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Oregon Daily Emerald

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OREGON 31, WASHINGTON 28



MARK McTYRE for the Emerald

Wide receiver Pat Johnson leaps to make the game-winning touchdown catch in the end zone.

Win: Washington dominates third quarter

Continued from Page 9
third and 20 looming.

"We were talking on the sideline about wanting to try and get Pat deep ...," Smith said. "I was telling the line to give me some protection and let me get the ball off and everything would be okay."

He couldn't have been more right.

Smith lofted a pass to Johnson, who was streaking down the right sideline arm and arm with cornerback Mel Miller. Johnson dove for the ball, catching it just before he landed in the end zone, setting off a wild celebration on the Oregon sideline.

"We practice that so much and it was right on the money," Johnson said. "[Smith] put the ball where only I could get it. The ball was like a rainbow and went perfectly over the defender."

Smith said that after Johnson dropped a catchable ball early in the game, he challenged the wide receiver to step up his game.

"I told Pat, 'You're a senior, we need you right now, you got to pull through,'" Smith said. "And he answered the challenge."

"It wasn't the prettiest drive in the world, we weren't giving ourselves three downs," said Bellotti, who then commented on Johnson's catch. "I thought the throw was absolutely perfect, and the catch was maybe even better. We have talked a lot about Pat making that catch over the course of his career, and I can't think of a better time for him to come up with it."

The Oregon defense held the Huskies on its ensuing drive when linebacker Garrett Sabol

broke through the line on a third-and-one blitz, stuffing Washington tailback Jason Harris for a three-yard loss. Linebacker Peter Sirmon next stopped quarterback Marques Tuiaosopo behind the line on fourth and four, giving the ball back to Oregon for the remaining 1:20.

Inspired by what the team perceived as an insulting 22-point spread, as well as playing with the memory of four consecutive gut-wrenching losses to Pac-10 teams, Oregon jumped all over Washington early, taking a 14-0 first-quarter lead and a 24-6 lead at the half.

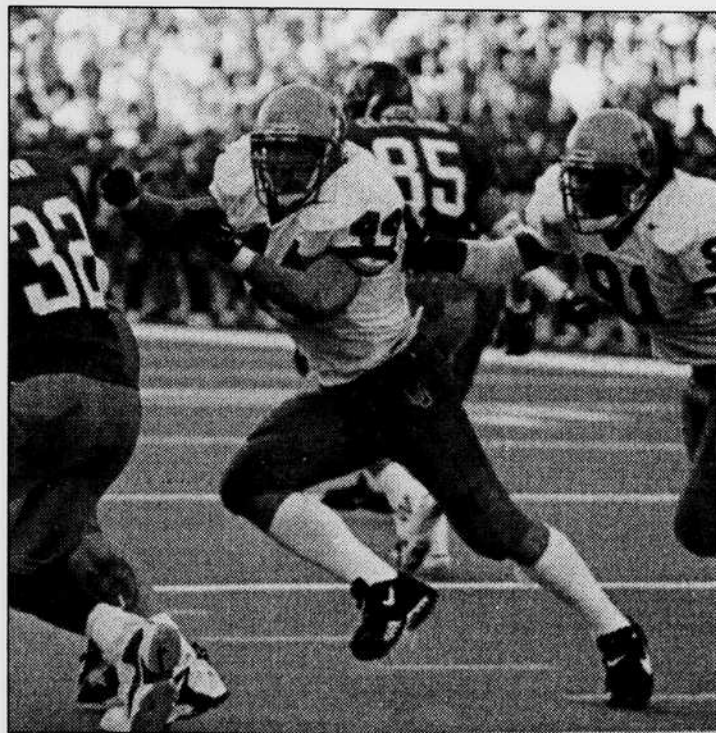
"We felt insulted the whole week," Johnson said. "We heard they weren't evening practicing hard all week because they were resting up for UCLA."

Oregon tailback Saladin McCullough rushed for 97 first-half yards on his way to a 115-yard day. Smith also had touchdown throws of two yards to tight end A.J. Jelks and four yards to Spence in the first two quarters.

The Oregon defense, ranked 100th overall in the nation and last in the Pac-10, stifled the high-powered Husky offense, holding it to only 117 yards in that half.

But the Huskies marched the first drive of the second half down the field, scoring on Tuiaosopo's 42-yard scramble. Tuiaosopo, who was 15 for 30 for 261 yards and one touchdown pass and gained 95 yards in 10 carries rushing, became the first true freshman to start at quarterback for the Huskies in the modern era.

After scoring another touchdown in the third quarter, the Huskies took a 28-24 lead on Tu-



MARK McTYRE for the Emerald

Linebacker Peter Sirmon led the way for the Duck defense as Oregon shut down the Husky offense in the first half of Saturday's game.

iasopo's 41-yard bomb into the end zone that was caught by Ja'Warren Hooker with eight minutes remaining in the game.

Despite Washington's comeback (25 unanswered points) and dominance of the second half (296 total offensive yards to Oregon's 105), Sirmon, who had nine tackles, one interception and a fumble recovery in the game, said the defense never panicked or doubted its ability to stop the Huskies.

"Panicking was only going to make it worse and make you start

missing assignments," he said. "We played well in the first half so there is no reason to sink the ship."

Oregon's game-winning drive followed Washington's go-ahead touchdown.

"It was tough for us to go two weeks after the [Southern California] loss, but our kids came out today and played inspired football," Bellotti said. "This gives validity to what I've said this team could accomplish. They believe in themselves and they play together."