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NCAA basketball:
Kansas vs. Colorado
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Parker ensures place in books in Oregon loss

Receiver Samie Parker broke numerous Oregon and Sun Bowl records on Wednesday, giving him 77 receptions for the season

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

EL PASO, Texas — In the 50th and final game of his career, Samie Parker had his best game as a Duck.

DUCK FOOTBALL

Parker caught 16 passes for 200 yards and two touchdowns in Oregon's 31-30 loss to Minnesota on Wednesday at the Sun Bowl. His performance cemented him as one of the most prolific players in Oregon's history.

"You always want to go out the right way," cornerback Steven Moore said. "He's one of the best receivers I've ever seen. Hopefully he'll get an opportunity at the national level and do it up there. I wish him nothing but the best."

If Parker can impress NFL scouts like he did the fans at Sun Bowl Stadium, he will become a power player in the professional league.

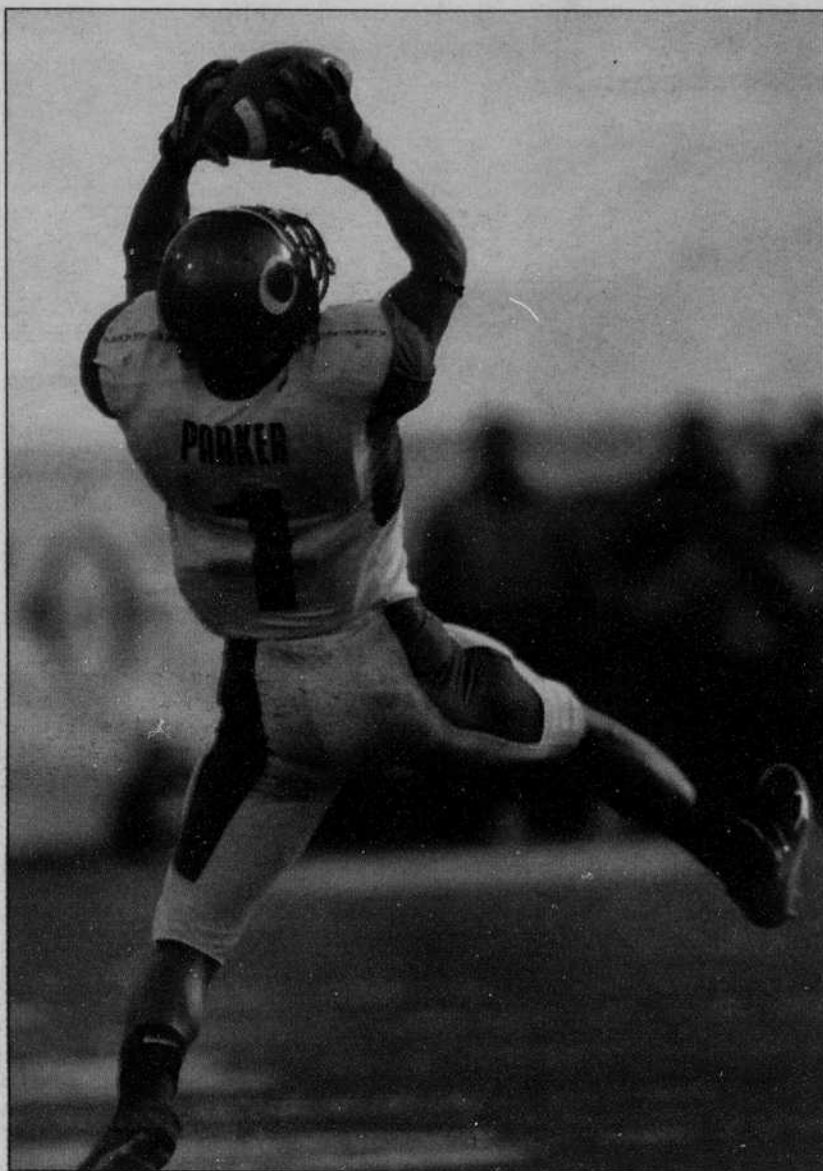
Parker's 16 receptions set an Oregon single-game record. The total gave him 77 on the season, also an Oregon record.

The accolades don't stop there. Parker ended his career with 178 receptions, good for best in the program's history. Finally, the 200 yards places him seventh all-time on Oregon's single-game list.

That's a long list of accomplishments.

"It was a pretty good performance, but it wasn't good enough because we didn't come up with a 'W,'" Parker said.

Parker scored his first touchdown of the game with 8:45 left
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Adam Amato Photo Editor

Samie Parker caught 16 passes against Minnesota, setting a single-game record for Oregon.

Fife ends career with Ducks as receiver

A late injury to Kyle Weatherspoon forced Jason Fife into the role of third-string receiver on Wednesday

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

EL PASO, Texas — It was the last pass of his Oregon career, and ironically, he didn't even get the chance to take the snap on the play.

In the final seconds of the first half, Kellen Clemens took the snap from center Dan Weaver and quickly threw a bullet to Jason Fife, who was stationed as a receiver to the left.

Because it was a lateral, Fife immediately took the ball and threw it back to Clemens, who was beginning to streak down the right side of the field. He ran for 13 yards to the Minnesota 13, where Jared Siegel kicked a 30-yard

field goal as time expired.

Such is the ending of Fife's career with Oregon. The quarterback/wide receiver leaves the Ducks after two seasons as a prominent offensive player.

It just so happened that in the final game of his career, he was Oregon's third-string receiver.

"I felt fast, I felt quick," he said. "I was open a couple of times. (Clemens) just couldn't get it to me. I had fun nonetheless."

Fife saw about a dozen plays at receiver against Minnesota and, aside from his pass to Clemens, did not figure into the game statistically.

He was, however, key in the Oregon offense. A couple of times in the first half, he was open, but Clemens, because of pressure by the Golden Gopher defense, could not find the senior from Lake Elsinore, Calif.

Late in the fourth quarter, Eli Ward stepped in

front of a pass intended for Fife that would have put the Ducks up by six. Ward didn't intercept the pass, but it helped cool down the Oregon series that resulted in a Siegel field goal.

"At first, I kind of thought we were going to use me as a decoy, but more and more, they actually started putting me in at crucial situations where I was going to have to catch the ball," Fife said.

Moore expected back

At first glance, it would seem that the Ducks are set to lose three-fourths of their starting defensive secondary.

Starters Marley Tucker, Keith Lewis and Steven Moore are all listed on Oregon's roster as seniors. Moore, however, is in a different situation than the former two.

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Adam Amato Photo Editor

Junior center Andrea Bills finished with 10 points and nine rebounds Sunday.

Bruins come back from 14, stun Ducks to 0-4 in Pac-10

Oregon fails to hold on to the win after UCLA forces turnovers in a full-court set; Ducks have lost five straight

By Mindi Rice
Senior Sports Reporter

Oregon neutralized one of the problems UCLA brought into McArthur Court on Sunday.

The Ducks held All-Pacific-10 Conference sophomore Nikki Blue to nine points after she worked them for 63 in three meetings last season.

"Nikki Blue didn't have the best game," Oregon point guard Corrie Mizusawa said. "They showed that they're not just the Nikki Blue

show at UCLA."

A problem Oregon (8-6 overall, 0-4 Pac-10) couldn't neutralize was the full-court press that UCLA used to shake up the Ducks in the second half, eventually grabbing the 63-57 victory.

"We weren't as composed as we were in practice," center Andrea Bills said. "We weren't looking past the pressure and it hurt us."

The Ducks came into the second half expecting to see the press since UCLA (6-6, 1-2) shot 25 percent in the first half.

What Oregon wasn't expecting was the amount of frustration the press caused them.

"We just didn't handle their pressure," Oregon head coach Bev Smith said. "You have to keep that focus. We need to be ready to handle it and we didn't."

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Hank Hager
Behind the dish

Hard loss hits Ducks in close final game

EL PASO, Texas — The loss will undoubtedly sting a bit.

In a game where two teams are so evenly matched, as Minnesota and Oregon were, the Ducks can't help but feel hurt. They can't help but wonder: What if the wind was just a little bit stronger, or that hand or forearm — as they claim — had gotten a bigger piece of the ball?

It will hurt because of a field goal, a play that 90 percent of the time reflects little in the final score. Even on the statistical sheet from the Sun Bowl, it resides as a blip, a smudge, an afterthought.

Except, well, it wasn't.

It appeared throughout the game that the team that controlled the ball last would be the one to ultimately take the win. That was the case. Rhys Lloyd's field goal was the dagger through Oregon's heart. It came at just the right time for Minnesota and seared through the momentum the Ducks were so hoping to keep in the fourth quarter.

That dagger will be deep and will become a reminder of an 8-5 season that almost went awry.

The dagger that went through the Ducks on Wednesday was a dull version of one that was ever so sharp in consecutive losses to Washington State, Utah and Arizona State. And it was the one that briefly made an appearance in Seattle before three impressive wins pulled the Ducks back from the dead.

The Ducks grabbed that dagger against those final three teams, but it was sharpened in El Paso as Laurence Maroney, Thomas Tapeh and Marion Barber III showed that no matter how good the Ducks' defensive pass rush was, it wasn't going to make a difference.

"We did not play as well at the line of scrimmage as we needed to," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said.

Oregon could defend against the Pacific-10 Conference, a set of 10 teams that tends to use more of an aerial attack. The running game on the West Coast is an afterthought.

Granted, the Ducks did stop the big Michigan machine and Chris Perry, but that was more of a case of the Wolverines being stubborn. Michigan proved in the fourth quarter of that game it could exploit Oregon's defense.

If the Wolverines had only started earlier... Against the Minnesota trio, the Ducks found out the Big Ten Conference is full of smash-mouth, incredibly deep offensive teams. When Barber III proved to be gaining little ground early on, the Golden Gophers went to Maroney, who had 131 yards rushing.

When they needed that 1-yard burst, they went to Tapeh. He scored three touchdowns in the game, two of which came from the 1-yard line.

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