

# Quarterback Comparison

by Cory Howard

## Fife vs. Clemens

Ducks Illustrated photos: Walt Grondona

Traditionally the University of Oregon football has been very spoiled when it comes to the quarterback position. Who could forget the likes of Joey Harrington, A.J. Feeley, Akili Smith, Bill Musgrave, Chris Miller, and of course Dan Fouts. In recent years the Duck football program has been very successful tallying the most wins in the Pac-10 over the last "Duckade", excuse me, decade and the play of the signal caller has been a big part of that success. Following their decisive victory over favored Colorado in the Fiesta Bowl the Ducks soared to #2 on the AP poll in 2001 and rolled into the 2002 season with even higher expectation from fans and coaches who were accustomed to winning. Junior quarterback Jason Fife emerged as the starter and led the Ducks to a perfect 6-0 start. However, questionable offensive and defensive play allowed the Ducks to drop 6 out of their last 7 games, including a humiliating loss in the Seattle Bowl to a mediocre Wake Forest team. The poor season left fans, coaches, and players with a bad taste in their mouths.

There are many questions that must be answered before Saturday's kickoff against Mississippi State for the Ducks to return to their winning ways. The most important question is: who will lead this team from the quarterback position? Senior Jason Fife and Sophomore Kellen Clemens are battling to win the coveted position as Oregon's starting quarterback. Both are sharing time with the number one offensive unit in order to determine who the best candidate for the position is. Thus far neither one has really done anything to distance themselves from their competitor. It's likely that we will not know who the starter will be until game day against MSU. Personally, I have to root for fellow Oregonian Kellen Clemens to emerge as the teams starting quarterback after a very solid spring game performance. However, only time will tell if my prediction is accurate. I asked Kellen and Jason a few key questions about the current quarterback controversy, and this is what they had to say:

**DI:** How has your knowledge of the offense improved over the last year?

**Kellen:** It has improved immensely. I have been watching a lot of film over the summer and I have been getting a lot of reps. Experience and reps pays dividends for a young QB.

**DI:** What do you have to do to improve this season?

**Jason:** To not let anything affect me at all, forgetting what the media says about me and Kellen and forgetting about any pressures I'm beginning to feel. Just letting it all go, just playing football and not worrying about it because that's when I'm at my best.

**DI:** What do you have to do to win this job?

**Kellen:** Play consistent, make good decisions, and not turn the ball over

**DI:** How are you going to keep your starting job?

**Jason:** I have to be confident and optimistic; otherwise I might as well lie down and not play

**DI:** How comfortable are you in the pocket now, and with the game speed?

**Kellen:** I am very comfortable in the pocket, and the game speed is just fine now.

**DI:** How is your throwing going this summer?

**Jason:** My footwork wasn't as great near the end of the season and I wasn't finishing my throws, so I concentrated on that during the off-season. And I think that my vision of the field has improved. **O**



### MORE ABOUT KELLEN

Favorite Pro Athlete:

**Brett Favre**

Favorite Food: **Steak**

Favorite Movie: **Tombstone**

Favorite TV Show:

**Home Improvement**

Favorite Music: **Country**

Dream Play:

**Touchdown drive to win the National Championship**

Player I miss the most from last year:

**Dave Moretti**

Career after Football:

**Rancher**

Most Influential Person:

**Dad**

If I was stranded on an island, I'd like to be with... :

**Shania Twain**

Team I Enjoy

Beating the Most:

**Oregon State**

Funniest Guy on the Team:

**Matt Floberg**

Team Not on the Schedule

I'd Like to Play:

**Texas**

On my wall I have

a poster of: **2002 Festa Bowl**

Hobbies:

**Breaking Horses**

### MORE ABOUT JASON

Favorite Pro Athlete:

**Steve Young**

Favorite Food: **"Fife's Surprise", a Pasta Chili Cheese dish**

Favorite Movie:

**Lord of the Rings**

Favorite TV Show:

**Sponge Bob Square Pants**

Favorite Music: **Punk**

Dream Play:

**Scramble for 80-yard TD**

Player I miss the most from

last year: **Allan Amundson**

Career after Football:

**Fireman**

Most Influential Person:

**Wife (see page 9)**

If I was stranded on an island, I'd like to be with... :

**Wife**

Team I Enjoy

Beating the Most:

**Huskies**

Funniest Guy on the Team:

**Erik Cheney**

Team Not on the Schedule

I'd Like to Play: **Southern Cal**

On my wall I have

a poster of: **A person**

**Kneeling & Praying**

Hobbies:

**Snowboarding & Golf**

## Who Has The Edge?



**GAME EXPERIENCE: JASON**

**FIELD LEADERSHIP: KELLEN**

**KNOWLEDGE OF THE SYSTEM: JASON**

**SCRAMBLING ABILITY: KELLEN**

**ARM STRENGTH: JASON**

**ACCURACY: TOSS-UP**

**FIELD VISION: KELLEN**

**POCKET PASSING: JASON**

**POISE UNDER PRESSURE: TOSS-UP**

**TOUCH PASSING: KELLEN**

