

Oregon 49, Arizona 31

Won from the Heart

■ **FOOTBALL:** Oregon plays solid all-around football to get back on the winning track this season

By Chris Hansen
Sports Reporter

Saladin McCullough honored his son's birthday by having one of the greatest rushing games ever by an Oregon tailback.

And while it may take a few years for Saladin Jr., who turned 3 years old Saturday, to understand the significance of his father's performance, McCullough's teammates and coaches were immediately aware of its importance. With 223 yards and five touchdowns on 25 carries — including scoring runs of 42, 40 and 34 yards — McCullough paced the Ducks to a 49-31 win against Arizona, their first victory in six games.

"He made my job and everybody's job a lot easier," quarterback Tony Graziani said, who didn't have too shabby of a game himself, completing 11 of 19 passes for 113 yards and one rushing touchdown. Graziani, though, had to leave the game in the fourth quarter after straining the medial collateral ligament in his right knee, an injury that has him being listed as day-to-day and questionable for next Saturday's game against California.

Much of McCullough's performance can be credited to Oregon's offensive line. The offensive line dominated Arizona's defenders, enabling Oregon to get a solid ground game established for the first time in Pacific-10 Conference play.

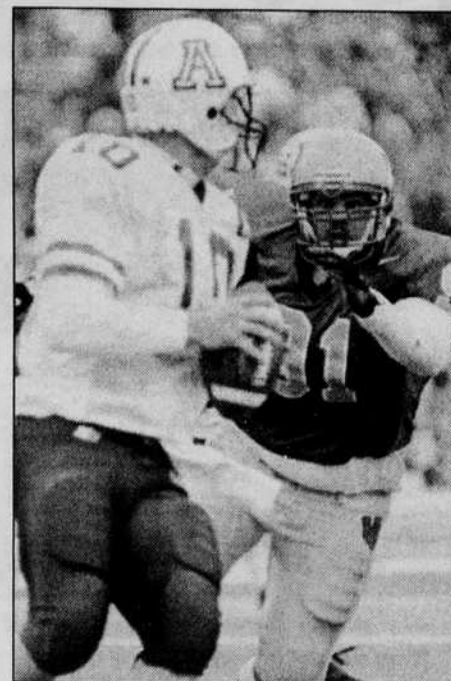
"The offensive line was blowing the defensive line off the ball," McCullough said, who also had to leave the game in the fourth quarter after pulling his right hamstring on his fifth touchdown run.

"We always felt as an offensive line that we could run the ball," Wiggins said. "But

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Flanker Damon Griffin scores the Ducks' final touchdown on a pass from Ryan Perry-Smith midway through the fourth quarter of Oregon's 49-31 win on Saturday.



Nose tackle Bryant Jackson eyes a sack of Arizona quarterback Brady Batten.

OREGON by the NUMBERS

- **RUSHING YARDS:** 310
- **PASSING YARDS:** 152
- **TOTAL YARDS:** 462
- **3RD DOWN CONVERSIONS:** 8-of-11
- **SACKS:** 4



Play of the game

Leading 42-31 with 10 minutes left in the game, Oregon linebacker Peter Sirmon stuffed Keith Smith on a fourth-and-one quarterback sneak to give the ball back to the Ducks.



Player of the Game

Saladin McCullough. He rushed for the third-highest single-game total in Oregon history with 224 yards and scored a school record five rushing touchdowns.



Turning Point

Oregon was down 14-0 four minutes into the game when McCullough took a handoff 42 yards for the touchdown.

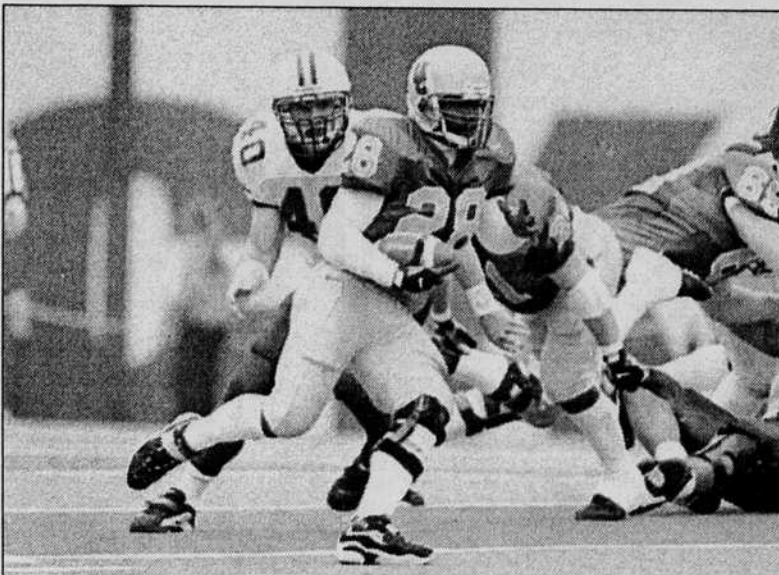


Quote of the Day

"We know what it's like [to not win]; it's like being dateless for three years. When you go on a date you kind of wine and dine. I think everybody went out on that limb with Coach Bellotti when he said we were going to win."

—Josh Wilcox, UO tight end

McCullough shines in Oregon's romp of the Arizona Wildcats



Tailback Saladin McCullough runs past the Arizona defense during his record-setting performance Saturday at Autzen Stadium.

■ **RECORD SETTER:** The junior tailback recorded 224 yards rushing and a new single-game mark of five touchdowns

By Ryan Frank
Sports Reporter

With the Ducks down 14-0 less than four minutes into Saturday's game, Oregon's hope of its first Pacific-10 Conference win of the season looked far from a reality.

But apparently someone forgot to tell tailback Saladin McCullough that.

On the first play from the line of scrimmage following Arizona's second score, McCullough grabbed the handoff from quarterback Tony Graziani and didn't look back until he hit the end zone — 42 yards later.

"Tasi [Malepeai] pulled and I followed him until I saw daylight," McCullough said.

It seemed as if McCullough was seeing daylight all day against a Wildcat defense that held Washington State to 42 yards rushing earlier this season. The junior tailback finished the day with 224 yards

on 25 carries and a modern-day school record of five touchdowns.

As if he needed anything extra to make Saturday any more special, it was his son's fourth birthday.

"It's a real good feeling," McCullough said. "I went through a lot of problems, but overcame them. Plus it's my son's birthday today. I guess God made me have a good game on his birthday."

For a team that prides itself on defense and held Washington State to 42 yards rushing this season, the Wildcats were visibly shaken after the game.

"They basically were able to do anything they wanted against us," said Arizona linebacker Chester Burnett. "There is really no excuse. We just didn't come out to play the way we should have been playing."

But McCullough's big day and Oregon's big win came at a cost.

On the tailback's fifth touchdown run of the day, a 6-yard rush, he pulled up slightly before diving in the end zone. And following the touchdown, McCullough was lying on the turf of Autzen Stadium while being attended to by team trainers.

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