

Duck offense returns to beat WSU

By Steve Mims
Oregon Daily Emerald

The return to form of Danny O'Neil, and the return of some familiar faces to the Oregon offense, kept the Ducks postseason hopes alive with a 46-23 win over Washington State Saturday.

O'Neil put the six interceptions he threw last week against Washington out of his mind and had another spectacular performance for Oregon. The junior quarterback completed 19 of 27 passes for 327 yards, three touchdowns and no interceptions. O'Neil said he put the Washington game out of his mind last Saturday, and proved that to be true against the Cougars.

"Danny proved he can bounce back from adversity," Oregon head coach Rich Brooks said. "I didn't have any reason not to expect Danny O'Neil to play very, very well today."

Oregon's backfield got additional boosts from the return of running back Ricky Whittle and fullback Juan Shedrick. Whittle had carried the ball only eight times in the last three games but had 16 carries on Saturday in place of Sean Burwell, who sprained his ankle in the first half. Whittle was everywhere for the Ducks on Saturday, rushing for 52 yards, catching five passes for 77 yards and returning two kickoffs for 77 yards.

"Sean Burwell was hurt, and they needed somebody to catch those balls," Whittle said. "I had to step up and take the reins from him since he was hurt."

Shedrick gave the Ducks a boost with ten yards rushing, but more important was the inspirational role he played.

"It was very electric," Whittle said about the return of Shedrick. "We know he has to be in there because of the things he does."

Shedrick missed the last three games after suffering an elbow injury against California and wasn't expected to see time on Saturday. Brooks said he decided to play Shedrick on Thursday after the team doctors examined him.

The game was not decided until the fourth quarter when Oregon put 21 points on the board. The Ducks held a tentative 25-17 lead nine seconds into the fourth quarter. A holding penalty gave the Ducks a second down and 21 yards at their own 12 yard line, but O'Neil found Whittle on a short pass that the sophomore took 30 yards for the first down.

Whittle gained 11 yards on the next play followed by another short pass by O'Neil, this time to Cristin McLemore, that the receiver turned into a 23-yard gain to the Washington State 23-yard line. Whittle powered his way 11 yards on the next play, and two plays later running back Dino Philyaw scored from three yards out behind blocks by center Tom Curran, guard Eric Barnes and Shedrick.

Philyaw is another one of the Ducks who stepped up his performance Saturday. The junior college transfer ran the ball only twice and caught two passes on offense, but he turned around and played defensive back, a position that has been decimated by injuries.

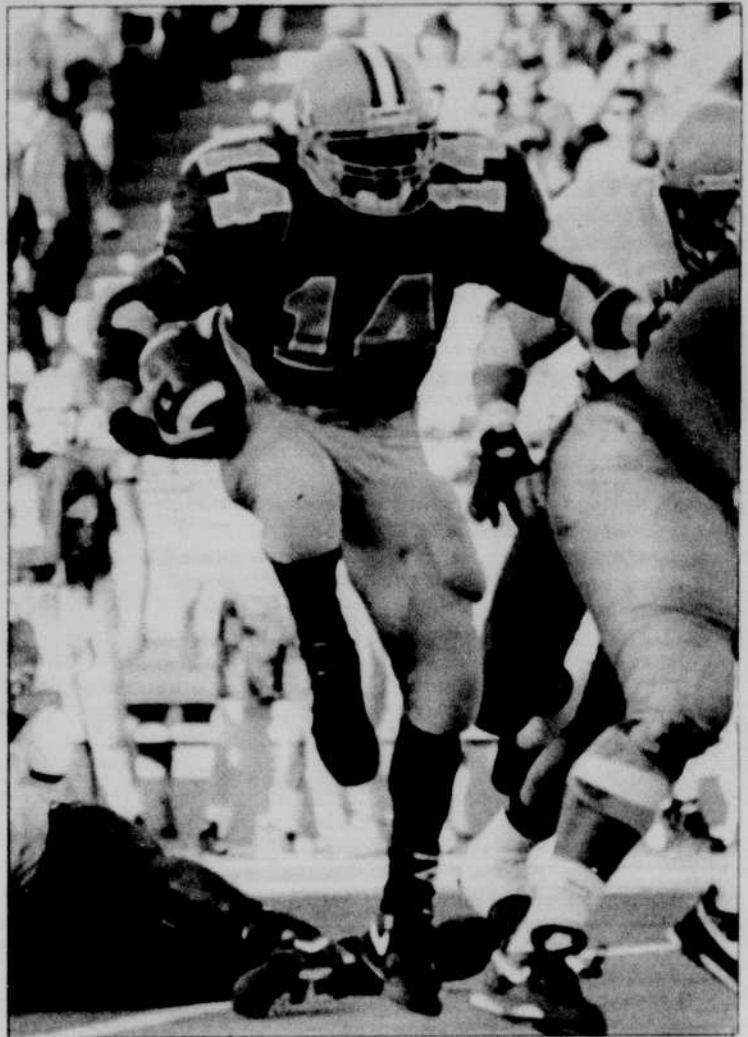
Washington State came right back after the Philyaw touchdown to score on a four-yard touchdown pass to Keith Reynolds, cutting Oregon's lead to 32-23 with 6:55 left in the game.

Washington State appeared to make the big play of the game when the ensuing kickoff was short, and Washington State recovered it at the Oregon 24-yard line. However, the Cougars were offside on the play and had to kick again.

"We had our hands team on the field," Brooks said. "The ball bounced backwards. I was not pleased, but I was very pleased when I saw the yellow flag."

Oregon got the resulting kickoff and rather than try to run out the clock, Oregon went on the offensive. O'Neil found McLemore on the second play of the drive for a gain of 35 yards to Washington State's 15-yard line. Two plays later, McLemore took a reverse from O'Neil and tossed a five-yard

Turn to **DUCK GAME**, Page 10



Oregon running back Ricky Whittle high-stepped his way to 52 yards rushing in Oregon's 46-23 win over Washington State Saturday.

Ducks party past WAZZU

By Dave Charbonneau
Oregon Daily Emerald

If Saturday's game between Oregon and Washington State were a campus party, it would have been a successful one: Everybody was scoring.

The Ducks distributed the wealth in their 46-23 win over the Cougars Saturday at Autzen Stadium. All six of Oregon's touchdowns were scored by someone different as the Ducks kept Washington State's highly touted defense off balance the entire day.

"We have a lot of weapons on offense. I think that's very obvious," head coach Rich Brooks said. "I'm really pleased because the ball is being spread around because it makes it difficult for defenses to zero in and take our offense away by concentrating on one or two people."

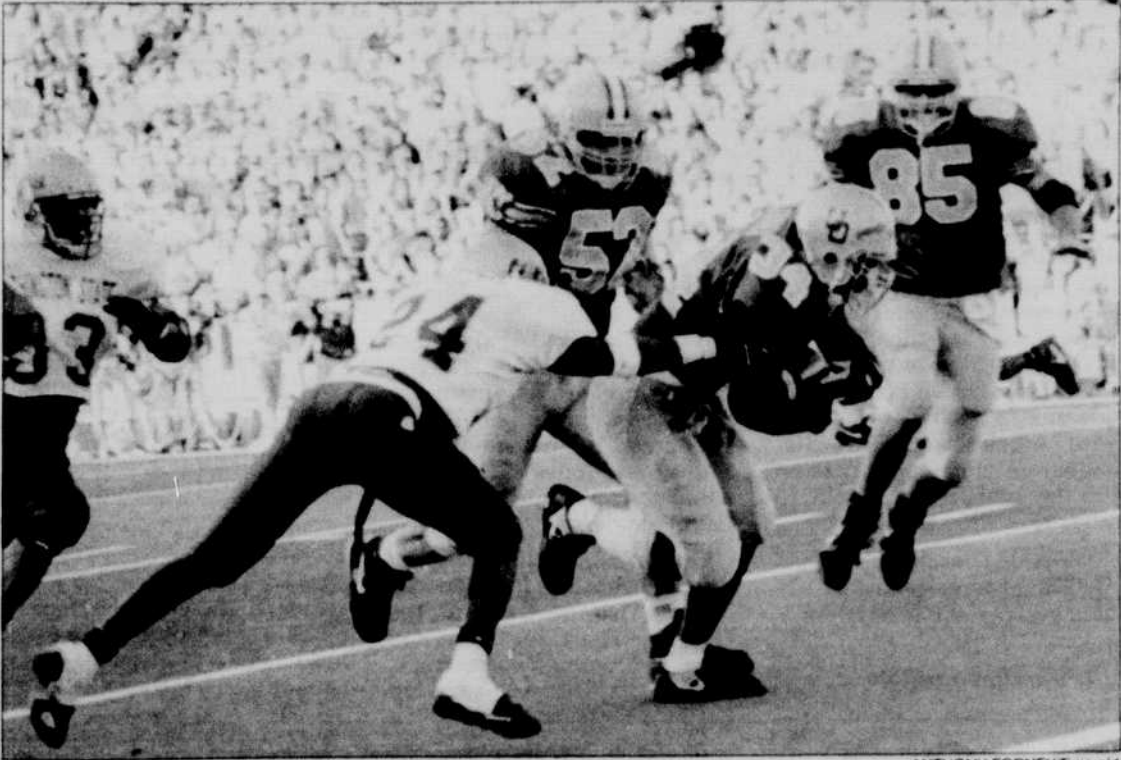
The Ducks piled up 430 yards against the Cougar defense, which came into the game ranked sixth in the nation, allowing only 274 yards a game. Oregon quarterback Danny

O'Neil destroyed Washington State's secondary throwing for 327 yards and three touchdowns. A host of Duck running backs combined for more than 100 yards rushing against the No. 2 rushing defense in the nation (the Cougars were giving up less than 60 yards a game on the ground).

Three Oregon receivers caught touchdown passes, and one receiver threw for one. Two running backs ran on touchdowns, another was on the receiving end of a score and two Ducks had their first touchdowns in Oregon uniforms.

The Ducks threw bombs, ran a couple trick plays, tossed a few screens and quite simply embarrassed the Cougars' defense, putting a severe dent in their bowl game aspirations.

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Oregon fullback Dwayne Jones dives into the end zone for his first career touchdown Saturday.



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