

Drowning Ducks recover to beat Falcons

Robertson's scores shoot down Air Force

By JOHN HEALY
Of the Emerald

Controversial Steve Harvey, who puts together the Associated Press' "Bottom 20" poll, previewed last Saturday's Oregon — Air Force game as being potentially the nation's crummiest game of the week.

For once, Harvey was right. On an incredibly cold, wet and leaden day, Oregon's offense performed a series of bellyflops that looked quite out of the ordinary for a team that is often referred to as the Webfoots.

Oregon-nearly drowned in its own mistakes, but a last gasp rescue effort by reserve quarterback Tim Durando and injured tailback Dwight Robertson gave the Ducks their third win of the season, a 17-9 comeback victory over Air Force.

Air Force came out fired up against an Oregon team that was certainly below par physically, and in the week prior to the game, seemingly below par mentally.

"We were lax in the first half," recalled Robertson in a subdued Oregon dressing room following the game. "But we got it together in the second half."

Robertson, hurting from an undiagnosed leg injury, swept around Air Force's flanks once in each half to provide the Ducks with enough of a margin to beat the Falcons.

His two touchdowns — giving him six for the year — were sandwiched around a Doug Jollymour field goal from 25 yards out.

Until the fourth quarter, however, the Ducks' offense was reduced to wandering around Autzen Stadium looking for a combination of players that could click.

Luckily for Oregon, Tim Durando proved to be the key that unlocked the Ducks' potentially devastating backfield.

Midway through the second quarter, Oregon coach Rich Brooks sent in Durando for an ailing Reggie Ogburn. The Ducks' starting signal caller, Ogburn went into Saturday's game with a tender knee.

Air Force immediately jumped

on Ogburn, as strong safety Johnny Jackson latched onto an Ogburn pass at the Oregon 40 yard line and returned it for a touchdown, all within the first two minutes of the game.

The Falcons tacked on a 42 yard field goal at the end of the first quarter following a 12 yard punt by Mike Babb.

Durando — who has played back-up quarterback ever since he arrived at Oregon, except for a stint as a defensive back — replaced Ogburn in the second quarter with the Ducks on the Air Force 22, following a recovered fumble by Mike Kesler.

"I'm getting used to it (replacing the starting quarterback)," said Durando. "If that's what it takes for me to play and if that's my value to the team, then I don't mind. I'm ready at all times."

Robertson and third-string fullback Curt Renstrom alternated carrying the Ducks down to the Air Force four yard line. Renstrom, pressed into service when back-up Jeff Woods wasn't able to suit up because of a recurring shoulder injury (he was replacing starter Vince Williams, out with a shoulder separation for the past three weeks), gained 55 yards in the first half, 15 more yards than he had gained in his entire career at Oregon.

On second and goal, Durando sprinted right, flipped the ball out to Robertson, and the Ducks had cut the Falcon's lead to 9-7.

Ogburn and Durando alter-

nated at quarterback through the third quarter, but Durando finally took over the helm after he led his teammates from the Oregon 30 to a Jollymour field goal.

same as the touchdown I had against California," explained Coleman after the game, still wincing from a broken nose suffered while blocking. "But the safety was playing different,

Overall, the Ducks held Air Force to 133 yards of total offense, including limiting Ziebart to -1 yards passing.

"They weren't a team like

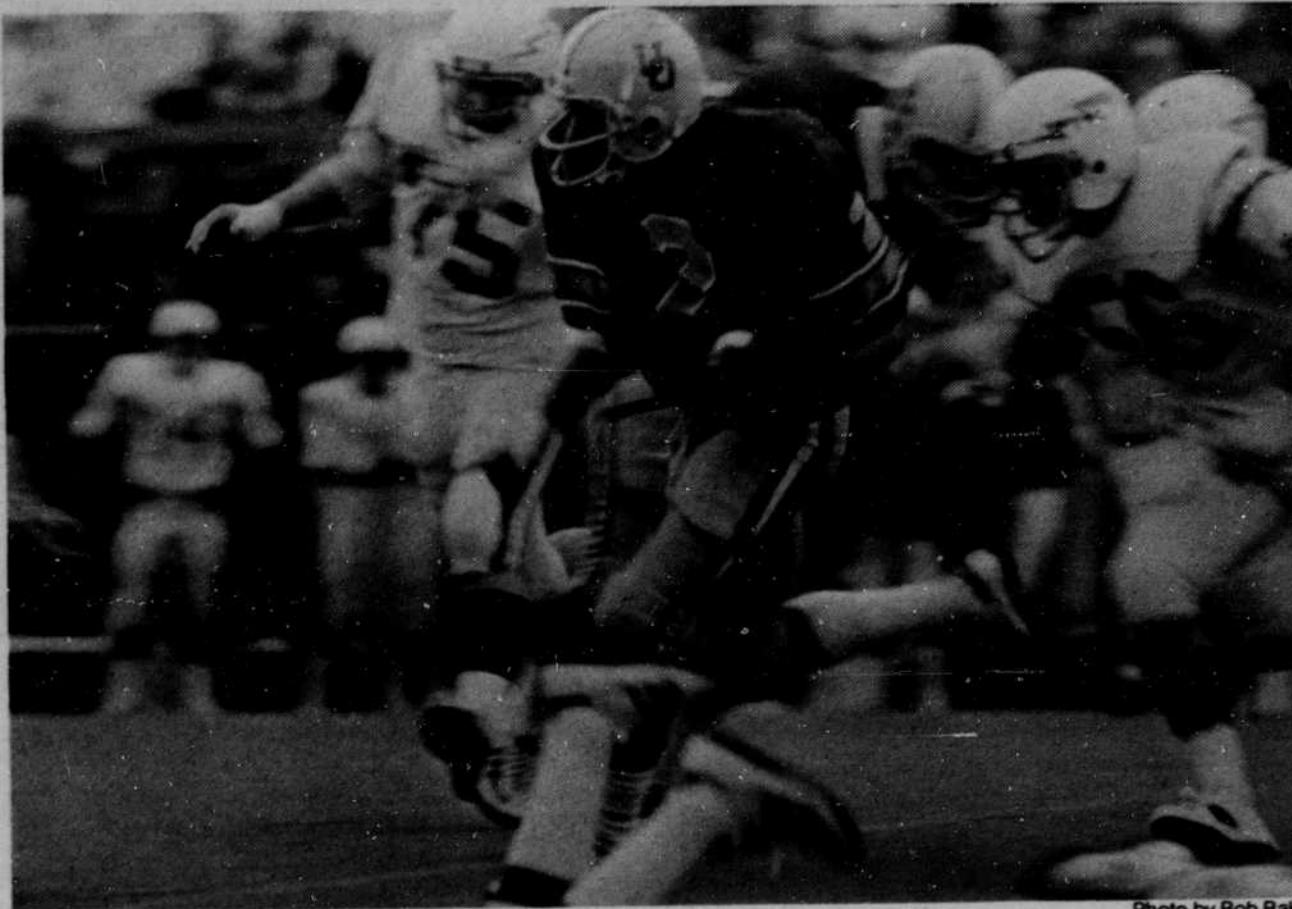


Photo by Bob Baker

Dwight Robertson shrugged off an undischarged leg injury and numerous Air Force linemen en route to scoring Oregon's two touchdowns to whip the Falcons, 17-9.

On third and fifteen at the Arizona 37, Durando rifled a pass over the middle to a diving Don Coleman, and Air Force's safety was called for pass interference.

"It (the pass route) was the

so I cut inside. He (the safety) went through me for the ball."

Oregon then drove to the Falcon's two yard line before the drive stalled and Jollymour came on to kick the field goal.

Washington or Purdue. They didn't have the tools physically," said Robertson about the Falcon's overall size. "But they were tough mentally."

Almost too tough for Oregon.



Photo by Bob Baker

Super-sub quarterback Tim Durando came off the bench to direct Oregon's two touchdown drives.

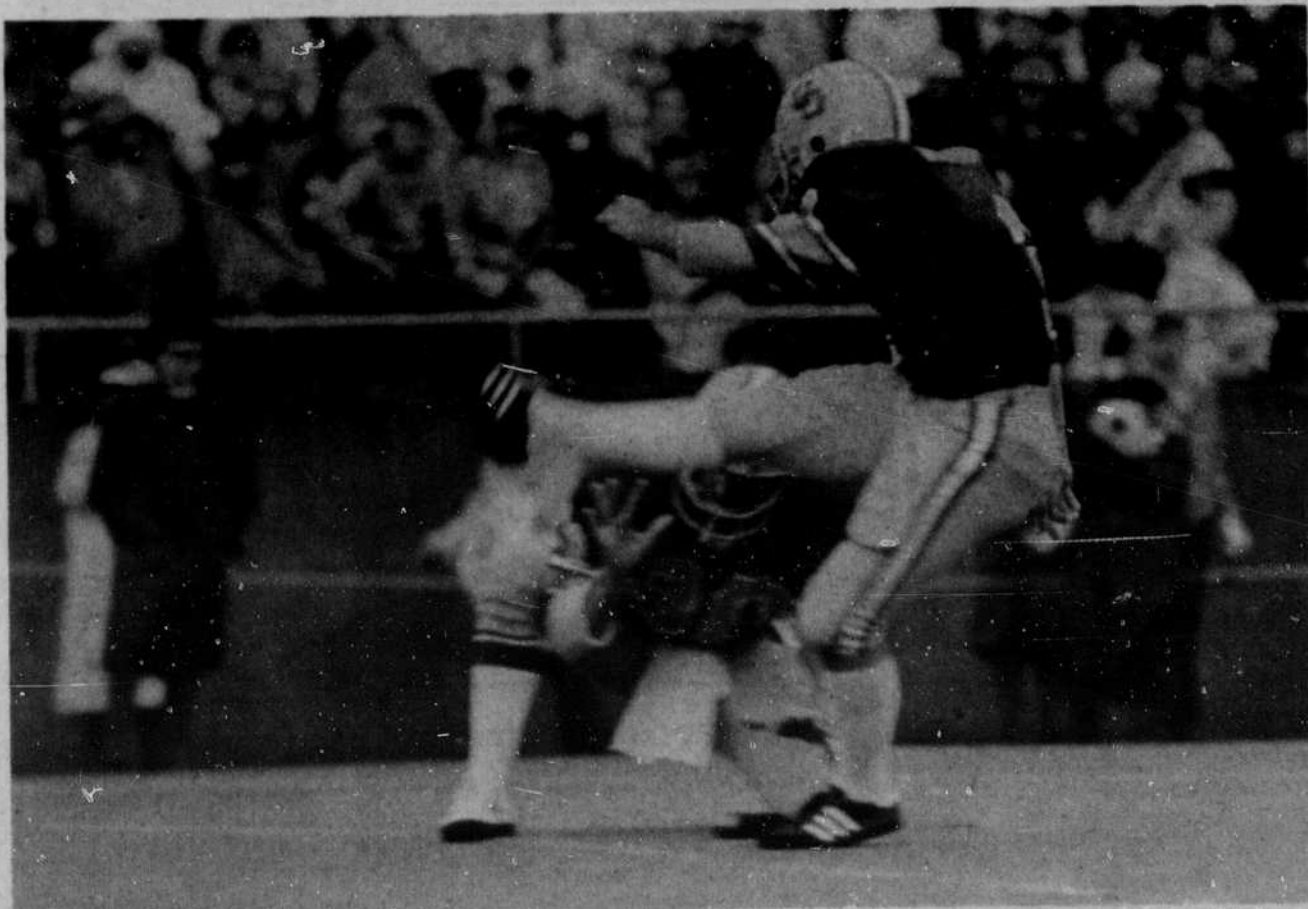


Photo by Bob Baker

Doug Jollymour's 25 yard field goal was the ducks' decisive score against Air Force, putting the Oregon ahead to stay in the sloppy, sloshing ball game last Saturday.

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May 12, 1973



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