wade. The Spurs countered with a team in every sense of the word; no one averaged more than 16.7 points during the regular season, but six players were in double figures.

The outcome was astonishing. San Antonio romped to the championship in a five-game blowout, its four victories by an average of 18 points.

While Kawhi Leonard is remembered as the breakout star from that series, it was pretty much business as usual for the Spurs. Tony Parker (18.0) was the team’s top scorer — more than 10 points a game less than James’ average — and five other players averaged at least 9.2.

“The trend a couple of years ago was loading up to one side of the floor, stopping the iso (isolation play),” Hawks guard Kyle Korver said. “A lot of teams kind of caught on to that. Then you see some of the success the Spurs had, some of these teams that get good players to buy into team basketball. When you do that, it’s really hard to guard.”

In Atlanta, the Hawks hired longtime Spurs assistant Mike Budeholzer before last season, hoping

he could instill the same concepts that worked so well for Gregg Popovich in San Antonio. General manager Danny Ferry knew he didn’t have a superstar, so he constructed the roster with the idea of having a bunch of guys capable of hitting the outside shot, from the point guard to the center.

It has worked better than anyone could’ve imagined.

By spreading the floor, the Hawks turn opponents into something resembling a rubber band, stretched thin until it finally breaks. Atlanta will shoot from pretty much anywhere, which almost makes it seem like they’ve slipped an extra player or two on the court.

The Warriors play much the same way, taking full advantage of NBA rule changes over the last few years that have opened up the offensive flow, allowed players to move unencumbered around the court, and pretty much eliminated the ugly, grinding style once viewed as a key to success.

“The product in the NBA has gotten better — dramatically better — over the last 10 years,” Kerr said. “Some of it is the rules changes. A lot of it is the influence of several coaches.”

For those expecting the next words out of his mouth to be “Gregg Popovich,” Kerr throws a change-up. He points to former Phoenix Suns coach Mike D’Antoni, who shook up the way rosters were constructed after first making a name for himself in Europe, by “playing smaller guys at the 4 (power forward) who can stretch out the defense, playing a lot of shooters.”

Now, there’s no reason for teams to totally tear themselves down when it’s time to rebuild, hoping to land a franchise player in the draft or free up enough cap space to pursue the next superstar to become available in free agency.

That will surely make it possible for more teams to compete for championships, as we’re already seeing this year with the improbable rise of Golden State and Atlanta.

“We’re not the Lakers, we’re not New York, we’re not teams that have won championships recently,” Curry said. “It’s kind of fun to switch things up a little bit. I think we’re ready for the moment.”

Paul Newberry is a national writer for The Associated Press. Write to him at pnewberry@tapat.com or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/pnewberry1963

From Thursday

No. 2 Gonzaga rallies to extend streak

Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — As soon as Gonzaga stopped giving the ball away, the Bulldogs shot their way to another victory.

Byron Wesley scored 17 points and keyed a crucial second-half run that helped No. 2 Gonzaga rally for its 16th straight win with a 77-63 victory over Santa Clara on Thursday night.

Kyle Wiltjer led the way with 22 points and Gary Bell Jr. added 16 for the Bulldogs (23-1, 11-0 West Coast Conference), who shot a season-high 69 percent from the field to overcome a sloppy first half and win the game.

“We had 10 turnovers in the first half,” Wesley said. “That’s unlike us. We knew once we started taking care

of the ball and make them take tough shots, we’d be fine.”

Jared Brownridge scored 25 points to lead the Bulldogs (11-13, 5-7), who have lost 26 straight games against ranked teams and 10 straight to the Bulldogs.

“We have to understand that if we play that hard all the time, we’ll win some games,” coach Kerry Keating said.

WCC Standings			
	Conf	Ovr	Str
Gonzaga	11-0	23-1	W16
St. Mary’s	9-2	17-5	L1
Pepperdine	8-4	17-5	W3
BYU	7-5	17-8	L1
San Diego	5-7	12-12	L1
Santa Clara	5-7	11-13	L3
Portland	4-7	13-10	W1
Loyola Mary.	4-8	8-16	W2
San Francisco	3-9	9-15	L4
Pacific	2-9	10-13	L4
Saturday’s Games			
BYU at Loyola Marymount, 1 p.m.			
Portland at Santa Clara, 5 p.m.			
San Diego at Pepperdine, 5 p.m.			
Pacific at St. Mary’s, 7 p.m.			
Gonzaga at San Francisco, 8:30 p.m. (ESPN2)			

NCAA Baseball

New ball, old favorites in college baseball this season

Associated Press

A few things to know as college baseball’s regular season begins on Feb. 13:

MORE OFFENSE? The flat-seam baseball makes its debut with the hope that it will counter the drop in offense since new bat standards were adopted in 2011. Coaches say research showing the ball travels farther than the old raised-seam ball has been confirmed in practices. The change should lead to more scoring in a sport that has long searched for the right balance between offense, pitching and safety.

FAMILIAR FAVORITES: Vanderbilt and Virginia played each other in last year’s College World Series finals, with the Commodores winning their first



AP Photo/Eric Francis
Pac-12 strike-out leader James Kaprielian of UCLA is poised for a big year after an impressive summer with the USA Collegiate National Team.

national championship in baseball. Both programs are among the early favorites to make it back to Omaha. Among the other schools that have high hopes: 2013 national champion UCLA, 2010 and 2011 champion South Carolina and 2011 runner-up Florida.

TALENTED TEXANS: It could be a banner season for several programs in the Lone Star State, an

area that’s long been home to some of the nation’s top talent. D1baseball.com has six teams from Texas in its preseason top 25, including No. 7 Houston, No. 8 TCU, No. 10 Texas, No. 13 Rice, No. 16 Texas Tech and No. 17 Texas A&M. Texas, Texas Tech and TCU all reached Omaha last season.

POWER ARMS: Many of college baseball’s biggest stars can be found on the

mound. Vanderbilt’s Walker Buehler and Carson Fulmer, Virginia’s Nathan Kirby, Duke’s Michael Matuella, Louisville’s Kyle Funkhouser and UCLA’s James Kaprielian are among those expected to post big numbers and be high picks in June’s Major League Baseball draft.

WIDE-OPEN WEST COAST: College baseball observers are high on UCLA and all its pitching, but it otherwise looks to be a down year on the West Coast. Oregon State, the NCAA tournament’s No. 1 national seed, was bounced in regionals and lost all its biggest stars. Stanford and Washington’s offenses were gutted. Big West champ Cal Poly will be hard-pressed to repeat a breakthrough season that ended when it failed to make it out of its regional.