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## CBI Tournament: Oregon 68, Weber State 59: Jovean Catron extends Ducks' season

Published: Wednesday, March 16, 2011, 8:32 PM Updated: Wednesday, March 16, 2011, 10:51 PM



By John Hunt, The Oregonian



Jovean Catron

EUGENE – Jovean Catron made sure he extended his college career for at least another game as he had 24 points and a season-high 12 rebounds to lead **Oregon to a 68-59 win over Weber State in the opening round of the CBI Tournament.**

Oregon (17-17) advances to play Duquesne in the quarterfinal round at 7 p.m. Monday at Matthew Knight Arena, where 4,375 fans turned out Wednesday night – the highest total of any of the eight first-round CBI games.

In some ways, it was a game befitting a third-tier tournament. It was choppy, Oregon missed all 11 of its three-point shots in the first half, and the Wildcats (18-14) missed more free throws than they made. Oregon coach Dana Altman admitted his team “didn’t play with a lot of smoothness,” at least in the first half.

But in one way, it was something to see. Catron, the fifth-year senior and the only Duck who has played in the NCAA Tournament, played as if he were doing it again.

“I just don’t want to see it end,” said Catron, who had 18 points and seven rebounds after halftime as the Ducks looked inside to their scoring leader after the three-pointers weren’t dropping.

This was not an aesthetically pleasing game. The officials let a lot of contact go, and Weber State coach Randy Rahe admitted his team’s style is a bit ugly. Late in the first half, when Oregon missed its 10th straight three-pointer, the Wildcats’ Jordan Richardson answered with an airball on his three.

Richardson was serenaded with the “air-ball” chant the rest of the way, as Catron heard things like, “We love you, Catron!”

E.J. Singler had 16 points for Oregon, with two blocks and two steals, and hit all seven of his free throws as the Ducks finished 23 of 26 from the line, including a 12-for-13 night for Catron. Weber State was 5 of 11.

The first half ended with a three-point buzzer beater by Weber State guard Lindsey Hughey that put Weber State up 28-26, but the Ducks made a simple adjustment at halftime: Get the ball to Catron.

Catron worked his spinning, lunging magic on the low post, and his teammates were judicious on threes, hitting 3 of 4 after halftime.

"They were kind of slow afoot, and we knew we could penetrate," Catron said of the Wildcats.

Duquesne (19-12) beat Montana 87-76 in another first-round game in Missoula, Mont., on Wednesday night. In the CBI for the second straight year, the Dukes won 11 in a row early in the season but lost seven of nine to end the regular season.

As spring break begins at Oregon, the crowd Monday probably won't be too big. Altman, who is making his 14th consecutive postseason appearance after leading Creighton to the CIT a year ago, complimented the CBI organizers and quickly added, "But I don't want to play in it again."

Altman has his sights set higher for the Ducks, but for Catron, his only focus is to keep playing.

"No, this isn't the NCAA Tournament, it's not even the NIT," Altman said. "But the passion Joe showed for the game ... E.J. and some of the guys ... that's what you're looking for – guys who want to compete."

-- **John Hunt**

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