

Monday, September 29, 2003

It's a blowout: Cougars embarrass Oregon

Washington State came out "on fire" and held the Oregon offense in check on Saturday

By **Mindi Rice**
Senior Sports Reporter

Washington State waited until halfway through the first quarter to force Oregon's first turnover.

Two minutes later, after the Cougars turned the blocked punt into a field goal, free safety Jeremy Bohannon picked off Jason Fife's first throw of the day.

"We just knew we had to come out on fire," Bohannon said. "Our main goal was just to get some turnovers in this game."

If it was turnovers the Cougars wanted, it was turnovers the Cougars got. They found ways — nine, in fact — to force the Ducks to hand the ball right back into their paws.

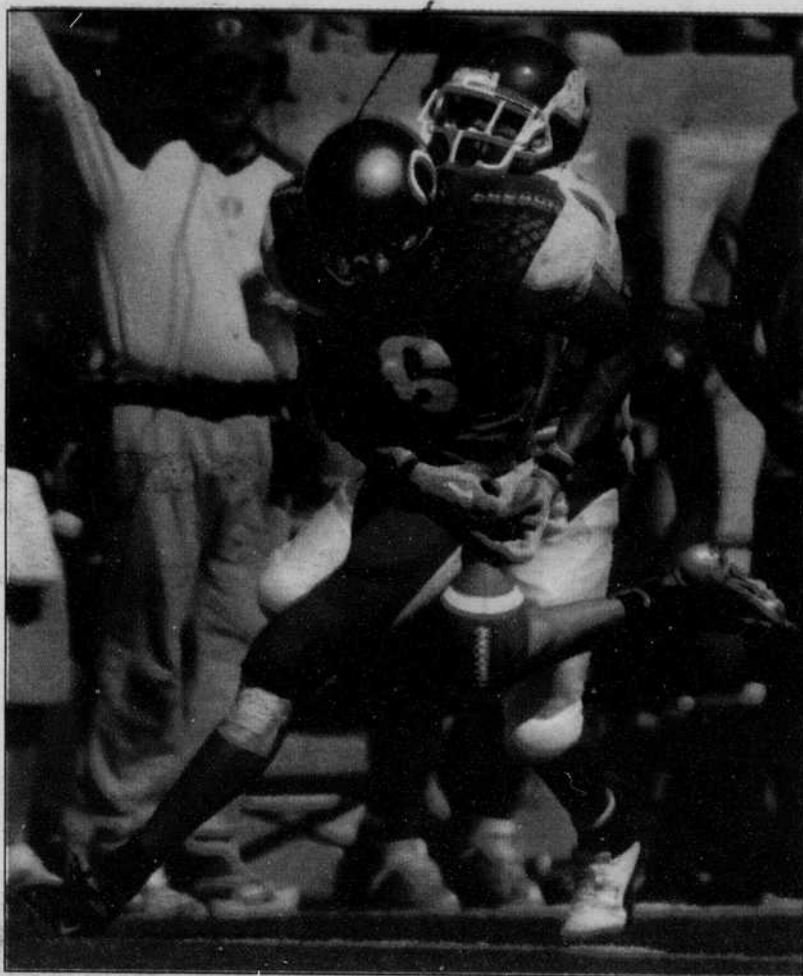
Oregon's quarterback tandem of sophomore Kellen Clemens and Fife, a senior, had yet to throw an interception during the Ducks' 4-0 start.

Clemens alone was picked off four times, including three interceptions during a five-minute span in the second quarter.

Four was a magic number for the Cougar defense. They also sacked Clemens four times for 21 yards.

"The whole week they kept talking about the hype of the Ducks and the two great quarterbacks with no turnovers," Washington State defensive end D.D.

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Mark McCambridge Senior Photographer

Demetrius Williams fumbles after a 47-yard pass completion in Saturday's first quarter.

Oregon turned the ball over seven times en route to the Cougar's record 55 points

By **Hank Hager**
Sports Editor

Oregon found out Saturday that as quickly as hype can be bestowed, it can be taken away even quicker.

Against Washington State, Oregon learned the hard way. Just days after finding themselves on the cover of Sports Illustrated, the Ducks fell to the Cougars 55-16 in front of 57,473 fans at Autzen Stadium.

"There is no way to describe it," Oregon linebacker Kevin Mitchell said.

The Cougars (4-1 overall, 1-0 Pacific-10 Conference) outplayed the Ducks in every fashion, blocking two punts and forcing the Ducks to turn the ball over time after time. Washington State forced nine turnovers, including seven in the first half.

Washington State gained 125 yards on the ground, and had two quarterbacks combine to throw for 315 yards.

The 55 points the Cougars put on the board was the most by any opponent at Autzen. It was also the worst loss at home for the Ducks since a 54-0 defeat at the hands of Washington in 1977.

If there's any question as to why the Ducks failed to stay close to the Cougars, a quick look at the stat sheet would answer it. The nine turnovers committed by the Ducks (4-1, 1-1) kept them from establishing any consistency on offense, evidenced by 79 yards rushing.

"Early on, we committed so many turnovers we couldn't keep the same balance on offense we usually like," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said.

What national title hopes the Ducks had entering the game were quickly erased by the Cougars. Washington

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DUCK FOOTBALL

Oregon's loss leaves more questions to answer



Hank Hager
Behind the dish

Here's a situation that just seems so mind-boggling it would hurt your head if you really tried to figure it out.

First, Washington State narrowly lost to

Notre Dame earlier this season, falling short in overtime. Next came the Fighting Irish's 38-0 blowout loss to Michigan.

Then, a 31-27 Oregon victory over the Wolverines was followed by the 55-16 blowout the Ducks received at the hands of the Cougars on Saturday.

Huh?

Does this make any sense at all? If the Cougars could lose to Notre Dame, how could they beat the Ducks, who beat Michigan, who absolutely destroyed Notre Dame?

Which team is the real deal? Who is going to come out on top this season?

If you answered Oregon, you're probably more wrong than right, but the door to the

Rose Bowl is still open plenty wide for the Ducks to squeak through.

It's going to take an effort, though. If Oregon couldn't come out of the gates like gangbusters against the Cougars — especially after the Michigan win — then how can they do the same with the likes of Stanford and California left on the schedule?

Maybe the Wolverines were still on Oregon's mind. After the Washington State game, Samie Parker said he thought the Ducks weren't focused on Washington State and didn't have the same kind of energy when they hit the Autzen Stadium field.

If you're going to compete in — or even dream of — the national championship,

that's a tough pill to swallow.

There's no doubt that Oregon players were fired up before the game, though. Asked after the game whether Michigan was still on their minds, Kevin Mitchell said that it shouldn't have been the case.

"If it was, that was a shame," the senior said. "That's only game (five), and you've got more to go."

The future will be the key to a winning finish or a losing drought for Oregon. This season the Ducks have said that they have changed since last season — a time when team chemistry was a problem.

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Oregon soccer sinks to 5-4 after shutout loss to Fullerton State

Women's soccer drops its fourth straight game on the road in LA

By **Jesse Thomas**
Sports Reporter

Clearly, away games are not the strong point for the Oregon women's soccer team. Or at least they haven't been for the past two weeks.

Oregon (5-4 overall) was shut out 5-0 for the second time in three days on Sunday against Cal State Fullerton (6-3). In the Ducks' third weekend on the road, Oregon was also shut out 5-0 by Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles on Friday.

The Ducks began the season undefeated with five wins, three of them coming at Papé Field, yet in the past two weekends on the road, Oregon has lost four straight, all by

shutout. Oregon faced then-No. 4 Texas A&M and Southern Methodist University over the Sept. 19 weekend and lost by a combined 6-0 score in the two games in Dallas.

Sunday marked the fourth straight game where Oregon failed to put one in the back of the net. Cal State Fullerton coasted to its first win over a Pacific-10 Conference team in five years, snapping a six-game losing streak.

The recurring shutouts are not a good sign for the Oregon offense, which looked to be rejuvenated earlier with the return of redshirt sophomore Nicole Garbin, who missed last season with an anterior cruciate ligament injury.

Sunday "was a frustrating day," Oregon head coach Bill Steffen said. "We actually played pretty well in the first half."

The Ducks put up a strong front against the Titans as they released three shots in the first 15 minutes, all within seven yards of the goal. Yet two of the goals missed wide right and the third was blocked by a Fullerton defender.

The Titans saved their energy for the end of the first half by converting twice in the final three minutes before halftime. The Titans continued their rout of the Ducks by taking a 3-0 lead just four minutes into the second half.

"After the third goal, which came early in the second half, I think it rattled our players," Steffen said. "We lost our concentration from then on."

Cal State Fullerton scored its final two goals within four minutes of one another toward the latter part of the second half.

For the Ducks, redshirt freshmen Sabrina DeMonte and Andrea Valadez each recorded two shots. Midfielders Erin Engelhardt and Cristan Higa each one of Oregon's two shots on goal.

In goal, redshirt sophomore Dominique Lainez recorded one save while allowing five goals. Senior goalkeeper Mary Etter made a five-minute appearance at the end, but allowed no goals and recorded no saves.

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Adam Amato Photo Editor

Forward Nicole Garbin (right) has been Oregon's leading force on offense this season with four goals.

WOMEN'S SOCCER