

Arizona options to beat Oregon

By Steve Mims
Oregon Daily Emerald

Arizona head coach Dick Tomey chose the correct option, ditching his pro-style offense and inserting running back Chuck Levy in to run the option, which had been on Arizona's shelf recently.

Levy ran for 126 yards and three touchdowns in Arizona's 31-10 victory over Oregon Saturday in Tucson, Ariz. Levy has seen limited time at quarterback this year, usually in short-yardage situations, but he ran the offense masterfully Saturday.

Tomey changed his offensive philosophy this season, switching from an option attack in recent years to a pro-style offense. The offense was built with 6-foot-5 sophomore transfer Dan White in mind, but White had struggled all year and was rated ninth in the conference in passing.

White and backup Brady Batten were injured in Arizona's loss at UCLA, but were probably healthy enough to play on Saturday. However, Oregon head coach Rich Brooks said last week that he wouldn't be surprised if Levy saw some action at quarterback. Levy saw enough action to make Brooks sick Saturday.

Arizona ran on every offensive play but one Saturday, finishing with 389 yards on the ground. In addition to Levy, Arizona tailback Ontiwaun Carter ran the ball 29 times for 127 yards and a touchdown.

Meanwhile, the Wildcats' famed Desert Swarm defense limited Oregon to 10 yards rushing on 23 carries, an average of .4 yards per carry. Oregon's running game never got on track, as injured Sean Burwell ran only twice and Ricky Whittle gained only 15 yards on five carries.

Arizona came out right away and drove the ball 70 yards on 16 plays before Levy took the ball into the end zone from one yard

DUCK FILE

WHAT: Oregon fell to the Arizona Wildcats 31-10 in Tucson Saturday.

HIGHLIGHT: Arizona inserted running back Chuck Levy at quarterback to run the option and he responded with 126 yards rushing.

NEXT: Oregon meets Stanford at home, 1 p.m. Saturday.

out. The next time the 'Cats saw the ball, they executed another long drive, 79 yards in 16 plays, before Levy scored on a three-yard run to give Arizona a 14-0 lead early in the second quarter.

Arizona got the ball back late in the first half, but instead of slowly torturing Oregon's defense again, Levy outran the Duck defenders down the right sideline for a 48-yard touchdown, giving Arizona a 21-0 lead at half-time.

"I was very disappointed how we started the game," Brooks said. "(Arizona) took the fight to us in the first half very well and hammered us. We didn't do a good job at the line of scrimmage in the first 30 minutes of the game on either side of the ball."

Oregon seemed to get the message at halftime and fought back in the second half. The Ducks drove into Arizona territory twice in the third quarter, but were able to get only three points thanks to a 54-yard field goal by Tommy Thompson.

Oregon quarterback Danny O'Neil and receiver Cristin McLemore connected seven times Saturday for 65 yards. That combination gave the Ducks their only touchdown when O'Neil found the sophomore wide receiver open in the end zone for an eight-yard touchdown, cutting the Wildcats' lead to 21-10 with more than 13 minutes left in the game. The play was set up by a 65-yard pass from O'Neil to Whittle, who took the ball down to

Arizona's eight-yard line.

Instead of getting back in the game, Oregon killed two scoring chances with turnovers. Following the touchdown by McLemore, Oregon stopped the Wildcats and seemed to gain some momentum by forcing them to punt. However, redshirt freshman Dameron Ricketts, subbing for Brian Brown, fumbled the punt and the Wildcats recovered near mid-field.

"Ricketts has got some speed," Brooks said, "but he's got to learn how to catch the ball and secure it before he does anything else."

Arizona appeared to put the game away on Levy's fourth touchdown of the game, a 24-yard run, but the play was called back because of a hold by the 'Cats. Four plays later Arizona kicker Steve McLaughlin kicked a 43-yard field goal with 8:27 left in the game.

Oregon needed two quick scores to have a chance to win the game, and appeared to be on its way to getting at least one when McLemore fumbled at the Arizona 20-yard line and the Wildcats swarmed around the ball for the recovery.

The Ducks' scenario for the remainder of the season is now simple: They must beat Stanford and Oregon State to have the six wins necessary over Division I opponents to be eligible for a bowl game.

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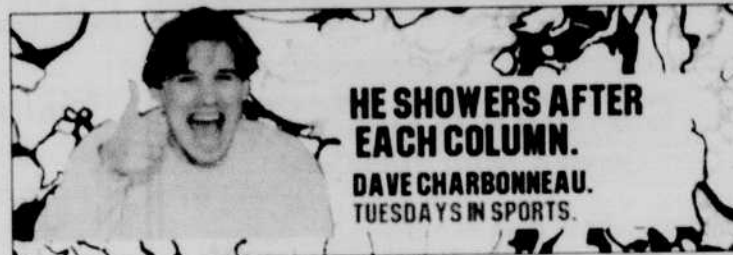
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