

WASHINGTON 69, ARIZONA 63

PHYSICAL UW TAKES DOWN UA



Arizona's Zeke Nnaji gets a hand in the face from Washington's Jaden McDaniels. The last-place Huskies jumped to a 15-point lead at halftime and hung on to drop UA to 20-11. PHOTOS BY KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Teams will rematch on Wednesday in Vegas

By Bruce Pascoe

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Washington's zone defense hasn't flattened the Pac-12 the way it did a year ago, but it has puzzled the Arizona Wildcats twice this season.

And this time, Arizona never recovered.

Although the Wildcats managed to pull out a three-point win on Jan. 30 in Seattle after some initial problems against the Huskies' zone, in a 69-63 loss Saturday at McKale Center they stumbled to a 15-point halftime deficit while shooting just 20% percent and committing 10 turnovers before halftime.

Arizona never led again despite a heroic Senior Day performance from guard Dylan Smith, who hit six 3-pointers after suffering a broken nose.

"Our performance tonight was poor. Poor," UA coach Sean Miller said. "We weren't ready to play. We didn't run as fast, jump as high, struggled to get back defensively."

Smith suffered a broken nose in the first half when he collided with the elbow of Washington's 250-pound center Isaiah Stewart with 13 minutes left in the half. He was taken to the locker room and put under concussion protocol while having cotton nose plugs inserted into both nostrils.

Smith was out a total of six minutes and UA athletic trainer Justin Kokoskie said he lobbied hard to come back even quicker.

UP NEXT

- **Who:** No. 5 seed Arizona (20-11) vs. No. 12 seed Washington (15-16)
- **What:** Pac-12 Tournament, first round
- **When:** 2:30 p.m. Wednesday
- **Where:** Las Vegas
- **TV:** Pac-12 Networks
- **Radio:** 1290-AM, 107.5-FM

Miller also praised Smith's attitude in the face of adversity.

"These days, you know, if you get hit in an eyebrow, you could be out for two to four weeks," Miller said dryly. "The kid broke his nose. His nose is smashed. And he played and really is the reason we stayed in the game."

"One thing I'll say about Dylan Smith is he shows up in. In today's world of college basketball, effort level and in being able to count on these guys is really important. ... his fight in the second half and just watching him take that hit ... in response, wow, it's quite a testament to being a tough kid."

The Wildcats' only four-year player, though he began his career at UNC Asheville, Smith hit 6 of 8 3-pointers in the second half and finished with a team-high 19 points. Jaden McDaniels scored 20 to lead Washington.

The loss dropped Arizona to 20-11 and a final Pac-12 record of 10-8, although the Wildcats were already locked into the No. 5 Pac-12 Tournament seed before the game



Dylan Smith took a shot to the nose in the first half, but kept the Wildcats close by hitting six 3-pointers and finishing with a team-high 19 points overall.

began. Arizona will face Washington again on Wednesday at 2:30 p.m. in a Pac-12 Tournament first round game in Las Vegas.

Washington, similarly locked into the No. 12 seed before the game began, finished its regular season at 15-16 and 5-13, having finished last in the Pac-12 after winning it with a 15-3 record last season.

Thanks in large part to Smith's 3s, Arizona trailed just 55-51 when Christian Koloko was called for reaching over the back of Stewart

— and then was called for a technical for appealing the call.

"Christian may be one of the nicest kids that I've ever met," Miller said.

"We're actually on him to communicate more. It's just hard for me to believe, but I guess that's the way the world is right now."

The two fouls resulted in four Washington made free throws, two by McDaniels and two by Stewart, and the Wildcats never recovered even as Smith hit his sixth 3-pointer.

Earlier, Washington expanded a 15-point halftime lead to 38-23 when Stewart dunked inside 30 seconds into the half, but Smith then hit three 3-pointers within 66 seconds — all from the right corner and wing — to singlehandedly pull UA within 10 points, 42-32.

Then, after Stewart scored inside, Smith fired in a 25-footer from above the top of the key to cut the Huskies' lead to single dig-

See WILDCATS, BC2

'Poor, poor performance' in loss to Huskies makes you wonder if Cats know it's March

Until Saturday night, last-place basketball teams in the Pac-12 had played 44 games against Arizona at McKale Center and you can guess how inept they were — two wins, 42 losses.

The difference had been so monumental that Arizona could've mailed it in and won most of those games by 20.

In 1988, Cal, USC and Washington tied for last place. When they arrived in Tucson, got rolled by a combined 101 points.

Times change.

When last-place Washington walked onto the court Saturday night at McKale, Arizona indeed mailed it in. It didn't even put



Greg Hansen

postage on the envelope in a hapless first half, trailing 38-23. And remember: this is a UW team that lost nine straight games from mid-January to late-February.

The last-place Huskies pushed Arizona around so thoroughly, winning 69-63, that Sean Miller used the definition of a last-place team to describe his team.

"Our performance tonight was poor, poor," he said. "We weren't ready to play. We didn't run as fast, jump as high. We struggled to get back defensively. The guys lost confidence. We struggled to catch the ball. We struggled to dribble the ball."

Other than that, how was the play, Mrs. Lincoln?

When Arizona was beaten by those WSU last-place teams in 1984 and 2010, there wasn't a feeling of helplessness. That's because the '84 and '10 Wildcats were still in their break-in mileage periods under Olson and Miller.

In fact, both of those seasons were ultimately viewed as prom-

ising; Olson's 1984 team won six of its last eight games and completed an 11-17 season by beating the same last-place WSU team in Pullman by 18 points.

And when Miller capped his first Arizona season at 16-15, the Wildcats celebrated Senior Day with a thrilling 86-84 overtime victory over UCLA, completing a weekend sweep of the Los Angeles schools.

Times change.

If you're looking for a promising, feel-good scenario about the 2019-20 Wildcats, you've come to the wrong place.

Arizona's attempt at Senior

See HANSEN, BC2



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR
Arizona freshman Christian Koloko was called for a technical foul for denying he fouled a UW player. UA was down four at the time.

SEEN AND HEARD AT MCKALE CENTER

Senior send-offs get bloody

Arizona honored its six seniors before Saturday's game, a change from its usual postgame tradition.

Kory Jones, Jake DesJardins, Max Hazzard, Chase Jeter, Stone Gettings and Dylan Smith all received large framed jerseys and a few photos. While neither Hazzard (personal reasons) or Jeter (suspension) were available to play, Gettings and Smith started as usual.

Things took an unexpected turn in the first half, when Smith took a hard elbow to the face from Washington's 6-foot-9-inch, 250-pound Isaiah Stewart.

Smith, from Mobile, Alabama, went to the locker room for a few minutes, but returned to action with nose plugs.

Scoreboard watching

Before Saturday's tipoff, the video board in McKale Center showed Pac-12 Women's Basketball Tournament action between UA and Oregon in Vegas.

The Cats were unable to pull off the upset of the top-seeded Ducks, losing 88-70, which means Arizona will now have to wait until March 16 to find out its NCAA Tournament seeding, where it hopes to have a top 16 seed.

Straight to Vegas

Washington plans to head straight to Las Vegas following Saturday's game, because, well, who doesn't a few extra days in Sin City?

Actually, the Huskies are taking precaution due to the coronavirus — which caused the university to halt all in-person classes and transition courses be online until the end of the quarter later this month.

Arizona will play the Huskies again in the opening round of the Pac-12 Tournament Wednesday.

More senior stuff

How long is four — or five — years? Consider: Sean Miller's first recruiting class at Arizona, one that included Kevin Parrom and Solomon Hill, didn't experience its Senior Day until 2013. Parrom and Hill are rarities in modern college basketball. The only other four-year scholarship players to spend their entire career at the UA under coach Sean Miller are Jordin Mayes, Kaleb Tarczewski, Gabe York, Dusan Ristic and Parker Jackson-Cartwright.

Recently, Arizona's Senior Day festivities have marked a farewell to players who transferred to Tucson from elsewhere. T.J. McConnell (Duquesne), Matt Korcheck (Cochise College), Ryan Anderson (Boston College), Mark Tollefsen (San Francisco), Kadeem Allen (Hutchinson C.C.), Talbott Denny (Lipscomb), Keanu Pinder (Hutchinson C.C.), Justin Coleman (Samford), Ryan Luther (Pittsburgh), Smith (UNC-Asheville), Gettings (Cornell), Jeter (Duke) and Hazzard (UC Irvine) all transferred to the UA either as undergraduates or graduates.

Senior Day in today's college basketball world is a "sign of the times," Miller said.

"When you celebrate Sean Elliott's great career — when he came in as a youngster and you watched him grow from his freshman to his sophomore, junior, senior year, that's what Senior Night was at that moment," Miller said. "It's not that anymore."

And next year? Ira Lee is expected to be the only Senior Day participant who started his career at Arizona.

He was a part of the 2017 recruiting class that also had Deandre Ayton, Brandon Randolph, Emmanuel Akot and Alex Barcello; Ayton was the top NBA draft pick, while Barcello (BYU) and Akot (Boise State) transferred, and Randolph turned pro following his sophomore season.

Nico Mannion passes Jason Gardner

Heading into Saturday, point guard Nico Mannion needed one assist to pass former UA great Jason Gardner (162) for the third-most assists by a freshman. It took Mannion until the second half to record his one dish. Mannion still has a ways to go to catch up to Mike Bibby (178) and Russell Brown (197).

Tweet of the day

Damon Stoudamire is having a remarkable season as the head coach of Pacific, and was recently named West Coast Conference Coach of the Year after leading the Tigers to their first 23-win season in a decade.

Although the week has been one to remember for Stoudamire, a star on Arizona's 1994 Final Four team, he was reminded on Twitter about the 1995 season — when North Carolina's Jerry Stackhouse was named the "Sports Illustrated" Player of the Year and was featured on the SI magazine cover.

Stoudamire tweeted "I'm still hot about this. Led Pac-10 in scoring and assists. (I scored 45 points at) Stanford. (I had a) triple-double against Oregon. (I scored 40 points) at (Washington State). Gave it to everybody! ... Just saying."

Stoudamire averaged 22.8 points and 7.3 assists per game, while Stackhouse averaged 19.2 points and 8.2 rebounds in 1995.

The memorable number

5 Saturday marked the five-year anniversary of T.J. McConnell kissing center court at McKale Center, part of a memorable senior day.

He said it

"If you watch 'Sesame Street' and you listen to the guys on 'Sesame Street', it's a children's show. Every bracketology is a children's show. ... You start to go through the bracketology and you start to listen to the 'Sesame Street' cartoon guys who need people to click. ... When I was in the Atlantic 10, (ESPN's) Joe Lunardi was my best friend. He used to help me all the time.

"When I went to Indiana, he needed to crap on Indiana the other day just to get people to watch 'Sesame Street.'"

— Indiana head coach Archie Miller, brother of Sean Miller, after the Hoosiers' loss to Wisconsin on Saturday. Archie was making his case for Indiana as an at-large team in the NCAA Tournament.

— Justin Spears and Alec White



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Ira Lee draws the attention of the Washington defense Saturday night. Lee finished with two points in 10 minutes in UA's 69-63 loss.

WILDCATS

Continued from Page BC1

its at just 44-35.

Mannion later hit a 3-point-er to cut Washington's lead to 48-40 with 12 minutes left in the game and then a 6-0 run, thanks to a three-point play from Mannion, pulled UA to within 53-48 with 8:46 left.

Mannion had hit a near-3-pointer from the right corner when he drew a foul from Washington's Hameir Wright, then made the ensuing free throw to keep the game close.

McDaniels, a projected NBA first-round pick who comes off the bench for the Huskies, had 11 points in the first half, along with four rebounds and three blocked shots.

Josh Green had eight points to lead Arizona in the first half. While Green made the only 3-pointer he took, his teammates missed all of theirs, seven in total.

Arizona stayed close with Washington over the first seven minutes of the game, but things changed after Smith

PAC-12 TOURNAMENT

Wednesday, March 11

- No. 8 Oregon State vs. No. 9 Utah, noon, Pac-12 Networks
- No. 5 Arizona vs. No. 12 Washington, 2:30 p.m., Pac-12 Networks
- No. 2 UCLA vs. 7/10 winner, 6 p.m., Pac-12 Networks
- No. 3 USC vs. 6/11 winner, 8:30 p.m., Pac-12 Networks

Friday, March 13

- 1/8/9 winner vs. 4/5/12 winner, 6 p.m., Pac-12 Networks
- 2/7/10 winner vs. 3/6/11 winner, 8:30 p.m., FS1

Saturday, March 14

Championship game, 7:30 p.m., FS1

All games at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas

went down after taking an elbow to the face.

Officials ruled Stewart's elbow was inadvertent and did not call a foul on the play.

By the time Smith returned to the game with 5:57 to go, the Huskies had a 29-16 lead, with McDaniels having just hit a 3-pointer and making a layup after Marcus Tsohonis stole the

ball from UA's Green.

Washington went up by 15, when Elijah Hardy drove inside with 5:28 to go before the Wildcats cut it to 33-23 with 1:42 left.

The Wildcats were again playing without two reserve players: Guard Max Hazzard, who is being held out for what UA is calling personal reasons,

WASHINGTON 69, ARIZONA 63

Washington	Min	FG	FT	Reb	A	PF	PTS
Carter	23	1-8	2-2	1-4	1	5	4
Stewart	32	7-12	2-2	3-7	0	2	16
Wright	17	2-5	0-0	0-4	1	4	4
Bey	34	2-3	7-7	0-3	1	1	12
Tsohonis	22	1-3	0-0	0-2	5	1	3
McDaniels	32	7-14	4-4	2-6	1	3	20
Hardy	26	1-6	0-2	0-3	2	2	2
Timmins	8	2-3	0-0	0-1	0	1	6
Battle	6	1-2	0-0	0-0	0	0	3
Totals	200	24-56	15-17	6-30	11	19	69

Percentages: FG 42.9, FT 88.2, 3-Point Goals: 6-17, .353 (McDaniels 2-5, Bey 1-1, Timmins 1-1, Battle 1-2, Tsohonis 1-2, Hardy 0-1, Carter 0-2, Wright 0-3). Team Rebounds: 5, Team Turnovers: 1, Blocked Shots: 5 (McDaniels 3, Stewart 2). Turnovers: 14 (Carter 5, Hardy 3, Wright 3, Bey, McDaniels, Tsohonis), Steals: 11 (Tsohonis 3, Carter 2, Stewart 2, Wright 2, Hardy, McDaniels). Technical Fouls: Hardy, 2:38 second.

Arizona	Min	FG	FT	Reb	A	PF	PTS
Gettings	23	2-8	2-2	2-7	1	2	6
Nnaji	35	4-10	4-6	7-11	1	2	12
J.Green	33	2-7	3-3	1-5	2	2	8
Mannion	40	3-9	4-5	0-2	5	1	11
Smith	33	6-11	1-2	0-5	1	4	19
Baker	16	0-4	0-0	0-1	1	0	0
Koloko	11	2-5	1-2	3-4	0	5	5
Lee	10	1-3	0-0	0-2	0	1	2
Totals	200	20-57	15-22	13-37	12	19	63

Percentages: FG 35.1, FT 68.2, 3-Point Goals: 8-21, .381 (Smith 6-10, J.Green 1-2, Mannion 1-5, Baker 0-4). Team Rebounds: 2, Team Turnovers: 1, Blocked Shots: 3 (Gettings, Koloko, Smith). Turnovers: 17 (Mannion 5, J.Green 4, Nnaji 3, Baker 2, Gettings 2, Smith), Steals: 5 (Baker, Lee, Mannion, Nnaji, Smith). Technical Fouls: Koloko, 4:49 second.

Washington 38 31-69
Arizona 23 40-63
A: 13,604. Officials: Michael Greenstein, Greg Nixon, Deldred Carr

HANSEN

Continued from Page BC1

Day on Saturday was muted. The pre-game ceremony was held when maybe 7,000 people were at McKale. It was emotion-free, and a few minutes later the Wildcats similarly played without emotion in a desultory first half in which they missed 20 of 25 shots and committed eight turnovers.

Miller's sideline demeanor didn't change much. He's seen this don't-show-up-on-time, toughness-lacking version of his freshman-laden team so often that he at times seemed disconnected — and he rarely does that.

"I feel terrible for our crowd and our fans," he said. More? He said his club exhibited a "deer-in-the-head-lights mode for 20 minutes."

"You've got to take wins in college basketball," he said "You've got to go get 'em."

That's probably the G-rated version of the post-game chat he had with his team, but if any of it is getting through, it doesn't show.

Even fifth-year senior Stone Gettings, a Cornell grad, admitted that Washington "came out with more energy than us."

Now — gulp — Arizona must prepare to play the Huskies again on Wednesday, an elimination game in the Pac-12 Tournament.

It might be the first time in league history that the Vegas bookies put the odds on the 12th place team over the fifth-place team.

What made Saturday's loss to the Huskies more head-shaking was that Washington was accompanied by a load of unfavorable history. The UW became the first team since USC in 1986 to go from



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Sean Miller's Wildcats are 11-11 since starting the year 9-0. UA has lost four of its last five games overall.

first place to last place in one season.

Yet when coach Mike Hopkins deployed his favored 2-3 zone defense against Arizona on Saturday it was hard to see any difference between the Husky team that went 15-3 last year and the one that finished 5-13 this season.

"It's hard to believe they were 3-13 before this trip

began," said Miller. "Watching them (beat) Arizona State on Thursday, we knew we were in for a fight."

Really?

The Huskies have one dynamic player, 6-foot 9-inch freshman center Isaiah Stewart, who plays with a toughness and tenacity that Arizona's three freshmen starters have not been able to

PAC-12 STANDINGS

Team	Conf.	Overall
Oregon	13-5	23-7
UCLA	12-6	19-12
USC	11-7	22-9
Arizona State	11-7	20-11
Arizona	10-8	20-11
Colorado	10-8	21-10
Stanford	9-9	20-11
Oregon State	7-11	17-13
Utah	7-11	16-14
California	7-11	13-18
Washington State	6-12	15-16
Washington	5-13	15-16

discover.

"Stewart's like a lion!" said Miller. "He's a problem."

But there are so many holes in this Washington team that you can see how it lost to Cal and was swept by a bad Washington State team. For example, Hopkins used sophomore Elijah Hardy at point guard for 27 minutes. He averages 10 minutes a game. He is shooting 28 percent from the field and 14 percent from 3-point range.

Yet Hardy played fearlessly, pushing the action against Arizona's Nico Mannion and Josh Green, and although he shot poorly, 1 for 6, he seemed like a better option than the Arizona freshmen.

Miller used no alibis. "The buck starts and stops with me," he said. "It was very disappointing."

More than anyone, Miller knows why that buck stopped on Saturday.

He said: "If you have to get guys motivated to play at McKale Center — the last game of the year — you've got a lot bigger problem than what seed you've got at the Pac-12 Tournament."

The madness of March used to be the most anticipated time of the year in Tucson sports. Now it is accompanied by a sense of dread.