

Ducks do it again; whip Beavers 24-3

By JOHN HARRIS
Of the Emerald

OSU, our pants are off to you.
Beavers, bastards, sons
of bitches too.

We'll smoke your cigarettes,
We'll fuck your majorettes;
OSU fuck you! — the Ducks'

rendition of the
Oregon State fight song
following their 24-3
victory over the Beavers
in Saturday's Civil War.

It certainly was something to shout about. Especially for Bruce Beekley, Rudy Bryan, Dan Clark, Rick Hudnell and Tom Reedal who became the first Ducks to play on Oregon teams that beat OSU four times in a row since 1932-35.

It was a day to remember as well for the above individuals because each had an opportunity to contribute to the win. Beekley spearheaded an inspired defensive effort by recording 13 tackles, recovering a fumble and intercepting a pass. Bryan entered the game late in the fourth quarter but was in on two quarterback sacks. Clark was the Ducks' leading receiver with two catches for 22 yards. Hudnell had six tackles and two interceptions, and Reedal punted once for 33 yards.

The victory, Oregon's second against nine losses, provided a ray of sunshine in a somewhat dismal season, and nobody was happier after the game than senior linebacker Willie Blasher, who never gave up despite being a winner just four times in a two-year Oregon career.

"When I was recruited (from Contra Costa Junior College) I had a chance to go to other schools that had winning records, but I wanted to come here and help to establish a winning attitude. I think I was successful."

Blasher's statement seems a bit paradoxical considering the Ducks' win-loss record, but there is truth in what he says. Oregon endured a season of close losses; losses sure, but the competitiveness the Ducks displayed was often almost enough to overcome the mistakes brought on by inexperience.

"We've made a lot of progress," said a relieved-looking Rich Brooks in the jubilant Ducks' locker room. "One thing that has happened is the team has come together. My first year here there were some attitude problems, but this year even through the losses no one pointed fingers. We stayed together."

Saturday Oregon's defense stuck together when the Beavers drove to the Ducks' 31-yard line on their second possession and threatened to go ahead 10-0. Beekley recovered a Tim Sim fumble to stop the drive. With Oregon ahead 21-3 midway through the second quarter, OSU moved the ball to the Ducks' 21-yard line, first down. Split end Dwayne Hall picked up a yard. Quarterback Steve Smith added three more, but on third down the Ducks' Mike Kesler poured through to throw Smith for an eight yard loss. Smith threw incomplete on fourth down, ending the Beavers' final offensive surge of the day.

"Our defense really played well when backed up and put in a bad position," said Brooks.

"The defensive line is what made this game ours," added Blasher. "You've got to control the line of scrimmage to win, and we did just that."

The Ducks' defensive front—sophomores Neil Elshire, Vince Goldsmith and Scott Setterlund and juniors Terry Dion and Mike Kesler—continually pursued

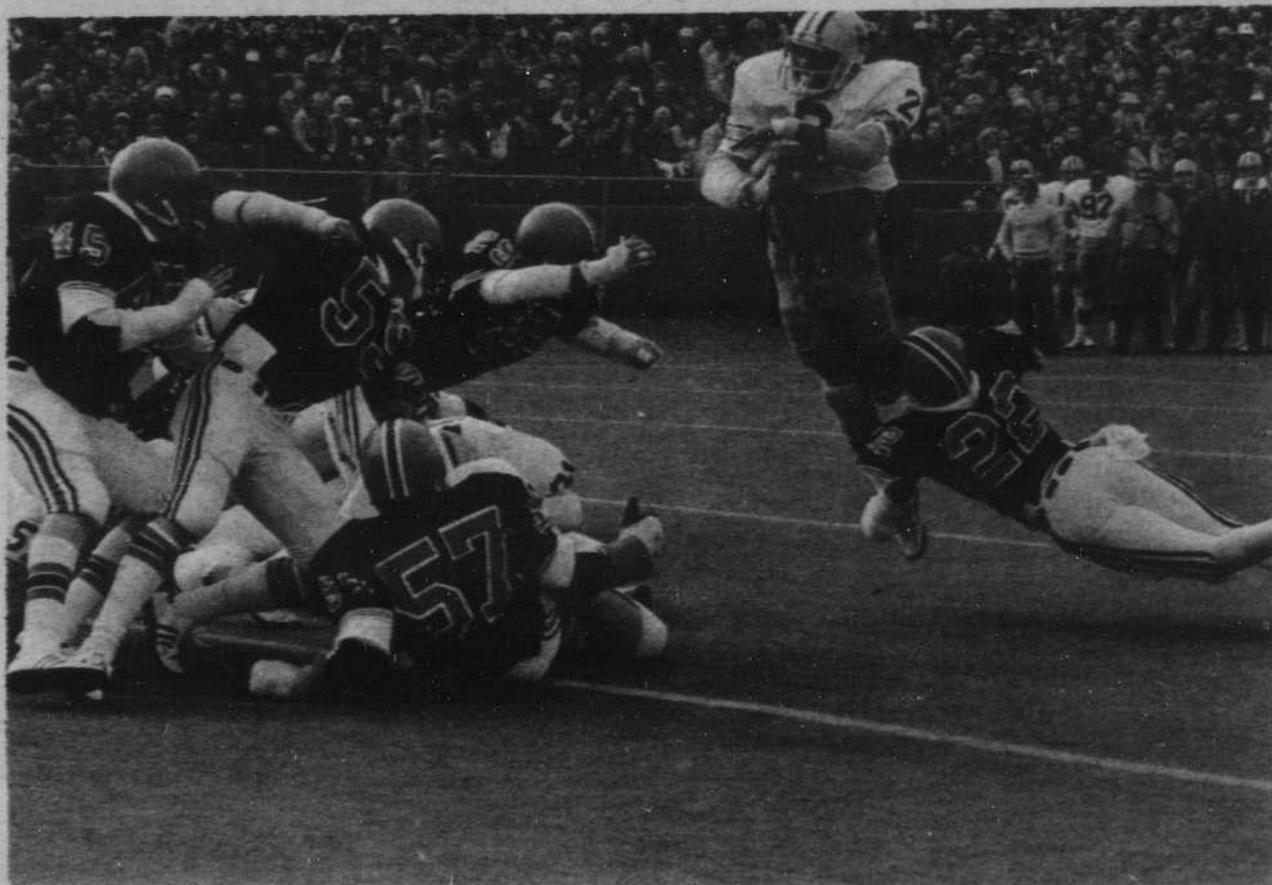


Photo by Steve Dykes

Oregon freshman tailback Dwight Robertson broke this tackle and high-stepped into the end zone for the second of his three scores in the Ducks' 24-3 Civil War win over Oregon State Saturday.

the Beaver quarterbacks, forcing four interceptions. In all, Oregon had six sacks for -34 yards.

While the Ducks' defense was forcing turnovers (six in all), the offense was taking advantage of OSU's mistakes. Following Beekley's first quarter fumble recovery, Oregon drove 26 yards in five plays with freshman tailback Dwight Robertson going over from two yards out for his first of three scores.

Five plays later, after Hudnell's first theft, Robertson scored again, high stepping into the end zone after a 9-yard run with 59 seconds remaining in the first quarter.

The Ducks' and Robertson's final touchdown came early in the second period again set up by a

Hudnell interception. At the end of his 10-yard scoring jaunt Robertson taunted the Beavers' Reggie Williams by sticking the ball in the defensive back's face.

"That happened because he said some things that he shouldn't have," explained Robertson. For his display of cockiness Robertson was benched for most of the second half by an irate Brooks, who prefers restraint in his players.

The Civil War, as always, was full of hard and not always clean hitting. Following his first interception Hudnell was punched and then trampled by an over-zealous Beaver. "He started calling me names and talking about my mother, so I figured he was just a little hyperactive," Hudnell said

later. "But there was no sense bringing my mother into it."

Blasher, who got things rolling with a vicious, but in the opinion of the officials, legal hit on Steve Smith, offered his own explanation for the rugged nature of the contest. "We kicked their ass," he said. "They got so fired up and came out and got their ass kicked, so they did anything they could to win."

In an attempt to break the Oregon hex, the Beavers even broke out the black jerseys they wore back in the late sixties when OSU dominated the rivalry. But different colored shirts could not help the Beavers hold onto the ball. "You can't turn the ball over and expect to win even in my son's flag football league," Craig Fertig, OSU's coach summed up.

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Despite losing record

Ducks have stats on their side

Despite a 2-9 record this season, the Oregon football team took a step or two toward building a competitive (by Pac-10 Conference standards) football team.

The Ducks' two victories came in league play, against Washington State, 31-7, and Oregon State, 24-3, and earned Oregon an eighth place finish in the Pac-10.

More importantly, though, the Ducks finally eliminated the rout, something coach Rich Brooks had hoped could occur during his first year. As so often happens when a coach comes into a losing program, though, Brooks overestimated the talent he had to work with, and as a result, the goals he set for himself and his team were postponed one year.

Mistakes that so often plague a young team caused defeat for Oregon in games it appeared the Ducks were going to win. Four weeks in a row Oregon went to the wire before beating itself against

Texas Christian 14-10, Wisconsin 22-19, California 21-18 and Brigham Young 17-16.

But in the process the Ducks achieved team and personal statistics that turned out to be better than those seen around Autzen Stadium in years.

The Ducks' defense yielded 212 points this season, the fewest given up since 1968. Oregon just missed allowing the least amount of total yards since 1973. The Ducks needed to hold the Beavers below 271 yards but gave up 290. Oregon did hold OSU to 112 yards rushing though, which made this year's unit the best against the rush since 1973.

By amassing 262 yards against the Beavers Saturday the Oregon offense gained more total yards this year than any other Oregon team since 1973, and the Ducks also had their most prolific scoring total since 1973 with 173 points.

The Oregon rushing offense came up 57 yards short of be-

coming the best since 1962, but sophomore fullback Vince Williams, who picked up 57 yards on 12 carries Saturday, became the fourth all-time single season ground gainer in Oregon history with 853 yards. He also became the top rushing fullback in Oregon history and the Ducks' all-time best sophomore ground gainer.

Statistics are for losers it is said, but for the Ducks, it might reflect a changing attitude. "Most of the players now believe they can go into any game and win," Brooks said before the UCLA game. "I think the players believed that to a point before, but now they believe it very deeply. This is paramount to building a program. If you don't believe you'll win, you won't, unless it's a fluke."

And as the Beavers found out Saturday, the Ducks' wins, far and few between as they were this season, were not flukes.