

## ■ In my opinion



JON ROETMAN  
ROUGHING THE PASSER

## Four weeks, four wins, but Ducks inconsistent

Oregon continued a four-week trend of inconsistency Saturday against Washington.

While the Ducks excelled on one side of the ball, they struggled to execute on the other.

Despite its troubles, Oregon continued another four-week trend as well: winning.

The Duck defense carried a sputtering offense to a 31-6 victory against the Huskies at Autzen Stadium. While the score is indicative of a blowout, the outcome remained in question until late in the fourth quarter.

Oregon held Washington to 256 yards of total offense and put the game away with four minutes remaining in the fourth quarter when defensive end Chris Solomona intercepted a swing pass from Washington quarterback Casey Paus and returned it 10 yards for a touchdown.

Solomona fought off a block and snared the ball with his right hand before lumbering into the end zone.

"We'd been going over it throughout this week about (Washington's) backs flaring out," Solomona said. "(Defensive line) Coach (Steve) Greatwood said whenever you see the back flare out of the corner of your eyes, they are going to throw it there. I saw the back go, and I just followed him. Robby (Valenzuela) put some pressure on the quarterback, and I made a big play."

To that point, the Oregon defense did everything it could to compensate for numerous offensive mistakes.

For the game, the Ducks held the Huskies to 45 yards rushing and caused seven turnovers. This performance came a week after Oregon held Stanford to minus-eight yards rushing and sacked Cardinal quarterbacks 10 times.

Middle linebacker Jerry Matson, who finished with six tackles, said the Oregon defense has a chance to be as good as it was in the mid-1990s, when the Ducks earned a trip to the Rose Bowl.

"If you're an offensive coordinator, you know that your job is going to be tough when you play us," Matson said. "We got the game ball on ESPN last week, and I know this was as good a job, if not better. We are a good defense, and hopefully we keep on playing even better than this and really become a 'Gang Green' type of defense that's a notorious thing for a long time."

Defensive end Devan Long led the way for Oregon with eight tackles, including three for loss. The Anacortes, Wash., native said the defense thrives on athletes working together.

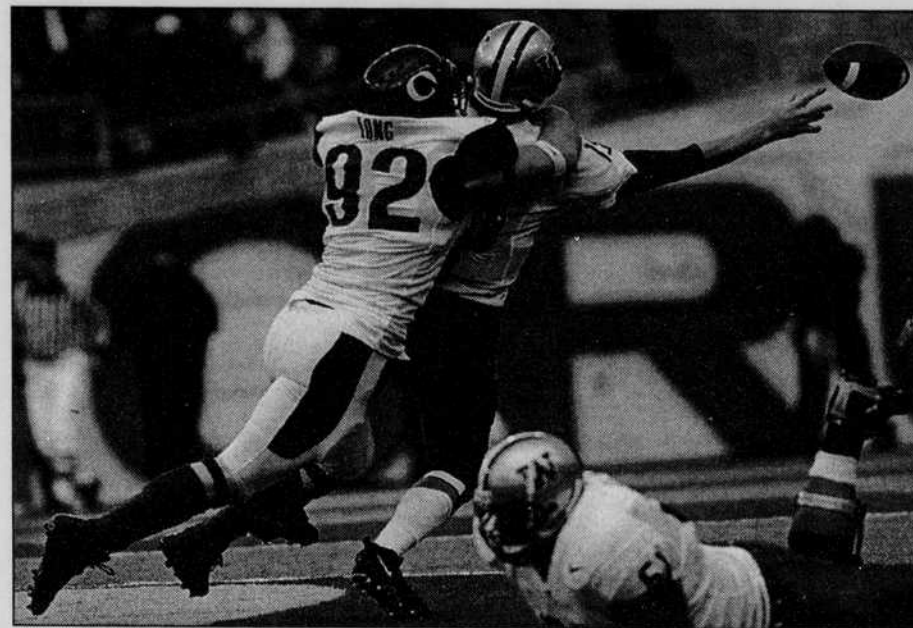
"We just went out there and played as a team, and that's how good defenses play," Long said. "There's no single person, no egos."

As well as the defense played, the offense was equally as poor in the second half. After scoring 17 first-half points, Oregon struggled with mistakes and missed opportunities in the final two quarters.

For the game, Oregon managed only 24 points and 292 yards offensively against the Pacific-10 Conference's second-worst defense,

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## ■ Duck football



ERIK R. BISHOFF | PHOTOGRAPHER

Defensive end Devan Long hits Washington quarterback Casey Paus as he attempts a pass. The Ducks applied constant pressure to the Husky signal caller, leading to four interceptions.

## Defense mars Huskies in Ducks' 31-6 victory

*For the second week in a row, the Oregon defense has controlled the tempo of the game, making up for several mistakes on offense*

BY CLAYTON JONES  
SPORTS EDITOR

A superb defensive effort helped push Oregon past rival Washington in a very sloppy 31-6 victory Saturday at Autzen Stadium.

The victory was even sweeter for the Ducks (5-3 overall, 4-1 Pacific-10 Conference), as they have lost to the Huskies (1-7, 0-5) the past two seasons, including a game at Autzen where Washington danced on the "O" at the 50-yard line after their victory.

Once the game clock wound down and the game ended Saturday, a majority of the Oregon players ran out to the middle of the field and did their own dance on the "O" while the Washington players walked past.

"It's kind of a pride thing," Oregon quarterback Kellen Clemens said. "This our house. Autzen Stadium is where we live. Dancing on the 'O' is kind of our way of celebrating that we stood strong today and held the fort."

The defense was key for Oregon, forcing seven turnovers, holding the struggling Huskies to 256 yards of offense and coming up with big plays when Washington was driving late in the game.

"I'm sick of it, just sick of it," Washington head coach Keith Gilbertson said of his team's inability to score. "It's a nightmare that we keep reliving."

Two of the top defensive plays for the Ducks came in the fourth quarter when the Huskies were still hanging around at 17-6.

During the first play of the quarter, Washington quarterback Casey Paus threw a pass toward the goal line, but linebacker Ramone Reed stepped in, picked it off and ran back to the Oregon 10-yard line.

"That might of been the biggest play of the game because they had all the momentum," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "His interception seemed like a touchdown to me."

Reed said he just followed Paus' eyes. "The quarterback was looking (to the) strong (side of the field)," Reed said. "I saw the guy go underneath, and I jumped it, and he threw it right to me."

The play that put the nail in Washington's coffin was an interception by Oregon's Chris Solomona late in the fourth quarter that was returned for a touchdown.

Paus was looking to his right and threw a pass toward the sideline, but Solomona stuck his hand in the air, tipped the ball to

himself and ran it the rest of the 10 yards to the endzone.

Oregon's Devan Long said the interception was a perfect way to end the game.

"It's always nice to secure your win," Long said. "To get a pick for a touchdown ... pad your stats, it's great."

Long also had a sack on the day, moving him up to fourth on Oregon's all-time sack list with 19.5.

The Ducks defense made up for what was an unusually sub-par performance by an offense that has racked up more than 1,500 yards in the last three games.

While Oregon piled up 220 yards on the Huskies in the first half for a 17-3 lead, the offense sputtered in the second half, only managing 72 yards.

"We made it a lot tougher (on ourselves)," Bellotti said. "We dropped some passes offensively, and I think some of those mistakes hurt us. I don't think we supported Kellen Clemens the way I would like to see."

The Duck offense started strong, scoring on a 14-play, 80-yard drive during its first possession of the game. The drive was capped off with a 16-yard pass to freshman Cameron Colvin. It was Colvin's first collegiate touchdown.

The Pittsburg, Calif., native said it was his time to step up.

"The coaches are saying I'm not a rookie anymore," Colvin said. "I've been learning my material ... and the offense. I'm just playing my role."

Clemens said that Colvin benefited from the matchup that Washington presented him.

"Cameron, because of their defense, had some one-on-one opportunities, and we got him the ball," Clemens said. "Fortunately, he made some big plays when we needed them."

Clemens, who entered the game leading the Pacific-10 Conference in total offense, passed for only 134 yards against the Huskies.

"We need to play better offensively than we did in the second half," Clemens said. "On a lot of plays, we were just right there. We had a couple drops. We had one or two missed blocks where if you get that block, Terrence (Whitehead) or Dante (Rosario) are off for a big gain. It's frustrating when that happens."

Clemens moved into seventh place all-time at Oregon in total offense and passing yards during the game. He passed Tony Graziani in

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## ■ Duck volleyball

## Husky fans, top offense help undo hazy Ducks

*Despite an improved defense, Oregon saw a three-game loss to No. 1 Washington on Friday*

BY STEPHEN MILLER  
SPORTS REPORTER

Purple flooded the stands of McArthur Court as No. 1 Washington gathered its 15th sweep of the season and washed out Oregon on Friday.

The Huskies, who nearly lost to Oregon State in a five-game shootout the day before, showed a lack of composure against the Ducks in the first game. Washington regrouped and took the match in three games, 30-27, 30-19, 30-20.

Washington (18-0 overall, 10-0 Pacific-10 Conference) combined its league-leading offense with a mediocre defense to hand the Ducks their eighth-straight loss.

"(Washington's) system is not very complicated," Oregon head coach Carl Ferreira said. "It's one where there's an efficiency component to it. They run their plays and rely on hitters being playmakers and hitting a variety of shots."

Coach Ferreira denounced his team's downfall to tiring rallies and distractions that correlated to an unsuccessful attack.

"One thing was fatigue, one thing was focus," he said. "The moment you lose focus you get impatient, and then you no longer sustain that ability to be somewhat methodical about the execution. ... As you get fatigued you have to increase your mental focus."

Defense kept Oregon (9-11, 1-9 Pac-10) in the match as it overshadowed the Huskies' seven team blocks with 11.5. Junior Kelly Russell collected 13 digs and a match-high seven block assists, and sophomore Kristen Bitter recorded six.

In the backcourt, senior libero Katie O'Neil led Oregon with 16 digs, and sophomore Allyson Leavitt added 14.

"Ally really helps in the back row along with Katie," Ferreira said. "(Leavitt) is easily one of our better overall defensive players. Kelly was the other one that played well again."

"I think our players are just getting better at understanding the defensive system and executing a scouting report, so I was really proud about how they executed and played defensively."

Despite Oregon's respectable defensive performance, the Ducks could not contain Washington's hitting core of young and old. Junior Brie Hagerty led all attackers with a match-high 21 kills and .421 hitting percentage.

Freshman Christal Morrison distributed an equal effort with 14 kills and 15 digs. Senior Kaitlin Leck added 12 kills and 10 digs. Senior libero Candace Lee, a former Churchill High School player, recorded 32 digs.

Leavitt posted a team-high 11 kills on 46 attempts for the Ducks and rotated through every position on the floor. She has been the stabilizer of Oregon's offense with 35 kills in the past two matches.

"I think we looked really good," Leavitt said. "We're playing smarter, and it's not so urgent. When people get on like Kristen with huge blocks, we get fired up."

Sophomore middle blocker Kim McNally contributed eight kills and was effective in 40

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