

Sports

PAC-12 MEN'S BASKETBALL

Ducks stifle Arizona in second half to turn tie game into rout

■ Oregon holds Arizona to just 16 points in the second half of a 73-47 win

EUGENE (AP) — For the second game in a row, Oregon found a way to exceed coach Dana Altman's defensive expectations during the second half.

The next challenge will be to bottle that intensity to take on the road.

Two nights after holding Arizona State, the Pac-12's top scoring team, to a season-low 51 points, the Ducks put the clamps on Arizona.

Freshman Louis King scored 14 points and Oregon used two 12-0 runs in the second half to dominate the Wildcats 73-47 on Saturday night.

"Tonight was our best night of the season, even better than Thursday," Altman said. "There was really a connection with all the guys."

Payton Pritchard and Will Richardson added 12 points each and Francis Okoro had 10 for the Ducks (17-12, 8-8 Pac-12), who outscored Arizona 42-16 in the second half after being tied at the break.

Oregon held the Wildcats (17-13, 8-9) to 19.2 percent shooting in the second half, including 1 of 12 from 3-point range. Meanwhile, the Ducks shot 57.7 percent after half-

time and matched Arizona's 36 rebounds, led by King and Okoro with seven each.

"I thought it was our best," Altman said. "Everybody in the boat and everybody rowing the same way, and I thought they did a good job."

Dylan Smith led the Wildcats with 14 points, all in the first half, and Brandon Williams had 12 off the bench. The loss was Arizona's sixth in its last eight meetings with Oregon and came within a point of its 85-58 drubbing in Eugene two years ago.

Altman recited from memory the exact point totals the Ducks allowed in the second halves of their three recent road losses, capped by the 62 they surrendered at UCLA after leading big in the first half.

The difference at home against the Arizona schools came down to better communication.

"It was talking, just being focused," senior Paul White said. "One of the things that we lack sometimes is we lose focus and make mistakes, and other teams capitalize on them. We've kind of cut down on our mistakes, so it just makes it harder for teams to

score on us."

The Wildcats shot 31.3 percent overall, their third-worst performance of the season, and saw their 15 turnovers lead to 15 points for the Ducks. The 47 points also were the fewest for Arizona in coach Sean Miller's 10 seasons in Tucson.

"They just played harder than us," said the freshman Williams. "I've got to give them credit. They were the better team, they were the stronger and more physical team, so we've just got to be ready next time."

In a first half of scoring runs by both teams, Arizona survived a 12-1 gap in turnovers and only two points from posts Ira Lee and Chase Jeter to go to the locker room even at 31. The Wildcats scored the game's first nine points but fell behind by 11 after 13 minutes at 25-14, only to ride a 17-3 burst to regain the lead.

BIG PICTURE

Arizona missed its first sweep of the Oregon trip since 2009 and slid all the way to 10th in the Pac-12 standings with one game to play before the conference

tournament. It also snapped the Wildcats' three-game winning streak.

Oregon is now one game out of fourth place and a possible bye in the Pac-12 tournament with two road games to go. The Ducks are tied for sixth with Stanford, USC and Colorado.

STAT OF THE NIGHT

Oregon committed just three turnovers, its fewest in two seasons, and got 27 points from its bench. The Ducks went nine deep and all scored at least four points before Altman subbed in two walk-ons in the final minute.

TURNING POINT

Arizona had closed within 47-40 before Okoro bulled his way inside for consecutive baskets against Ryan Luther, who was playing with four fouls after picking up a technical earlier in the second half that helped ignite one of Oregon's 12-0 runs.

UP NEXT

- Arizona: Hosts Arizona State next Saturday.
- Oregon: At Washington State on Wednesday night.

Sun Devils hand OSU second close loss

By Kyle Odegard
Associated Press

CORVALLIS — Luguentz Dort doesn't feel the pressure of big moments on the court, said Arizona State coach Bobby Hurley.

"It's rare that you see a freshman that never gets rattled. He's got a very cool customer way about him," Hurley added.

Dort had 20 points with four 3-pointers — knocking down a clutch long range shot and free throws in the final minute — as Arizona State came back in the second half to beat Oregon State 74-71 on Sunday night.

"I just felt I had confidence to step up in this big game," Dort said.

Zylan Cheatham added 12 points and 10 rebounds, while Remy Martin and Rob Edwards scored 13 points apiece,

for the Sun Devils (20-9, 11-6 Pac-12).

Ethan Thompson had 20 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists and Tres Tinkle scored 24 for the Beavers (17-11, 9-7).

"A tough one that we're going to have to bounce back from here as we head into the last week on the road and prepare for the (Pac-12) tournament," Oregon State coach Wayne Tinkle said.

Arizona State shot 47 percent, compared to 39 percent for Oregon State. The Beavers ended the first half on an 8-0 run to take a 37-30 lead at the break. The surge included a block by Kaylor Kelley that led to a fast break dunk by Tinkle.

The Sun Devils outscored the Beavers 15-4 to open the second half, however, and went ahead 45-41 after a 3-pointer by Edwards with about 15 minutes

remaining.

The game turned into a back-and-forth affair.

With 1:13 left Arizona State led 68-67 and had the ball, and Dort drained a 3-pointer with 58 seconds to go.

Tinkle responded with a layup 10 seconds later to make the score 71-69. After a Sun Devils miss, the Beavers had the ball with 20 seconds left, but Stephen Thompson Jr. missed a layup.

Edwards was fouled after securing the rebound and made 1 of 2 free throws. Ethan Thompson was then fouled by the Sun Devils with five seconds left. Thompson made both and the Beavers trailed 72-71.

The Beavers fouled and sent Dort to the line with 3.7 seconds left. Dort sank both, and a desperation heave by Oregon State was off the mark.

Washington escapes Stanford with a win

By Janie McCauley
AP Sports Writer

STANFORD, Calif. — Mike Hopkins decided not to show his Washington players any video from their ugly loss at California that began a tough Bay Area trip. No need — everybody knew.

"Sometimes you've just got to survive and advance, forget it and have a short-term memory," Hopkins said, "crumble the paper and throw it away and it never happened."

The Huskies responded. Jaylen Nowell scored 13 points but

missed the front end of a 1-and-1 during a nervous finish for No. 25 Washington, which still held off Stanford 62-61 on Sunday for a weekend road split.

Stanford star KZ Okpala missed an off-balance 3-pointer at the buzzer and the Huskies secured the loose ball.

Noah Dickerson added 12 points for the Huskies (23-6, 14-2 Pac-12), who lost 76-73 at California on Thursday night as the Golden Bears earned their first conference win.

"The reality of it is, it's not the end of the world," Hopkins said.

Josh Sharma scored 16 for Stanford on a day when leading scorer Okpala was limited to six points with more than two dozen scouts in attendance. The Cardinal committed a pair of turnovers in the final 2:37 after the teams had traded baskets down the stretch.

Oscar da Silva added 15 for the Cardinal (15-14, 8-9), who had won the last four meetings at home in the series and three of four overall.

"We didn't lose the game in the last possession we had there," da Silva said. "Too many turnovers, I would say."

California completes Washington sweep

By Michael Wagaman
Associated Press

BERKELEY, Calif. — Normally one of California's top 3-point shooters, Darius McNeill noticed quickly that his perimeter shot wasn't very sharp so he changed plans and began driving for easy and often uncontested layups.

It wasn't how Golden Bears coach Wyking Jones designed it, but with his team winning back-to-back games following a school-record 16-game skid, he certainly wasn't complaining either.

McNeill scored 17 points to lead four California players in

double figures and the Golden Bears beat Washington State, 76-69, on Saturday.

Paris Austin added 12 points while Justice Sueing and Connor Vanover scored 10 apiece for California (7-22, 2-15 Pac-12).

"Our hard work is paying off," McNeill said. "When I saw my first 3 wasn't falling I decided to get to the rim and do whatever I can to help the team win. That's what I was doing."

Two days after upsetting No. 25 Washington, California won its final home game of the season in somewhat easy

fashion. The Bears never trailed, led by 15 midway through the second half and pulled away after the Cougars made their biggest push.

McNeill had 11 points in the second half mostly on drives through the lane. McNeill made one 3-pointer after Washington State pulled within 62-56, then added a key steal and layup moments later.

Jones said that McNeill's ability to get into the paint gets overlooked sometimes because of his role in Cal's offense.

"It's not really something

that we tell him to go do," Jones said. "To see him get into a groove of getting to the rim and finishing right hand, left hand, we know that he has that in his game. It's just not something that he particularly uses because for us what's most important is that he shoot the basketball."

Even then, the Bears had to hold on after missing eight of 11 free throws over the final two minutes.

CJ Elleby had 20 points and 10 rebounds and Robert Franks added 18 points and 12 boards for Washington State.

Hood's best game of season leads Blazers

By Steve Reed
AP Sports Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Nicolas Batum said the Hornets' game plan was to stop Portland's backcourt tandem of Damian Lillard and C.J. McCollum.

He didn't expect Rodney Hood to beat them.

Hood broke out of a shooting slump with a season-high 27 points — all in the second half — and Jusuf Nurkic added 26 points and 15 rebounds to help the Trail Blazers beat Charlotte 118-108 on Sunday.

"I've been through worse slumps before. The biggest thing I did the second half was not think as much as I have," said Hood, who was acquired in a trade from Cleveland last month. "You know, trying to learn the plays, try to figure everything out. When we just play ball I think I can affect the game in a positive way."

In the Blazers' last five games, Hood had made just 7 of 32 shots from the field, including 1 of 10 from 3-point range.

And he didn't score Sunday until making a pull-up jumper with 2:26 left in the third quarter.

But he carried that momentum over to the fourth quarter, when he made 7 of 10 shots — including three 3s — and all four free-throw attempts for 21 points. By the middle of the period, teammates could sense his confidence and were setting screens to free him up.

"I think C.J. was 2 for 12 and (Lillard) was 9 for 20-something," Batum said. "We contained those guys pretty well and I think when you get like 21 points (from Hood) in the fourth, we didn't see that coming."

Lillard added 23 points for the Blazers, who have won six of their past seven.

Portland entered the game tied with Oklahoma City for the third-best record in the Western Conference. The Thunder were hosting the Grizzlies later Sunday.

"Tonight it was Rodney Hood. CJ (McCollum) had a game against Toronto," Blazers coach Terry Stotts said. "It's just been different things on different nights, not one thing."

Jeremy Lamb had 23 points and Kemba Walker had 18 points and a season-high 12 assists for the Hornets, who entered the day tied with the Magic for the eighth and final playoff spot in the East.

The Blazers spotted Walker to 5-of-21 shooting.

It was a back-and-forth game until the six-minute mark of the fourth quarter, when the Blazers went on a 12-2 run sparked by Hood to break it open. Portland scored from a variety of spots including a fast-break layup from a hustling Nurkic, an 18-foot jumper by Hood and a put-back from Al-Farouq Aminu that led to a three-point play.

Leonard's late shot lifts Raptors over Trail Blazers

By Ian Harrison
Associated Press

TORONTO — One day after the Toronto Raptors practiced "game-winning shots," Kawhi Leonard made one against the Portland Trail Blazers.

Leonard scored the go-ahead basket with three seconds remaining and the Raptors held on to beat the Trail Blazers 119-117 Friday night.

Toronto won it when Leonard used a screen by Kyle Lowry to drive against Portland's Damian Lillard, then rose over his smaller opponent for the decisive basket.

"We just practiced that exact scenario yesterday," Raptors coach Nick Nurse said. "It was great. Kyle sets a screen and we try to get the smaller guy so (Leonard) can just vault up over him and shoot."

Toronto had run the same play moments earlier, with Lowry making a layup. When the play was called again, Leonard was more interested in keeping the ball himself.

"I was looking to get baseline," Leonard said. "That first time I had seen I could be a little bit more aggressive and that's what I did the second time down."

Leonard scored 38 points and Lowry had 19 points and 10 assists as the Raptors won for the ninth time in 10 games. Toronto is an NBA-best 11-4 in games decided by three points or fewer.

"Just staying composed and understanding that situations aren't always going to be perfect," Lowry said.

Marc Gasol scored 19 points and Pascal Siakam had 16 for Toronto, which has won four straight home meetings with Portland and seven of the past eight overall.

C.J. McCollum scored 35 points and matched a career best by making seven 3-pointers, but it wasn't enough to extend Portland's season-best five-game winning streak.

Lillard scored 24 points and Jake Layman had 13 as the Trail Blazers suffered their first loss after winning four straight to begin a seven-game trip.

"Obviously it's disappointing to lose but I like the way we competed," Portland coach Terry Stotts said.

Ahead 93-84 to begin the fourth, the Raptors missed nine consecutive field goal attempts, allowing Portland to close to within one, 95-94, on a 3-pointer by Lillard at 6:47.

Leonard ended Toronto's drought with a layup, but the Raptors couldn't hold the lead, and Lillard tied it 103-all with another 3 at 3:27.

Lillard made another tying 3 with 13 seconds left, but Leonard won it with his baseline jumper.

"The ball hit every part of the rim," Lillard said.