

GAME DAY

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Best bet
Florida at Tennessee
12:30 p.m. Saturday, CBS

Friday, September 20, 2002

The big box of football

Tasty morsel No. 1

Saturday's game is the 200th game to ever be played in Autzen Stadium. It is also the 20th-straight sellout, and will be the largest crowd to ever witness Portland State play.

Morsel No. 2

Wondering why the Ducks scheduled a Division I-AA team this year? They were originally slated to play Michigan, which backed out and asked that the home-and-home series be played starting in 2007. Oregon compromised and will head to Ann Arbor next year.

Trivia Bowl

The Ducks and Vikings last met in 1994. Can you name Oregon's starting quarterback in that game?
Answer at bottom of box.

Rank me

Oregon and Portland State in the 2002 national rankings (PSU rankings are D I-AA)

Rushing offense
Portland State.....32
Oregon.....51

Passing offense
Oregon.....42
Portland State....82

Scoring offense
Oregon.....16
Portland State....45

Rushing defense
Oregon.....17
Portland State....51

Passing defense
Oregon.....78
Portland State...102

Scoring defense
Oregon.....33
Portland State....48

Turnover margin
Oregon.....12
Portland State....83

Morsel No. 3

In Oregon's game against Idaho last week, the Vandals had the ball for 17 more minutes of game time than the Ducks.

Trivia answer

Danny O'Neil.

Vikings rely on offensive stars

Portland State running back Ryan Fuqua and quarterback Juston Wood guide the Vikings

Adam Jude
Senior Sports Reporter

As Ryan Fuqua goes, so go the Portland State Vikings.

The sophomore tailback leads NCAA Division I-AA with 174.5 yards per game and has accounted for 59 percent of Portland State's total offense through two games this season, despite being slowed by a sore ankle.

In a 23-20 overtime win over North Carolina A&T last week, Fuqua rushed 42 times for 207 yards and a touchdown. Of the 17 plays in the Vikings' game-tying fourth-quarter drive, he took 16 handoffs and rushed for 68 yards.

North Carolina A&T had held Portland State to just 51 total yards in the first half.

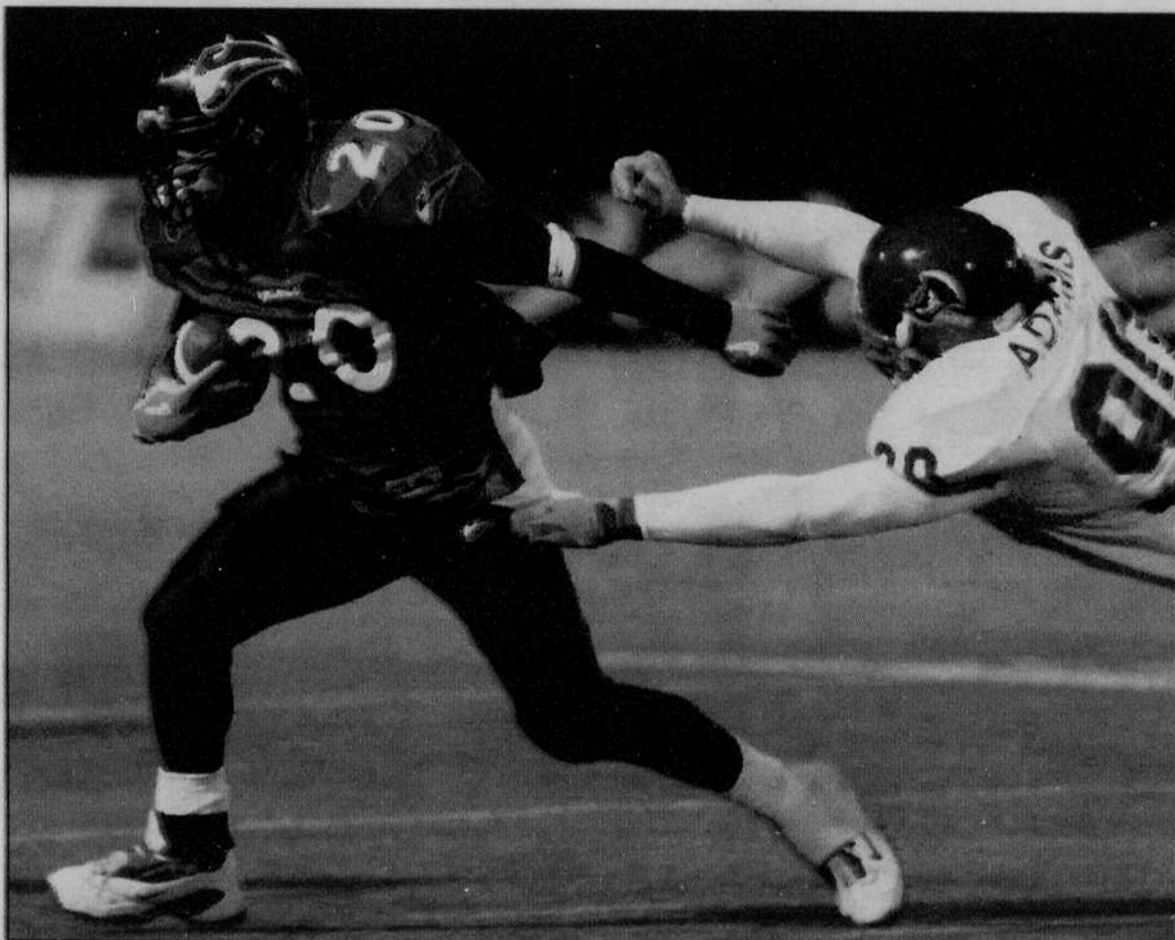
"We went back to our base run game, ran the football and let Ryan do his thing," Portland State head coach Tim Walsh said.

Fuqua will have to do his thing and more if the Vikings (2-0), ranked No. 8 in Division I-AA, hope to upset No. 9 Oregon on Saturday at Autzen Stadium. The teams meet for just the second time, the first since Oregon defeated Portland State, 58-16, in 1994.

"We will play this game like all the others," Walsh said. "We can't look at it any differently than any other Saturday. We prepare to play at the same high level in every game we play."

Fuqua is not the Vikings' only offensive weapon, just their best. Senior quarterback Juston Wood has thrown three touchdown passes this season, but has five interceptions. Senior running back Hashim Hall is third in the nation in kickoff returns, averaging 36.8 yards per return.

"The key to success is to be dom-



Courtesy Portland State Media Services

Portland State running back Ryan Fuqua (20) leads Division I-AA in rushing. He averages more than 170 yards per game.

inant on both sides of the ball," Walsh said of facing the Ducks. "They have those ingredients. They are a top-10 program with outstanding talent at every position. They have All-American receivers and arguably the best tailback in the country."

Defensively, Portland State has allowed 21.5 points per game this season (including a 31-23 win over Stephen F. Austin to start the season). Sophomore linebacker Tolo Tuitele made his first start of the

season last week and led the Vikings with 12 tackles. He also returned an interception for a score en route to being named the Big Sky Conference Defensive Player of the Week.

Turnovers have been a problem for Portland State. Fuqua lost the first fumble of his career last week as the Vikings coughed up the ball four times. In two games, they have seven turnovers.

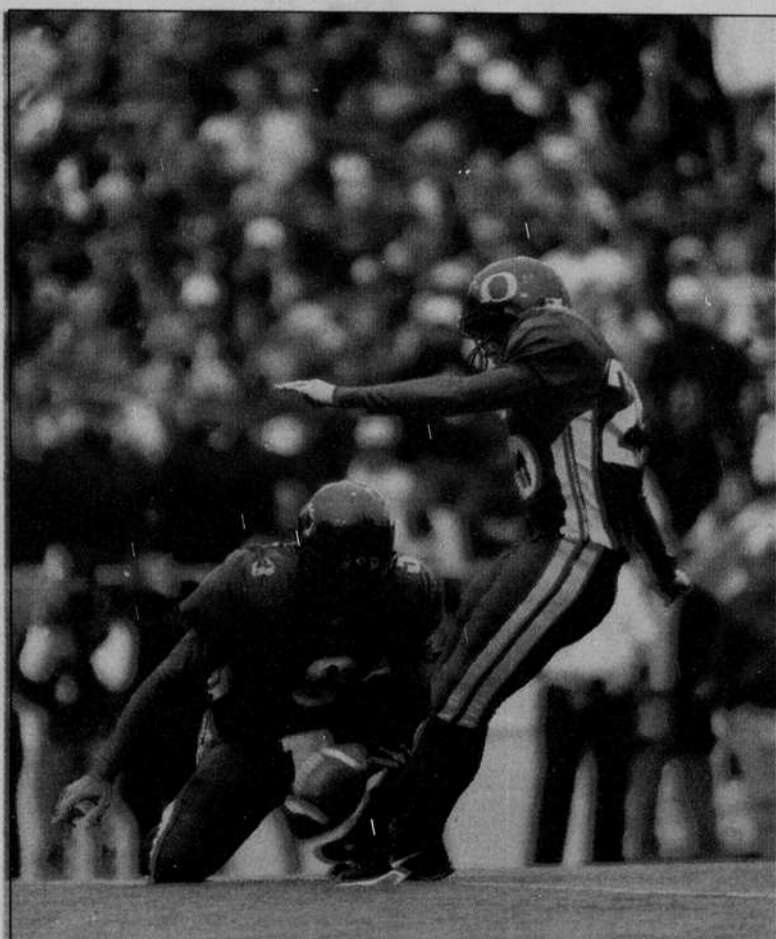
Portland State moved to Division I-AA in 1995. Walsh is 1-6

against I-A teams, his only win over Hawaii in 2000.

"Maybe 25 years from now we will be a 1-A program, but in order for us to become what we want to be, we must build the best program we can and play the best programs we can," Walsh said.

If Fuqua is leading the way, the Vikings may just get to where they want to be.

Contact the senior sports reporter at adamjude@dailyemerald.com.



Adam Amato Emerald

Jared Siegel has already kicked more field goals this year than he did all of last season.

Siegel, Arroyo kick towards success

The Oregon kicking game has picked up as the two kickers have settled into the UO system

Hank Hager
Sports Reporter

The kicking game in collegiate football is about as sexy as an offensive lineman in a Speedo.

When analysts discuss some of the nation's best teams, quarterbacks, running backs and wide receivers get the recognition, attention and Heisman talk.

Punters and place-kickers are normally left aside, anonymously standing on the sidelines waiting for their chance. While most quarterbacks throw the ball 30 times a game and runners dance through holes no bigger than a credit card, the kickers get very few chances.

But as is becoming the norm in college football, those few chances can mean a win or a loss, and in some cases, a national championship.

Case in point: Michigan's come-from-behind victory over Washington to start the season was earned after its kicker split the uprights with

just a few ticks left on the clock.

At Oregon, the mentality that the punter and place-kicker can be a team's most valuable weapon is no different.

The Ducks have already found that out the hard way.

"I think you can look at it when we played the Fresno State game and averaged 20 yards per punt," head coach Mike Bellotti said. "That changes the whole complexion of a game. When you average 42 yards per punt, it is truly something different that can keep people at bay, and give them a long field. Obviously with us returning about 18 yards per punt return, if we can do 42, there's a tremendous amount of field position over the course of time that's going to come our way."

After two sub-par performances, in which he averaged a combined 34.6 yards per punt against Mississippi State and Fresno State, punter Jose Arroyo impressed the Oregon fans with a 45.5 yard average against Idaho last weekend.

The senior was not terribly

Turn to Kick, page 12