

Ducks try to turn things around against Iowa

Mark McTyre
Oregon Daily Emerald

Oregon is coming off of its worst two-game display of offense in recent memory, and quarterback Danny O'Neil guarantees that he and the Ducks will be a lot more productive the rest of the season, starting with the Iowa Hawkeyes.

"I've thrown for five interceptions the last two games," O'Neil said. "I will not have a two-game stretch the rest of the season where I throw five interceptions. With that in mind, this team will be a lot more productive the rest of the season, guaranteed."

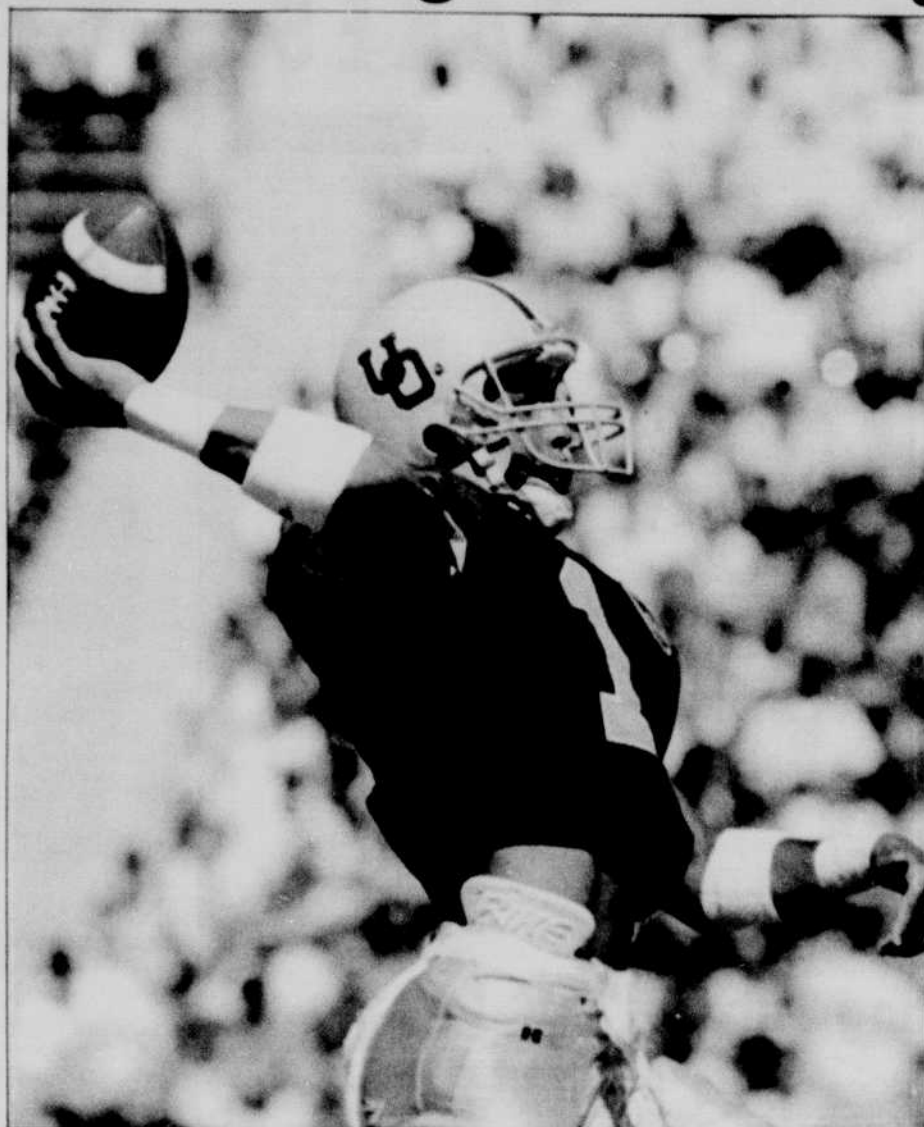
Last weekend the Hawkeyes were trounced by fifth ranked Penn State, 61-21, dropping their record to 2-1. Penn State raced out to a 35-0 lead after one quarter in which the Nittany Lions blocked an Iowa punt for a touchdown and took advantage of four other Hawkeye turnovers. After the slow start Iowa played nearly three even quarters of football. Iowa had 455 yards of total offense and the Iowa defense tossed up a bagel to the Nittany Lions offense in the third quarter as it held Penn State to zero first downs. Along with the three touchdowns that the Hawkeyes did score, Iowa was inside the Penn State 20-yard line on four other occasions and was unable to come away with any points.

Head coach Rich Brooks believes that the Hawkeyes need to be taken seriously.

"We're going to have to rebound against an angry Iowa team," Brooks said. "A team that can gain 455 yards on Penn State's defense is a very, very impressive football team. We're going to have to do a good job on the running game; their backs break tackles. That will be a real challenge for our defense."

Iowa has a one-two-three punch in its running attack. The three main Hawkeye backs average 207 yards per game on the ground alone. Starting running back Sedrick Shaw is averaging 7.2 yards per carry and 105 yards per game in his first three games, along with two touchdowns. Coming off of the bench, backup running back Ryan Terry is averaging 5.4 yards per carry and 55.7 yards per game. Kent Kahl follows Shaw and Terry at the fullback position averaging 5.3 yards per carry and 46 yards per game, along with four touchdowns.

Iowa's air attack comes from the arm of quarterback Ryan Driscoll, who completed



The Ducks hope to get receiver Cristin McLemore more involved against Iowa. McLemore attempted as many passes as he caught in last week's loss to Utah.

ed 17 of 34 passes at Penn State after throwing just 33 passes in Iowa's first two games. Driscoll has completed 37 of 67 passes for 487 yards. He had his first two touchdown passes of the season against Penn State and has thrown three interceptions over the first three games of the season. After a redshirt season in 1992, Driscoll missed last season because of a shoulder injury.

The Hawkeyes as a team are ranked 14th in the nation in rushing offense with 265 yards per game. They are averaging 468.7 yards per game of total offense and 36.7 points per game, ranking them 15th in total offense.

Another threat that the Hawkeyes have is freshman punt and kickoff returner Tim Dwight. Dwight is 19th in the nation in kickoff returns with 26.2 yards per return. He is ranked 22nd in punt returns, averaging 11.2 yards per punt return.

The Ducks' defense will need to have some standout performances again this weekend and fewer mistakes from everybody else. In the Utah game, free safety Jeff Sherman and strong safety Chad Cota led the Ducks defense combining for 21 tackles — two for a loss, two interceptions, one fumble recovery, and one forced fumble.

Even though Brooks showed a lot of concern about whom the Ducks are playing, he is more concerned about how his team has played.

"We played 35-45 minutes of outstanding football," Brooks said of last weekend. "We dominated Utah's offense during that stretch of time, moved the football, ran the ball effectively, protected the quarterback effectively, but didn't get as many points as I would have hoped."

Tailback Dino Philyaw was the lone standout for the Ducks' offense. Philyaw carried the ball 21 times for 76 yards, doubling his season totals. He also scored two touchdowns and hauled in five passes for 36 yards.

Iowa head coach Hayden Fry also believes that Oregon needs to be taken seriously even though the Ducks are on a two-game skid.

"It's going to be an extremely difficult game for us," Fry said in his weekly conference. "Oregon has had three or four first team, all-pro quarterbacks and the current quarterback has broken all of their college passing records."

One of Fry's major concerns for this weekend's game is the team's defense against the run.

"The defense is the thing that really concerns me because Penn State really ran by us."

The Oregon rushing offense right now is ranked ninth in the Pacific-10, averaging only 2.8 yards per carry.

To go along with the disappointing play of the team as a whole, Oregon's already physically diminished squad sustained a few more losses. Derrick Barnes, the Ducks' number three outside linebacker, was sidelined with a bruised shoulder and will not play this week. Reggie Jordan was also unable to finish last weekend because of a groin injury and may see limited action against the Hawkeyes. Players that are sidelined indefinitely are freshman tailback Kevin Parker (fractured left ankle), senior backup fullback Dan Meade (arthroscopic knee surgery) and sophomore inside linebacker Matt Steepin (foot).

Although the Ducks have many injuries going into this weekend's contest, Brooks is not worried about the injury report.

"From an injury standpoint, we're in about as good a shape as you can expect at this point."

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