

CU women's basketball

Linda Lappe's CU Buffs fall to Oregon Ducks

Colorado done in by another prolonged scoreless streak

Buffzone.com staff report
Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:02/04/2012 05:30:03 PM MST

EUGENE, Ore. -- The Colorado women's basketball team could agonize for a while about what it could have done different in the final minute Saturday.

Ultimately, however, it was the middle part of the game that hurt the Buffs most in a 67-62 loss to Oregon at Matthew Knight Arena.

CU trailed by just two in the final minute before Oregon put the game away at the free throw line.

"At the end of the game it didn't happen exactly how we wanted it to happen by any means," CU head coach Linda Lappe said after her team's third straight loss. "But at the same time, I thought our team fought. I thought we had good effort down the stretch.

"I really think we lost the game to come out of the second half. The start of the second half is where we weren't ready.

"We didn't come out with any sort of fire. We wanted to make sure that we kept our foot on the gas pedal. We just became pretty lackadaisical and they came at us."

Junior Chucky Jeffery hit a milestone in becoming the 24th player in school history with 1,000 career points and led the Buffs with 18 points. Freshman Lexy Kresl contributed a career-high 17 points, tying her career high with five 3-pointers.

Led by those two, as well as freshman Jen Reese, CU (15-7, 4-7 Pac-12) built a 34-21 lead during the first 18 minutes.

Oregon (13-10, 5-6) closed the half on a 5-0 run, which seemed harmless enough ... until the Ducks then scored the first 13 of the second half, stretching the run to 18-0.

During that run, CU went 8:04 without a point, and 9:20 without a field goal.

"Within a matter of three minutes, we lost our lead," Lappe said.

CU continued to battle, tying the game at 44 on a Jeffery 3-pointer with 12:29 to go.

That was followed by a stretch of nearly 9 minutes during which Oregon went on a 16-4 run. CU was scoreless for 4½ minutes during that Oregon run.

Jeffery then sparked a 10-0 spurt, capped by a Kresl 3-pointer with 49.4 seconds left that cut the Oregon lead to 60-58. Oregon, however, hit 7-of-8 free throws in the final 47 seconds.

In all, Oregon hit 28-of-32 free throws, including 11-of-12 by Amanda Johnson, who had a game-high 26 points. All but three of Johnson's points came in the second half.

CU was just 3-for-5 at the line.

"You have to give Oregon credit. They came out, they executed, they really drove the ball at us in the second half," Lappe said. "They obviously had it in mind to get to the free throw line and that was what they did."

Despite a strong start, CU finished with another poor shooting performance, making just 34.7 percent (26 of 75), including 21.2 percent from 3-point range (7-of-33).

"I would say it's primarily related to confidence at this moment," Kresl said of the team's shooting woes. "We need to get that back a little bit. We've been working on it a lot. I think we're over-thinking it. One we just let it come back to us and let it be natural, it'll come back."

Notable

The Buffs had an eight-point lead at the half, their largest half-time lead in Pac-12 play. ... CU is now 1-4 in conference play when leading at the half. ... CU had won seven games in a row decided by five points or less before Saturday. ... The Buffs have out-rebounded each of their opponents during their three-game slide. They were 13-0 when out-rebounding the opposition before that. ... Oregon has now won back-to-back games for the first time since a 6-0 start to the season.

[Close Window](#)[Send To Printer](#)

The Register-Guard<http://www.registerguard.com/>

Oregon women's basketball plays its way out of trouble against Colorado**Oregon has designs on the Pac-12's upper half after ending another foe's late rally**

BY ROB MOSELEY*The Register-Guard*Published: **Sunday, Feb 5, 2012 05:01AM**

Because Oregon's Pac-12 schedule was front-loaded with tough teams the Ducks won't see again, including Arizona State, USC and UCLA, the potential existed for the UO women's basketball team to make a second-half run.

The Ducks' marginal overall record and 3-6 mark in the first round of Pac-12 play didn't inspire overwhelming optimism. But potential existed. This past week, Oregon took steps toward turning potential into reality.

Oregon held off Colorado, 67-62, in Matthew Knight Arena on Saturday afternoon to complete a sweep of Utah and the Buffaloes. At 5-6 in conference play, the Ducks are within a game of the top half of the Pac-12, and just two games out of third place.

"I said to them (after Saturday's game), 'You played yourselves into trouble,'" UO coach Paul Westhead said. "Now the pressure's on to keep winning, because we're in the thick of things."

Saturday's victory featured more drama. For the second time this week, the Ducks led by double digits midway through the second half — as much as 12 Saturday — before allowing the opposition back within a possession of taking the lead. In this case, Colorado's Lexy Kresl hit a three-pointer to cut Oregon's lead to 60-58.

Holding on for dear life to win at home over second-tier Pac-12 teams like Utah and Colorado marks this as an Oregon team still with much to prove. But in the remaining seven regular-season games, the Ducks get another round against the Utes and Buffaloes, along with an upcoming road trip to face two other second-tier conference foes, Washington and WSU.

Yes, they're paying a little closer attention to the Pac-12 standings these days in the Oregon locker room.

"I think it's been helpful for us to gauge how important the games are coming up," UO senior Amanda Johnson said. "That we have the opportunity to move ourselves

forward.”

The Ducks did that Saturday, posting their first conference sweep in more than a year, and winning back-to-back for the first time since November. Now 13-10, Oregon has equalled its win total from a season ago, with the potential for much more given Johnson’s return from injury combined with the emergence of freshman Liz Brenner, who joined the team when Johnson was hurt in December.

Those two helped lead the way as Oregon fought back from a 34-26 halftime deficit Saturday that, Westhead said, looked worse than it actually was. Colorado had overcome issues with slow starts and sloppy play by committing just two first-half turnovers, while the Ducks shot only 34.8 percent before halftime.

Those trends were reversed after the break, as Oregon scored 13 straight to open the half, building a 16-2 run before Colorado’s first field goal. Two free throws by Johnson capped the 13-0 run and began a stretch in which she scored 12 straight UO points, on her way to 23 for the half and 26 in the game.

“She’s back,” Westhead said of Johnson, who made her third appearance and second start Saturday following an 11-game absence with a thumb injury.

It was two free throws by Johnson that gave the Ducks their biggest lead, 60-48, with 4:01 to play. Just as Utah did Thursday, Colorado frantically fought back, scoring seven straight to make it 60-55.

Bufs point guard Chucky Jeffery then poked the ball away from Oregon’s Nia Jackson for Jeffery’s sixth steal, and a teammate got her the ball on the fast break with a chance to make it a three-point game. But Brenner had sprinted back on defense and blocked Jeffrey’s layup attempt.

The Buffs got within 60-58 after another UO turnover, but the Ducks then made 7-of-8 free throws in the final 48 seconds, including 3-of-4 by Brenner.

“That’s a good sign,” Westhead said. “She’s evolving. Liz Brenner is and will continue to be a big help to us the rest of this season.”

Now she’s having the chance to do so with Johnson alongside her, the Ducks playing at full strength for the first time all season.

Just in time, for Oregon, which has four more weeks to fight its way into the top half of the Pac-12 standings.

UO women 67, Colorado 62

Key Stat: Oregon made 21-of-22 free throws in the second half, 95.5 percent.

Notes: In recognition of National Girls & Women in Sports Day, the Ducks held a pregame event in which female UO athletes interacted with and signed autographs for

young fans. ... Freshmen Liz Brenner of Oregon and Jen Reese of Colorado needed no introduction Saturday, after Brenner's Jesuit High team beat Reese and Clackamas High in last year's Oregon Class 6A title game. Brenner and Reese were each first-team all-state selections, with Brenner taking player of the year honors. ... For the first time this season, freshman Jordan Loera has gone two straight games without making a three-point shot. With 39 three-pointers so far, Loera has tied Taylor Lilley (2006-07) for the UO freshman record.

Up Next: The Ducks visit Washington on Thursday at 7 p.m.

Boxscore: See Scoreboard, Page C4.

Copyright © 2012 — The Register-Guard, Eugene, Oregon, USA