

# Paris Warren

by Jerry Thompson

## A Duck Who Became A Ute

Junior wide receiver Paris Warren has been thinking about the upcoming game against Oregon all summer. If you're a player at Utah the BYU intrastate rivalry game is usually the game one looks forward to, but not so for Warren. Paris played at Oregon in 2001 and despite the Ducks winning the Fiesta Bowl he decided to transfer to another program. He looked at Boise State, Fresno State, Utah State, and Utah and chose to become a Ute. Even as a redshirt freshman with Keenan Howry, Jason Willis, Cy Aleman and Samie Parker ahead of him, Warren thought he should have received more playing time. Ironically one of the few games in which he saw action in 2001 was against Utah and as a receiver he caught a pass from Joey Harrington behind the line of scrimmage and then completed a 50-yard pass to Justin Peelle to set up a Maurice Morris touchdown.

So, why has Warren been concentrating so intently on this game? "Revenge", Paris told DI in a recent

interview. "I want to show them (Oregon) what they missed out on." Warren said he liked the "school", but he didn't agree with how the program was being run and how players were rotated. For the most part during 2001 it was Howry, Willis, and Parker at the receiver positions. Washington State and Oregon State, for example, consistently use 3 or 4 receivers in their formations while most of the time Oregon uses two as they rely on the use of the tight end more than some teams. Paris said that he wanted to stay at Oregon and would have if they used three or four receivers as a standard formation. "We line up with four receivers every play", Warren explained referring to Utah's offense this year. Warren said that midway through the 2001 season he went to coach Bellotti twice and asked about playing time but he didn't receive the answer he wanted. Even though he said the Duck coaches tried to talk him into staying, he decided to transfer.

When a Division I football athlete transfers to another D-I program outside of the conference, he loses a season of eligibility. So, Paris lost his sophomore year and is now a junior. Warren and Keith Allen were in the same class at Oregon and were neck

Photo courtesy: University of Utah Media Services



Warren, a cousin to Onterio Smith, is a multiple threat for the Utes.



Photos by: Walt Gromdona of Walt's Photography

In 2001 for Oregon vs. Utah, Paris threw a 50-yard pass to Justin Peelle.

and neck in competition after the 2001 spring game. Warren caught 6 passes for 117 yards and a touchdown in that game in Hillsboro. It's easy to see why the talented athlete from Grant High School in Sacramento, and cousin of Onterio Smith, had high expectations going into the 2001 season. The bottom line seems to be that Warren basically wasn't willing to wait his turn, so to speak at Oregon, and he opted for a program where he would almost be guaranteed a lot of "PT". Ironically in the spring of 2002 Howry and Willis were not able to play due to injuries, Aleman left the team, and Keith Allen was also limited due to an injury. The Ducks actually had a shortage of receivers in the spring of 2002. If Warren had stayed, he and Samie Parker would have been the focus of attention. Howry didn't reach full speed until the middle of last season, so who knows what role Paris would have assumed. It is almost certain that with Keith Allen's unfortunate knee injury at the beginning of this season Warren would have been in the starting rotation this year. The Ducks were basically forced to recruit two junior college receivers. It is not too much of a stretch to say that the loss of Warren has given Kellen Taylor and Marcus Maxwell an opportunity they might not have received.

At any rate, Warren is now a Ute and he says he is very happy there. "I fit in just right in this program," Paris said. First year head coach Urban Meyer has used Warren in a variety of ways. Warren is not only a receiver, he sometime lines up at quarterback where he can pass or run the option. Paris said it's fun to be utilized that way and it reminds him of high school where he was used as a shotgun quarterback to run the two-minute offense. He pointed out that it is more enjoyable at Utah because he has "more blocking" than in high school. So far this year Paris has 24 catches for 245 yards & 1 touchdown, and has returned 2 punts for 38 yards.

Paris' goal is to play wide receiver in the NFL. He talks to Onterio about "every other day" and Smith tells his cousin to keep working hard. Warren said that Onterio tells him he is trying to "work his way up" with the Minnesota Vikings. Although he separated himself from the Ducks, he watched the first half of the Oregon-Michigan game and talks with Samie Parker every week. In retrospect Warren wishes things would have been different, but is happy with the way it have turned out. The versatile Warren is a big part of the Utah offense so don't be surprised if the Utes do "ute-ilize" him in some special ways against the Ducks. **O**