

Sports

OREGON WOMEN'S BASKETBALL AT ARIZONA

Cold Ducks routed in the desert

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — No. 11 Arizona considers its televised 57-41 victory over No. 10 Oregon on Thursday night a boost for the program and Pac-12 conference.

“From a national perspective, this was a good statement win,” Arizona coach Adia Barnes said.

“A lot of people don’t see the Pac-12. ... For Arizona to bounce back after a tough loss on the road and show character and not to lose our confidence was important for us.”

Aari McDonald scored 16 points, Trinity Baptiste had 14 points and six rebounds and Sam Thomas had 10 points and six rebounds for the Wildcats (9-2, 7-2 Pac-12), who scored 17 of the first 19 points and led by as many as 21 in snapping a 10-game losing streak in the series.

“From the first quarter, I knew we were controlling the game,” McDonald said. “We had them flustered, and I’ve never seen Oregon players flustered like that. Everybody was locked in, and everybody



Chris Pietsch/Eugene Register-Guard

Oregon women's basketball coach Kelly Graves was unable to pick up a win on his birthday as the 10th-ranked Ducks lost to No. 11 Arizona on Thursday, Jan. 14, in Tucson.

wanted this win bad.”

Nyara Sabally had 15 points and seven rebounds and Sydney Parrish had seven points and seven rebounds for the Ducks (9-3, 7-3), whose previous season low in scoring was in a 70-63 loss to No. 1 Stanford. They have lost three of four for the first time since 2016-17.

The Wildcats entered the

game having lost two of three, a blowout to Stanford and an overtime loss to No. 25 Washington State last Sunday.

They were ready.

McDonald had six points during a 14-0 run as Arizona took a 17-2 lead seven minutes into the game. Oregon went 8 1/2 minutes between field goals and trailed 22-7 after the first quarter. It was

36-22 at the half, and Oregon was never closer than 11 in the second half.

“We know that Oregon is a great offensive team,” McDonald said. “So we knew for us to even be in the game, we had to come out strong. We were clicking on all cylinders.”

McDonald has scored in double figures in 77 straight games.

OREGON STATE MEN'S BASKETBALL

Wildcats overwhelm Beavers, 98-64

Jesse Sowa
Corvallis Gazette-Times

CORVALLIS — Wayne Tinkle has said for weeks that his team can’t keep playing catch-up if it hopes to succeed.

Oregon State got away with second-half deficits against Texas at San Antonio and Portland State but apparently didn’t listen closely enough to its coach in four losses, in which the Beavers had a lead after halftime in all.

OSU was the student and Arizona the teacher Thursday night, as the Wildcats took a 98-64 win in a Pac-12 men’s basketball play at Gill Coliseum.

Arizona (10-3, 4-3) scored the first 15 points of a game in

which Oregon State (5-5, 1-3) was never competitive.

There would be no comeback, or even a realistic chance at one, this time.

“We’ve got to get some guys that are going to take a big step in our direction,” Tinkle said. “I think the games up until now, even though we’ve had some disappointing losses, there’s been a little bit of fool’s gold and we got exposed with our lack of toughness and effort and that’s got to change.”

Oregon State was a step slower in defending and to the rebounds than its opponent, which had its biggest lead of the first half at 47-21 at halftime.

The Beavers trailed 23-4 less than 12 minutes into the game.

To that point, the home team was shooting 2 for 16 and the visitors 10 of 22, already with a double-digit advantage in points in the paint.

A Jarod Lucas 3-pointer and baseline jumper soon after gave the Beavers two straight made field goals for the first time in the game. Maurice Calloo’s basket off an Ethan Thompson assist made it three in a row.

But the damage was already done and Arizona never relinquished control.

The Wildcats led by as many as 36 in the second half

and the Beavers got no closer than 21.

Oregon State had no answer for Arizona’s Jordan Brown and Azuolas Tubelis, a pair of 6-foot-11 forwards who combined to outscore the Beavers by themselves in the first half with 26 points.

Where does Drew Brees rank on all-time QB list?

ESPN insider Adam Schefter was on the cable network’s Sunday Night Countdown television program, and he made a comment that surprised me.

“Everybody expects after this season Drew Brees will retire,” Schefter said.

Brees, in his 19th year in the NFL at quarterback, has been a model of consistency for most of his career. Starting off in San Diego, and then moving to the New Orleans Saints in 2006, Brees has made the Saints a perennial playoff contender for 14 years.

With one Super Bowl ring on his finger, Brees ranks first in career passing yards in NFL history (80,358), second in passing touchdowns (571), and fifth in QB rating (98.7%), according to ProFootball.

If this indeed is his last run for the Super Bowl — the Saints play host to Tampa Bay in a division playoff game on Sunday — does he go down as one of the best signal callers in the game?

Brees absolutely deserves to be in that conversation.

Is he one of the best of the best? I’m not so quite convinced of that yet. Though stats speak volumes, other elements do come into play.

Consider Joe Montana, who easily ranks among the all-time greats. During his career with the 49ers, Montana won four Super Bowls, threw for 273 touchdowns and over 40,000 passing yards. The latter two fall well short of Brees’ numbers (with a longer career), but what brings Montana into this argument is that when the 49ers needed him to be at his best, he was. Montana’s nickname, “Joe Cool,” reflects his demeanor on the field,



COREY KIRK

and it showed. He was able to win when it mattered most.

Another quarterback who has a case for the top echelon in league history is Brett Favre. His durability is legendary. He started 297 games in a row. Favre racked up one Super Bowl ring, three MVPs, and 11 Pro Bowls during his 1992-2010 career. He also has the stats to back up the accolades, with more than 70,000 passing yards and 508 touchdown passes. To post high numbers, play most of your career and always be a contender for personal awards, it’s sensible to say that Favre is among the greats.

Lastly, the career that may never be repeated belongs to Tom Brady, who will match up against Brees in Sunday’s playoff game. Brady, a seventh-round draft pick, has a resumé that’s unsurpassed, with six Super Bowl wins, most by any quarterback, and four MVP awards. At 43 (Brees turned 42 on Jan. 15), Brady continues to play at a high level with Tampa Bay, and his career doesn’t look to have an end in sight. Brady seems destined to surpass Brees in both passing yards (Brady has 79,204) and he already has the lead in passing touchdowns with 581.

Regardless of whether Brees ends his career after this season, he will certainly don the golden jacket and be enshrined in the Hall of Fame at Canton, New York. Though he makes a solid argument to be considered one of the best, I can’t put him above Montana, Farve or Brady due to the different elements each brought.

But I can say confidently that Brees is just behind that trio on the all-time greatest list at quarterback.

Pacers snap losing streak to Trail Blazers

By Anne M. Peterson
AP Sports Writer

PORTLAND — The Indiana Pacers figured if they slowed down Damian Lillard and CJ McCollum, they’d have a good chance against the Portland Trail Blazers.

The tactic worked. Domantas Sabonis had 23 points and 15 rebounds, and Indiana held Portland’s dynamic backcourt duo in check for a 111-87 victory Thursday night.

Malcolm Brogdon added 25 points and seven assists for the Pacers, who improved to 4-1 on the road this season and snapped an 11-game losing streak in Portland. Indiana led by 25 in the second quarter and maintained a double-digit advantage the rest of the way.

McCollum and Lillard each scored 22 for the Blazers, playing the second of a back-to-back.

“We talked about it as a team before the game — we’ve got to keep the ball out of Lillard and McCollum’s hands as much as we can and try to make them really work for everything they get,” Indiana’s Doug McDermott said.

The loss was costly for Portland: During the third quarter, center Jusuf Nurkic left the court holding his right wrist and the Blazers later announced he had sustained a fracture.

The Trail Blazers (7-5) won in Sacramento 132-126 on Wednesday night. Lillard had a season-high 40 points in that one and Portland tied a franchise record with 23 3-pointers.

The Blazers lead the NBA in 3s but they were off against the Pacers, making just 13 of 43 (30.2%).

The Pacers (8-4) were coming off a 104-95 road victory over the Warriors on Tuesday night, when Myles Turner had a season-best 22 points. He finished with 11 points and 10 rebounds against the Blazers, along with four blocks.

The Pacers traded Victor Oladipo to the Rockets as part of the four-team blockbuster Thursday that sent James Harden from Houston to Brooklyn. Indiana got guard Caris LeVert from the Nets and a draft pick in the deal.

“We lost a very good player, but this team is going to play very good ball,” Brogdon said.

Indiana led by six in the opening quarter, but the score was tied at 26 going into the second. A 12-0 run capped by McDermott’s layup put the Pacers up 40-28.

Indiana extended its lead to 25 before going into halftime up 59-36.

Portland was hurt in the third when Nurkic headed to the locker room after appearing to injure his right hand. The Blazers announced he fractured his wrist, but additional details were not available.

Lillard was asked how Nurkic was doing after the game.

“Frustrated. Disappointed. A little sad,” Lillard said.

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