

Sean Burwell scores on a 25-yard fourth-quarter run to make the Ducks' only touchdown in Saturday's game against Washington.

Photo by Jeff Paslay

Ducks lose to Washington, but maintain self-respect

By Jake Berg
Emerald Sports Editor

SEATTLE — Oregon did the unheard of at Washington Saturday.

No, the Duck football team did not beat the third-ranked Huskies; it merely avoided embarrassment in Oregon's 29-7 loss before 72,318 Husky Stadium fans.

Not too bad, considering that the Huskies, 4-0 in the Pacific-10 Conference and 7-0 overall, have outscored their three previous home opponents 158-3 this season. And thanks to perhaps the shortest Oregon scoring drive in a long time, the Ducks, 1-3 and 3-4, scored more points than Kansas State, Arizona and Toledo had been able to collectively muster at Husky Stadium this fall.

"Washington is the best team I've seen in this league, ever," Oregon Coach Rich Brooks said.

The Ducks scored their only points of the game — and the first touchdown by an opponent in Husky Stadium — on a 25-yard sprint to the end zone by tailback Sean Burwell, the first and only play of a six-second drive. The fourth-quarter drive was set up by Muhammad Oliver's block of a Washington punt.

When one takes into consideration the amount of injuries Oregon faced the third-ranked Huskies with, the Ducks held their own. But, believe it or not, the injury situation got worse before it got better Saturday.

Sophomore Doug Musgrave, the third starting quarterback for Oregon in as many games, became the Ducks' latest

casualty at the position. Musgrave broke his finger while tackling a Husky who recovered a Burwell fumble on the last Oregon play of the second quarter.

Musgrave was replaced in the second half by Kyle Crowston and could be out for the remainder of the season. Previous starter Brett Salisbury is still sidelined by a shoulder injury, and injured Danny O'Neil was lost for the season.

"It's pretty amazing what's happened with the quarterback situation this year," Musgrave said. "Fortunately, we have Kyle; I think he'll do a good job."

Crowston did not do a good job Saturday. The redshirt freshman completed only 2 of 8 passes for seven yards and threw two interceptions.

On the other hand, Musgrave looked fairly solid in his first collegiate start, completing 6 of 13 for 57 yards and throwing one interception against the nation's top defense.

Other injuries that likely hurt the Oregon cause were the absence of the entire starting defensive line and some hampering injuries to the linebacker corps.

Washington exploited the weakened Duck defense for 467 yards of total offense. Huskies quarterback Billy Joe Hobert threw three touchdowns and completed 23 of 36 passes for 256 yards, including 108 yards to Mario Bailey and 105 yards to Orlando McKay.

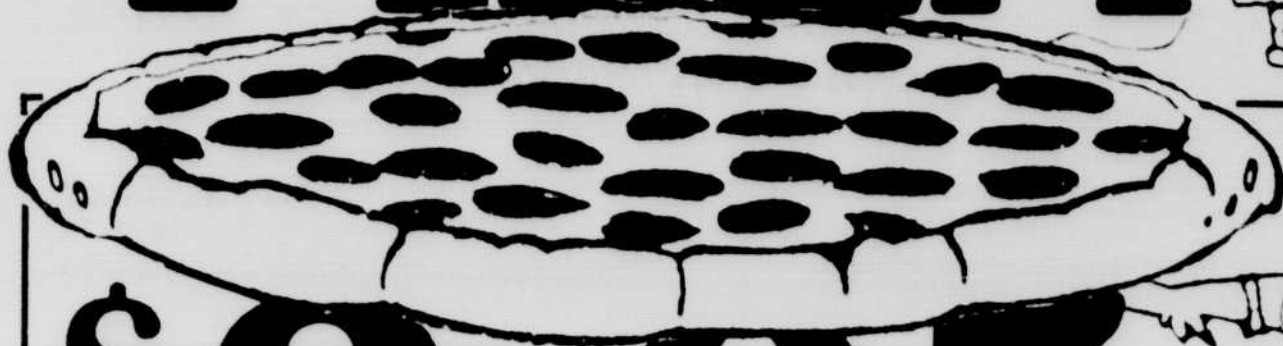
"If you had a healthy Oregon football team out there today, they would have given us a lot more problems," McKay said.

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