

Adams makes debut in 61-42 Oregon win

By Anne M. Peterson
AP Sports Writer

EUGENE (AP) — Vernon Adams' debut for the Ducks started with four crisp scoring drives and ended with a scary hit.

But most importantly for Adams, it was a win.

Adams threw for 246 yards and two touchdowns before he left the game in the fourth quarter, and No. 7 Oregon defeated his former team, Eastern Washington, 61-42 to open the season on Saturday night.

"It was great going out there, the fans going crazy," Adams said. "I had goosebumps. My heart was beating. I was like, man this is crazy, this is real life."

Royce Freeman ran for a career-high 180 yards and three scores for the Ducks, who didn't appear to have slipped much offensively without Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota.

Adams, who transferred to Oregon for his final year of eligibility, was ushered to the locker room after he staggered getting up from a late hit by Eastern Washington's John Kreifels, who was ejected.

Adams, a repeat Big Sky Conference offensive player

of the year, was replaced by Mariota's backup last season, Jeff Lockie. Adams came back to watch the end of the game from the sidelines.

Later he said he was fine and planned to play next week when Oregon goes on the road against Michigan State.

"Very proud of him the way he performed today, there was a lot of anxiety out there, a lot of people wondering what he was going to do and how he was going to do," Freeman said about Adams' much-anticipated debut. "But at the end of the day I like him because he's a baller. Point blank. Period."

Jordan West, who took over as Eastern Washington's quarterback after Adams' departure, threw for 293 yards and three touchdowns. He also left the game in the third quarter and was seen limping on the sideline, but later he said it was cramps.

Receiver Cooper Cupp caught 15 passes for 246 yards — both records at Autzen stadium — and three scores for the persistent Eagles, who were ranked No. 6 in the pre-season FCS coaches poll.

Adams took advantage of an NCAA rule that allowed him to join the Ducks without sitting out a season after

he wrapped up his degree at Eastern Washington. He arrived at fall camp several days late because he had to take one last final exam.

In 37 career games with the Eagles, Adams passed for 10,438 yards and 110 touchdowns while rushing for 11 more.

He has a considerable challenge in replacing Mariota, arguably the best quarterback in Oregon's history. Now with the Tennessee Titans, Mariota led the Ducks to a 13-2 record last season and a spot in the championship game of college football's first playoffs.

Oregon's issues on Saturday appeared to be on defense and the inability to contain West, who started in four games as an injury replacement for Adams last season, and Cupp.

Adams was efficient from the start with each of Oregon's first four scoring drives taking less than three minutes.

Freeman led the Ducks with 1,365 yards rushing last season — a Pac-12 true freshman record — and 18 touchdowns. He certainly showed no sign of slowing down on Saturday night, running for a pair of first-half scores.

After Oregon went into the break ahead 37-21, Freeman

opened the second half with a one-yard TD dive.

Adams' 24-yard scoring pass to Byron Marshall pushed Oregon's lead to 51-28. It was Adams' 27th consecutive game with multiple touchdown passes. He completed 19 of 25 passes, and also ran for 94 yards, before he left the game.

Eastern Washington Coach Beau Baldwin sought out Adams on the field following the game.

"I was just making sure he was OK," Baldwin said. "Obviously it was heartbreaking to see that (hit). He said he was fine, he said he was good and that made me feel a lot better."

Baldwin was angry with Kreifels, not only for the hit, but for taunting the Autzen Stadium crowd before he left the field.

"He should've been kicked out, but he needs to go out humbly and learn from it, not act like that," Baldwin said.

With the victory, Oregon upped its record to 14-0-2 all-time against Big Sky opponents.

Oregon has thrown a touchdown pass in 69 consecutive games, matching the national record set by Texas Tech from Sept. 23, 2006, to Oct. 22, 2011.

Fire in Crater Lake largest ever, 70 percent contained


BEND (AP) — Oregon has seen a hectic wildfire season and the largest fire in the recorded history of Crater Lake blackened the north-west corner of the state's only national park.

The *Bend Bulletin* reports that the blaze in the park has been burning for five weeks but was 70 percent contained by Saturday. It burned almost 25 square miles.

Of that, about 20 square miles are in the park and the rest is national forestland.

While historic, the big blaze did not leave a mark close to Crater Lake or any of the park's signature sights.


The fire closed the park's north entrance for 13 days. The park has two entrances, with most visitors coming from Bend or Portland typically entering through the north. That entrance is now open.



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