



Tuesday, February 27, 2001

OU women win regular-season title, earn top seed

An improbable turn of events landed Oakland University the top seed in the Mid-Continent Conference Women's Basketball Tournament for the second year in a row.

To have a shot at being the top seed, the **Golden Grizzlies** needed to win its last two games of the regular season, while Oral Roberts had to lose its last two games. With a 72-59 OU win over UMKC and an Oral Roberts loss to Southern Utah Saturday, February 24, it all came down to the last game of the regular season Monday, February 26.

The **Golden Grizzlies** came out on top as they defeated Youngstown State 77-52 and Oral Roberts lost to last-place UMKC 52-45.

The win over Youngstown State also gives OU its second straight **Mid-Continent Conference** regular-season title. OU ended the regular season 18-9 overall and 12-4 in the conference.

OU and Youngstown State played a close first half in Youngstown, Ohio, as the Golden Grizzlies held a 31-26 edge at intermission. During the first half, OU and YSU saw four lead changes with the final one coming in Oakland's favor at the 5:48 mark.

The second half was all Oakland as the Golden Grizzlies shot 60.9 percent from the field. OU and YSU each scored eight points in the first five minutes after halftime as the Golden Grizzlies held a 39-34 lead with 15:28 remaining. OU then went on a 29-5 run in the next 10 minutes, including a 24-0 stint, to put the game away as the Penguins shot a mere 31.3 percent in the second half.

Senior Beth Zeone poured in a game-high 29 points on 10-of-12 shooting from the floor, including 4-6 from the three, and a perfect 5-5 at the line to lead the Golden Grizzlies. Junior Sarah Judd popped in 22 points, 16 in the second half, connecting on 8-of-12 from the floor. Zeone and Judd each grabbed eight rebounds.

The victory gives OU the No. 1 seed at the Mid-Continent Conference Championship Tournament March 3-6 at the Allen County Memorial Coliseum in Fort Wayne, Ind. For fans unable to see the women's postseason games, they can listen to the live audio webcasts from the **OU athletics** website.

Oakland will face No. 8 seed Valparaiso (7-21, 4-12) Saturday, March 3, at noon in the first quarterfinal of the tournament. Oakland swept the two meetings against the Crusaders this season. Prior to this season, Valparaiso had never been lower than a No. 5 seed in the tournament. Oral Roberts (17-10, 11-5) finished in a three-way tie for second place, but earns the second seed thanks to its season sweep of Oakland. The No. 2 seed is the best seed ever for the Golden Eagles, which will face No. 7 seed Youngstown State (10-17, 6-10), last season's Mid-Con Tournament Champion, Saturday, March 3, at 5 p.m. Prior to this season, the Penguins had never been seeded lower than third in the Mid-Con Tournament. Oral Roberts swept Youngstown State in this season's series.

SUMMARY

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