

Men's College Basketball

# Rout of Arizona gives No. 5 Oregon a boost

## Ducks face tough road match-ups down the stretch

By ANNE M. PETERSON  
Associated Press

EUGENE — After a loss at Colorado and a close call against Arizona State, Oregon bounced back big time with a rout of Arizona.

The 85-58 victory on Saturday pushed the Ducks from No. 13 to No. 5 in the AP Top 25 released Monday. The jump was the largest in this week's poll and brought Oregon back to its preseason ranking.

The Ducks (21-3, 10-1) now sit atop the Pac-12 standings with Arizona and have the tiebreaker with their victory. The Wildcats (21-3, 10-1) dropped from fifth to No. 9 in Monday's poll.

"If they have another level above that, that's a bad thing for every team in the country," Arizona coach Sean Miller said about the Ducks after the loss.

With seven regular-season games to go, perhaps Oregon's biggest challenge down the stretch will come on Thursday when the team travels to Pauley Pavilion to face No. 9 UCLA (21-3, 8-3). And of the Ducks' seven remaining games, five are on the road.

But the victory over Arizona certainly gave the team confidence.

"I feel like the sky's the limit," junior forward Dillon Brooks said. "We can play even better than that."

Oregon coach Dana Altman used the upcoming schedule to spur his team on against the Wildcats.

"I told our guys we have five road games. We got a much tougher schedule (than Arizona)," he said. "We have to win the game today or it's over, and it would have been."

Before the statement-making win over Arizona, the Ducks were slumping a bit. They fell 74-65 at unranked Colorado on Jan. 28 then struggled at home in a 71-70 victory over



AP Photo/Chris Pietsch  
**Oregon's Payton Pritchard, left, Dylan Ennis and Dillon Brooks celebrate after Oregon defeated Arizona 85-58 in an NCAA college basketball game Saturday in Eugene.**

Arizona State last Thursday.

The Ducks built a 38-18 lead over the Wildcats and cruised to the win, leading by as many as 37 points in the second half. It was such a blowout that the home crowd

started to chant for Charlie Noebel, a walk-on who had played just 23 minutes this season. Fans got their wish and Noebel played the final three minutes.

The victory was Oregon's

40th straight at Matthew Knight Arena, now the nation's longest home winning streak after Kansas fell at home on Saturday.

"It's the best game we've played in the three years I've been here," Brooks said. "Guys were focused and confident in their shots."

Tyler Dorsey led the Ducks with 23 points and six 3-pointers. Brooks added 18 points, and on Monday was named the Pac-12 player of the week — not only for his performance against the Wildcats but because of his rally against the Sun Devils. The Ducks trailed Arizona State by a point with 3:15 left, but Brooks went on a personal 12-point run for the win and finished with 27 points.

Brooks is leading the Ducks with an average of 14.4 points a game, but he's averaging 16 points against Pac-12 opponents.

The Ducks' No. 5 ranking brings the team back to their preseason position in the AP poll. Oregon had some

trouble out of the gate, with November losses at Baylor and against Georgetown in Maui, but had a 17-game winning streak before the Colorado loss.

Last season, the Ducks won a school-record 31 games while claiming the Pac-12 regular-season and tournament titles. Oregon earned a first-ever No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament, and the Ducks advanced to the Elite Eight for the first time since 2007.

The Ducks also rebounded from a brief stumble last season: They lost back-to-back games on the road in mid-February. Under Altman, the Ducks are 40-16 in the second half of the conference season.

Brooks credits his coach with keeping the team focused.

"He always finds a way — if we're on top, keeps us level-headed and keeps us focusing and working hard, and if we're down, finds a way to push us to go harder," he said.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney  
**Cesar Ortiz (3), of Hermiston, goes to the basket Monday night against The Dalles at the Dawg House.**

## DAWGS: Girls stick to game plan for win

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quarter we started to figure it out."

Jordan Ramirez also did most of his damage off the dribble and scored nine of his 12 points in the first half as Hermiston staked a 35-34 lead at the break. They had stretched that to 58-48 by the end of the third quarter.

Kody Moss got the start for Hermiston and added nine points and six rebounds in what Arstein said was his best game of the season.

Dakota Murr scored a game-high 25 points to lead The Dalles, and Eric Flores added 17.

The Bulldogs are at Hood River tonight for a 7 p.m. tip-off. Hermiston's next home game is Thursday when it hosts Pendleton at 5:45 p.m.

TDHS	19	15	14	14	—	62
HHS	18	17	23	19	—	77

THE DALLES — D. Murr 25, E. Flores 17, J. Nisbet 10, J. Miller 5, O. Fernandez 3, Do. Seufalemua 2, D. Hoffman, J. Hernandez, Da. Seufalemua, J. Bonham.  
HERMISTON — X. Rambo 22, C. Flores 17, J. Ramirez 12, K. Moss 9, C. Ortiz 6, A. James 6, H. Walls 3, A. Mendez 2, A. Earl, R. Andreason, P. Wikks, T. McCullough, J. Hinkle.  
3-pointers — HHS 10-22; TDHS 4. Free throws — HHS 10-22; TDHS 14-17. Fouls — HHS 16; TDHS 19.

### GIRLS BASKETBALL

**HERMISTON 52, THE DALLES 39** — At The Dalles, the Bulldogs' game

**Andrew James (15), of Hermiston, goes to the basket Monday night against The Dalles at the Dawg House.**

Staff photo by Kathy Aney



# ATHENA Rockets fly past TigerScots

## Pilot Rock keeps postseason hopes alive with win

By ERIC SINGER  
East Oregonian

A lot was riding on Saturday evening's game for the Pilot Rock Rockets.

A win over Weston-McEwen would keep Pilot Rock in a position for one of the three district tournament slots, while a loss to the TigerScots would likely mean another year left out. And early in the second half, the Rockets appeared to be headed towards the latter, as Weston-McEwen opened up the third quarter on a 10-2 run to build a 44-33 lead with 5:25 left in the quarter. The outburst led to a timeout called by Rockets coach Mike Weinke, which proved to be a game-changer.

"Coach told us to keep playing hard on defense and to just keep playing hard, not to slow down," Rockets junior Bryson Pierce said of the message in the timeout.

Pilot Rock came out of the timeout re-energized and refocused, and it quickly showed. The Rockets went on to outscore the TigerScots 42-18 over the final 13 minutes and 25 seconds of game time to run away with a 75-62 victory and spoil the TigerScots' home finale.

"I can't even say how huge it is for the program and for the town," Weinke said of the victory. "The boys team has been down for several years and we've been close a few times (to districts) and haven't quite gotten over the hump, but this gets us over the hump for the moment."

Pierce led all scorers with 23 points for Pilot Rock (10-8, 3-3 CBC) and he also added six rebounds. He carried the Rockets offense

HHS	13	14	15	10	—	52
TDHS	15	5	11	8	—	39

HERMISTON — M. Juul 13, J. Romero 9, K. Padilla 8, R. Andreason 8, H. Thompson 4, J. Thomas 3, S. Gilbert 2, S. Stefani, M. Wilson, R. Meyers.  
THE DALLES — Ka. Hoylman 18, K. Jesch 8, J. Thomasian 6, B. McCall 4, I. Taylor 3, H. Wallis, S. Watson, M. Taylor, Ki. Hoylman, B. LeBreton.  
3-pointers — HHS 1; TDHS 2. Free throws — HHS 9-14; TDHS 5-11. Fouls — HHS 12; TDHS 16.

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then capped off by a miraculous turnaround 3-pointer that Sara Weinke drilled from 24 feet away right at the buzzer. Weinke went on to lead the Rockets with 15 points and nine rebounds.

"First quarter we played well as a team, filled all the open spots and then second quarter all we did was have one player drive against five of them," Pilot Rock coach Butch Wilson said. "But I knew this game would have both teams making their runs, back-and-forth because we match up pretty evenly."

Pilot Rock was able to tie the game at 28-28 with five minutes left, but just a short time later the Rockets were dealt a blow as point guard Bekah Roe picked up her fourth foul with 4:51 left and



Staff photo by Kathy Aney  
**Chris Weinke (20), of Pilot Rock, goes up for a shot with pressure from Weston-McEwens Ethan Reger (3) during Saturday's boys basketball game in Athena.**

for most of the first half, scoring 16 of his team's 31 points, but turned in some clutch baskets when his team needed them down the stretch.

"I just wanted to go out and play hard and do the best I can to help my team get a win," Pierce said of his performance, "because we really needed this win for league."

"He was really patient tonight, going to the hole and doing things that would give him an advantage because of his size," Weinke said of Pierce. "Teams have been keying on Bryson quite a bit and he hasn't been getting many scoring opportunities but he earned them tonight."

Weston-McEwen (11-7, 3-2) still held the lead at the

end of the third quarter with a 54-51 advantage, though TigerScots coach Brian Pickard said after the game that he wasn't surprised with the way the fourth quarter turned out.

"It seemed by the mid third quarter we were in slow motion and they (Pilot Rock) were at a different speed," Pickard said. "They were getting all the 50-50 balls and everything started going their way and we just could not get the momentum back."

Pilot Rock opened the fourth quarter on a 9-0 run as they made four of their first five shots, slicing through the TigerScot defense to the basket. Foul shots played a big part for the Rockets too, as they went 18-23 from the

PR	16	15	20	24	—	75
WM	14	20	20	8	—	62

PILOT ROCK — B. Pierce 23, C. Weinke 14, T. Denny 12, R. Lankford 11, D. Hasher 7, L. Trieme 4, B. Postma 4.  
WESTON-MCEWEN — S. Broncheau 21, E. Reger 11, B. Speed 8, G. Hungerford 7, J. Speed 4, J. West 4, O. Picard 3, B. Rudolph 2, B. Dearing 2.  
3-pointers — PR 3, WM 5. Free throws — PR 24-33, WM 11-14. Fouls — PR 14, WM 27. Fouled out — J. West (WM).

**Boys Basketball**

<b>Pilot Rock</b>	<b>Weston-McEwen</b>
<b>75</b>	<b>62</b>

line in the second half alone. "We've been working on composure and that's something that's gotten away from us in recent games," Weinke said. "They played with composure and got after the defensive boards because we were giving up second chance after second chance points. And offensively we wanted to go to the hole so the kids started driving and we got some fouls and they had some success."

Shaw Broncheau was the only TigerScot to reach double figures in scoring with 21 points, though he scored just five of those in the second half as Pilot Rock's defense picked up and he battled with foul issues. As a team, Weston-McEwen shot just 33 percent from the field which Pickard called "one of our worst shooting nights this year."

The loss was tough to swallow for the TigerScots, who now have to finish the season on the road with road games at Heppner, at Stanfield and at Culver as they hope to lock up a spot in the district tournament.

"We have a tough road now battling with Heppner and Pilot Rock for those spots and we definitely have our work cut out for us," Pickard said.

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## TIGERSCOTS: Five lead changes in overtime

sat the rest of the quarter. As a result, the Rockets shot 4-14 from the floor and scored 13 points to trail by 38-35 at the end of three.

"That hurt us," Wilson said of Roe's absence. "She's our press breaker, our mentally toughest player, our captain."

The fourth quarter was a heavy defensive battle for both teams, as neither reached double digit points in the quarter. Pilot Rock re-took the lead at 44-42 with 3:47 left to play on a lay-in by Rachel Willingham but Weston-McEwen came back and tied the game at 46-46 with just 18.2 seconds left. The Rockets had the ball and a chance to win the game after the free throws, but Quaepts got her hand in a passing lane to tip the ball, and was subsequently fouled. The foul was huge for

both sides, as the TigerScots were in the double bonus and Quaepts — who was 9-11 from the free throw line prior — stepped to the line with a chance to put her team on top with just 2.3 seconds left. But as luck would have it, Quaepts missed the first and then made the second, before it was wiped away for a lane violation, keeping the game tied at 46-46 and sending it to overtime.

In the extra session, the lead changed five times and there were also three ties. After Pilot Rock took its last lead at 53-51 with 2:15 left, Weston-McEwen answered with a pair of free throws by Bailey Hillmick to tie it at 53-53 and then three straight free throws by Vescio to put them on top for good.

"All the girls stepped up and they worked as a team to

get this one," Jensen said. Behind Vescio, Sarah Finifrock chipped in 11 points and nine rebounds, Ali Schroeder had nine points and seven boards, and Hillmick had six points and 11 boards.

The win puts Weston-McEwen atop the Columbia Basin Conference with a one-half game lead over Pilot Rock with three games left to play.

"If we're fortunate again to play them in the districts, it should be a good one," Wilson said of the two teams.

PR	17	5	13	11	7	—	53
WM	12	12	14	8	10	—	56

PILOT ROCK — S. Weinke 15, B. Roie 11, R. Willingham 10, J. Wilson 7, K. Deist 7, R. Oates 2, K. Evans 1.  
WESTON-MCEWEN — K. Vescio 15, S. Finifrock 11, C. Quaepts 11, A. Schroeder 9, B. Hillmick 6, A. Coffman 3, A. Finifrock 1.  
3-pointers — PR 5, WM 4. Free throws — PR 14-21, WM 20-31. Fouls — PR 24, WM 14. Fouled out — B. Roe, S. Weinke (PR); S. Finifrock, C. Quaepts (WM).