

Sports

MOUNTAIN WEST MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Nevada rallies to top Boise State

By Adam Soboleski
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Nevada got an early scare in the Mountain West Conference quarterfinals.

After trailing Boise State by 15 points in the first half, the Wolf Pack slowly responded. And not until the final minute of the game did they feel comfortable.

Jazz Johnson scored 20 points, Caleb Martin had 19 and No. 14 Nevada rallied to beat Boise State 77-69 on Thursday.

Tre'Shawn Thurman added 17 points, and Cody Martin had 10 to help

top-seeded Nevada (29-3) tie the school record for victories in a season. The Wolf Pack will face San Diego State in the semifinals Friday night.

Derrick Alston led Boise State (13-20) with 21 points, and Justinian Jessup had 18.

Boise State led 11-3 and had a 27-12 advantage with 7:37 left in the first half. The Wolf Pack opened 2 of 14 from the field.

"We stunk for the first 12 minutes of the game," Nevada coach Eric Musselman said. "It was hard to watch. I'd rather go the dentist and get some teeth pulled. But the thing with our ballclub is

down 15, no panic. We've been in those situations where we've gotten down and figured away to come from behind on a big stage. At halftime, we got our minds cleared."

Down 34-29 at intermission, Nevada shot 62 percent from the field in the second half, going 5 of 11 from 3-point range.

"In the three games we lost, we never found that spurt," Musselman said. "Today, we found that spurt."

After the Wolf Pack took a 57-50 lead with 9:33 left, the Broncos went on a 10-0 run. Nevada took the lead for good on Cody Martin's jumper with 3:37 left.

PAC-12 MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Ducks dominate Wazzu in first round

By John Marshall
AP Basketball Writer

LAS VEGAS — Oregon knows its only real NCAA Tournament shot is to win four games in four days at the Pac-12 tournament.

The way the Ducks are playing defense, they might just do it.

Ehab Amin scored 17 points, Miles Norris added 14 and Oregon rolled over Washington State 84-51 Wednesday night in the most lopsided game in Pac-12 tournament history.

"Our guys have made a big leap," Oregon coach Dana Altman said. "We're so much more connected. Our communication is so much better. It's a big, big difference where we were just three or four weeks ago."

The sixth-seeded Ducks (20-12) jumped on the Cougars from the start, racing out to a 15-point lead in the open-

ing 12 minutes. Oregon shot 49 percent from the floor and had 14 steals to earn a spot in Thursday's quarterfinals against No. 3 seed Utah.

The tournament's largest margin of victory had been 32, accomplished twice.

Washington State (11-21) shot 31 percent, went 7 for 32 from the 3-point line and didn't hit double-digits in points until the 5:34 mark of the first half.

The 11th-seeded Cougars also had 20 turnovers that led to 26 Oregon points in their ninth straight one-and-done trip to the Pac-12 tournament.

Washington State had no players score in double figures.

"I thought Oregon was just exceptional," Cougars coach Ernie Kent said. "People have talked about them being the hottest team in the league. Their length on the floor is

really difficult to score on, as they've shown the last five opponents they've played."

Oregon and Washington State were in the same position a year ago, both with the same seedings and Utah up next. Oregon won 64-62 in overtime.

The Ducks closed the regular season with four straight wins, including their second double-digit win over the Cougars.

Oregon's late-season run coincided with a lineup change, with four players 6-foot-9 starting alongside Payton Pritchard. The big lineup helped the Ducks hold four straight opponents to 62 points or less, a program first in the shot-clock era (since 1985-86).

Oregon certainly had Washington State on lockdown.

The Ducks swarmed the Cougars into turnovers and missed shots, starting the

game with an 18-3 run.

Washington State had 10 turnovers in the opening 10 minutes and 16 to trail 37-20 at halftime. The Cougars shot 5 of 22, including 4 for 17 from 3 in the first half.

"We did a good job of rotating, communicating with one another," Oregon's Paul White said. "I think that's been a key factor to the success of our defense so far."

Oregon didn't let up, pushing the lead to 29 in the first six minutes of the second half.

"With turnovers and them getting out in the open court, it was tough for us to find rhythm anytime during the game," Washington State's Robert Franks said.

PAC-12 MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Arizona State ousts UCLA to firm up NCAA bid

By John Marshall
AP Basketball Writer

LAS VEGAS — Arizona State appeared to be in good shape before heading to Las Vegas for the Pac-12 tournament.

A trip to the semifinals after a hard-fought win over UCLA should all but lock the Sun Devils' bid up.

Romello White scored 19 points, Rob Edwards added 15 and Arizona State withstood UCLA's second-half push for an 83-72 victory in the Pac-12 tournament quarterfinals Thursday night.

"It's a big step. It means a lot," Arizona State coach Bobby Hurley said. "We played in a lot of big games this year, a lot of high-level teams. We've been in this spot throughout the year, and this team has a great leadership and great resolve and desire to win. All those things were on display tonight."

The second-seeded Sun Devils (22-9) dominated the first half and stretched their lead to 23 early in the second, but let UCLA back in it by going nearly nine minutes without a field goal.

Arizona State settled itself after the long drought and held off the Bruins to earn a spot in Friday's semifinals against sixth-seeded Oregon. Zylan Cheatham had 13 points and 13 rebounds, and the Sun Devils shot 49 percent.

Seventh-seeded UCLA (17-16) looked sluggish early after playing the night before, but used a big run to trim into Arizona State's lead to nine.

BIG SKY MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Portland St. eliminated

BOISE (AP) — Jerrick Harding had 23 points as Weber State topped Portland State 81-71 in the Big Sky Conference Tournament quarterfinals on Thursday.

Cody John had 17 points for Weber State (18-14). Brekkott Chapman added 12 points and eight rebounds. Michal Kozak had 10 points, 10 rebounds and three blocks for Weber State.

Holland Woods had 19 points for the Vikings (16-16). Jamie Orme added 15 points, eight rebounds and three blocks. Rashaad Goolsby had eight rebounds.



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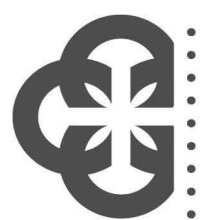
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