

History provides mixed message for Ducks

Mark McTyre
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Ducks have two road games standing between them and the Rose Bowl. The first challenge that stands in front of Oregon is the Stanford Cardinal. The Ducks are 2-6 on Cardinal soil since 1974, and 9-25-1 overall at Stanford.

The last time these two teams met at Stanford Stadium, Stanford won 21-7. Cardinal quarterback Steve Stenstrom directed his team to 496 yards of total offense. He passed for 331 yards and running back Glyn Milburn chipped in for 295 all-purpose yards.

The Ducks have had their share of troubles on the road over the years. In the past two-and-a-half seasons, they hold a road record of 6-7, being outscored 204-97 in those games.

And 1993 proved to be a cold reminder of what the road can do to a season.

With a 3-0 start to the season, hopes were high as Oregon opened its Pac-10 season at Cal-

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— RICH BROOKS
Oregon head football coach

ifornia.

Oregon's unbeaten football world came crashing down in its battle with nationally-ranked California when the Bears executed a 35-point second-half counterattack to nullify one of the Ducks' top offensive performances in the school's history. The Bears completed their comeback with an 85-yard drive in the final three minutes of the game to win 42-41.

The Ducks were devastated. Oregon had a chance to break into the top 25, but the defense could not hold.

The next road loss that the Ducks suffered came at the hands of Washington.

Oregon's offense, which had not shown any signs of collapsing throughout the season, came to a dead halt. After the Ducks' second field goal to pull within one point of the Huskies early in the third quarter, the offense became turnover plagued.

Oregon lost the ball four out of its final six possessions and quarterback Danny O'Neil, who was picked off a record-tying six times, failed to toss a touchdown pass for the first time in the season. The offense suffered seven turnovers against Washington and failed to score a touchdown for the first time since late in the 1992 season.

The Ducks defense was picked apart by three ground-exclusive drives by the Huskies, accounting for 290 yards of rushing.

Oregon has taken advantage of home games against Cal, Washington and Arizona this season and they hope to take the

momentum of the home victories into the closing contests of the 1994 season.

"We do have control of our own destiny," Oregon head coach Rich Brooks said, "but it's a tough road ahead at Stanford and Oregon State."

This season the Ducks have played only three games on the road, losing to Hawaii and then Washington State.

The Washington State loss may be the most devastating to the Ducks' season. With a win at Pullman, the Ducks would now be holding a one-game advantage over Arizona and USC, easing the pressure of the final road trips.

Brooks is encouraged by the performance the Ducks put on at USC earlier this season and that could be the first in a turning of the tides for the Oregon road woes.

"We just won one of the biggest games in school history when we beat SC, on grass, on the road," Brooks said.

OFFENSE

Continued from 2B

man class that I came here with. (This year) we know each other and we play more as a team. That's the best part of this team for me."

"The offensive line has done a good job making adjustments during the season. It's a testament to their concentration and their ability to understand what we're trying to do," Greatwood said.

Unfortunately, being a member of the offensive line also means going relatively unmentioned in the post game highlights.

"It's like anything else," Greatwood said. "When things are going well you probably get too much credit, and when things are going badly you probably get too much criticism."

"It's pretty much a given to go without recognition, but I think when you have the respect of your teammates and guys you are playing next to, that's pretty much all you can ask for."

The more visible aspect of an offensive

lineman's lifestyle can be found in the trenches of the football field. Inside the hashmarks stands five offensive lineman ready to do battle with anyone who would attempt to impede the progress of the offense.

"I enjoy the group aspect of the offensive line," Baldwin said. "It's five guys up front going nose-to-nose with the defense having to get the job done. If four guys get it done and one guy doesn't, then (the offense is) not going to click. Every guy has to get the job done and, when it happens, it shows, and it feels good."

Everything is tied together in the Oregon offensive scheme. The offensive line, running backs and receivers all have to work in unison in order for pass protection and the running game to be successful.

"It's a team effort on offense," Greatwood said. "That's what makes football so unique, particularly offensive football, because it really does take 11 guys doing the right thing for a play to be successful."

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