

SPORTS

ASU fails to sustain offense

By Paul Morgan
Emerald Sports Reporter

If the first five minutes of Saturday night's game between Oregon and Arizona State were to be any indication of how the game was going to go, the Sun Devils were going to dominate.

Arizona State had just gone 81 yards in 10 plays to score the game's first touchdown with incredible ease. The Sun Devils used nine rushing plays and averaged 4.8 yards a carry, and the Oregon defensive line was getting pushed around.

When fullback Kelvin Fisher powered his way in from the three-yard line, it looked as if Arizona State was going to have an easy time handling the Ducks.

The next Arizona State drive was equally as impressive, but it ended in a much different way.

After starting at their own 22-yard line, the Sun Devils worked down to the Oregon 25-yard line with 10 consecutive rushing plays with tailback Leonard Russell and Fisher taking turns plowing through the Oregon defense.

But how quickly things change.

Russell took the ball through the right side for a

four-yard gain, but the play was called back on a holding penalty and the Sun Devils faced a second-and-16 at the Oregon 36.

Then Oregon linebacker Peter Brantley snagged Russell behind the line of scrimmage for a six-yard loss, and after 19 consecutive rushing plays, the Sun Devils were forced to pass.

Redshirt freshman quarterback Bret Powers, who received the first start of his collegiate career against the Ducks, threw into the hands of strong safety Rory Dairy. The interception was a spark Oregon used to shut down the Arizona State offense for the rest of the game.

"In the first quarter we came out hard, ran good, and scored," Russell said. "Then the second half...I just don't understand it. We started hard and just came out here and broke down."

Indeed, the Sun Devils were successful with the run in the first half, particularly in the first quarter. Arizona State piled up 96 yards on 22 carries in the opening quarter — with Russell getting 57 yards on 13 carries — but managed to get only 10 yards on nine carries in the second quarter.

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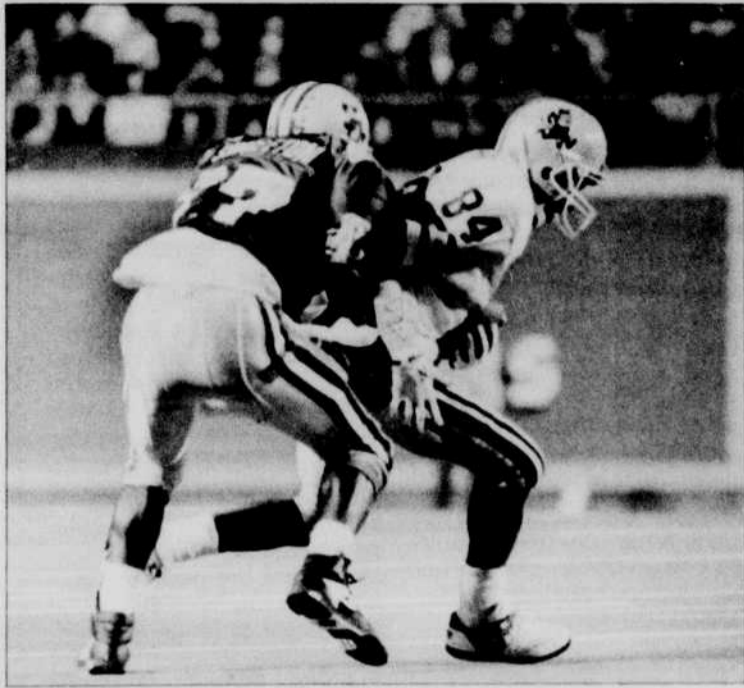


Photo by Eric Evans

Cornerback Daryl Singleton was one reason Arizona State had only 178 yards through the air, including this three-yard completion to Kevin Snyder.

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