

OREGON

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State, No. 21 in the nation entering the game, went up 17-2 after the first quarter and held a 36-point lead at halftime.

Oregon's two-quarterback rotation also took a severe hit in the loss. Kellen Clemens, who started his fifth straight game, threw four interceptions. In addition, Jason Fife was picked off three times.

"Every tipped ball seemed to come down into their hands," Bellotti said.

Clemens and Fife ended the game completing 24 passes in 58 attempts. They combined to throw for 360 yards.

"It was a nightmare," Clemens said. "We got some bad breaks. We didn't execute like we should have. We just got outplayed today. We made mistakes that are unacceptable at this level."

On the flip side, Washington State quarterback Matt Kegel completed 13 passes in 33 attempts, but threw for 242 yards and three touchdown strikes.

Whereas the Cougars sacked Clemens and Fife four times, the Ducks were able to get to Kegel just once through the first three quarters. Oregon also sacked Cougar backup Josh Swogger, but not until the game was deep into the fourth quarter.

The Ducks threw five interceptions in the first half — three of Clemens' four came in the first two quarters and Fife turned the ball over twice.

It was the first time this season the Ducks had even one pass picked off.

Oregon also fumbled twice, the first coming by wide receiver Demetrius Williams after the completion of a 47-yard pass that would have found Oregon at the Washington State 21. The other came on a kickoff return by Justin Phinisee with 16 seconds left in the first half.

"They were just ready to play," Mitchell said. "We had some breakdowns on the defensive side and we just didn't play the way we should have played."

The only highlight of the first half for the Ducks came on a punt block by safety Keith Lewis. The senior broke through the Cougar offensive line and easily blocked Kyle Basler's kick.

It was Lewis' third straight game in which he blocked an opponent's punt. However, he blocked it with so much force he knocked it out of the end zone, giving Oregon just two points on a safety.

Oregon pounced on two Washington State fumbles in the first half, both times coming after Kegel fumbled the snap.

The Ducks scored their first touchdown of the game with 9:28 to play in the third quarter. Terrence Whitehead crossed the plane after a 4-yard run.

Clemens connected on his only touchdown of the game eight minutes later, finding Williams for a 26-yard reception.

The game marked the first time since 1999

"It was a nightmare. We got some bad breaks. We didn't execute like we should have. We just got outplayed today. We made mistakes that are unacceptable at this level."

Kellen Clemens
Oregon quarterback



Adam Amato Photo Editor

Washington State fans had plenty to cheer about in the Cougars' 55-16 win at Autzen Stadium on Saturday.

the Cougars visited Autzen Stadium, and the win was the first for Washington State in Eugene since a 24-13 defeat of the Ducks in 1997.

Oregon wide receiver Jordan Carey and line-backer David Martin both suffered concussions. Williams had to be carted off the field after the game with an ice pack on his knee.

Williams led the Ducks with nine catches for 175 yards.

The loss sent the Ducks to 19th place in the Associated Press top 25 and to No. 22 in the

ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll on Sunday. The Cougars sit at 14th and 15th, respectively.

The Ducks now turn their attention to Utah as Oregon travels to Salt Lake City on Friday.

"We have to watch the tape, learn from this and get ready for Utah next week," Clemens said. "They aren't going to cancel our season because we lost to Washington State."

Contact the sports editor at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.

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They've insisted that 2003 can be more like the 2000 and 2001 seasons, when it seemed that the bounces went their way and the holes in opposing teams' defensive lines were bigger than the state of Washington.

Those teams, however, never faced anything like the loss to the Cougars. Oregon's two losses were by a combined 14 points in 2000, and its only defeat in 2001 came by seven points.

To see the Ducks lose like they did to Washington State boggles the mind.

Oregon has Utah on Friday — preceded by a short week of preparation — and the Utes can be a tough opponent.

Granted, they've lost their starting quarterback, but a few seasons ago they showed that they can be a thorn in Oregon's side. In 2001, Utah lost 24-10; a close finish considering the Ducks finished No. 2 in the nation that season.

Utah plays in the Mountain West Conference, an upstart league that would love nothing more than to upset a Pacific-10 Conference team.

If the Ducks think the bull's-eye was lifted after the recent loss, then they've got something else coming.

Contact the sports editor at hankhager@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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