



Chalk Talk

KEN WOODY
Feature Writer
DUCKS ILLUSTRATED

Pluck, Luck lead to Duck Win

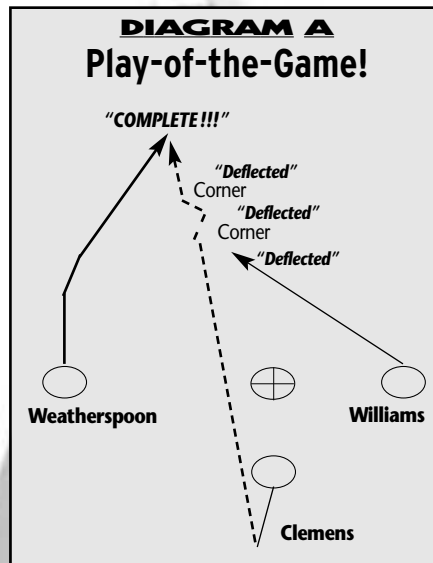
Just when you think you have them figured out, Oregon's Ducks throw you a changeup-and this time, at last, it was a good one. Trailing the Cal Bears 17-7 with six minutes to go in the game, Kellen Clemens came off the bench to lead the Duck offense to two touchdowns and finally, a fourth-quarter victory, 21-17. When Cal's Head Coach Jeff Tedford reviews the films, he will probably wish he had sophomore quarterback Aaron Rodgers throw the ball deep more often; the weather and conservative play calling seemed to help Oregon's defense. And, the play the will hurt the most will be the deflected pass freshman receiver Kyle Weatherspoon caught off two Cal defenders (after it deflected off the hands of the intended receiver, Demetrius Williams) for a huge first down in the fourth quarter. That set up the next play, a 31-yard completion to tight end Tim Day, who ran over five defenders for a touchdown that cut the lead to 17-14 (see *Diagram A*).

The defense came up big in the fourth quarter, after allowing a touchdown on a third and eighteen pass to begin the quarter. Clemens came back in with a shade over two minutes left and lead a 43-yard touchdown drive in nine plays, pitching the ball to Terrence Whitehead for a TD with 47 seconds left in the game. The Ducks accomplished a lot in practice the past week, key elements that lead to a big victory.

What the Ducks Improved On:

- * **Defensive pursuit, tackling:** holds Cal Offense to under 20 points
- * **Defensive third down conversions:** 1-9 after the first quarter (5-6)
- * **Pass rush:** defensive linemen getting hands up
- * **QB's Jason Fife, Kellen Clemens:** effective relief off the bench
- * **Pass blocking by running backs**
- * **Power running:** Dante Rosario - 4.8 average
- * **Tight end catching:** Tim Day, 4 catches, 69 yards, 1 TD
- * **Special Teams:** Timely runbacks, punts and kickoffs
- * **Kenny Washington kickoff returns:** 4 for 112 yards
- * **Justin Phinisee punt returns:** 4 for 44 yards
- * **Zero Turnovers**

The Ducks still have work to do. There were two poor offensive plays called in critical situations: Clemens throwing long, incomplete to Parker on 3rd and two on the final drive; and again, second and goal from the one, throwing the ball incomplete in the end zone, barely escaping a sack and deflection (remember WSU: first and goal from the two, throwing the deflection/interception, setting the stage for a complete rout?). If you were wondering why the quarterbacks



were going over to the sidelines, taking extra time, to get the plays, it's because of the familiarity Cal coaches had with Oregon's signals. A key play in the first half was a 15-yard taunting penalty on a senior defensive back (apparently momentarily forgetting he wasn't playing for OSU), which helped Cal get the field goal which put them in a 10-7 halftime lead. There was a lot of booing in the stadium with the official's call. It would be a mistake to think that all of it was directed at the official. Some fans remembered the Rose Bowl year of 1994 when Ricky Whittle made a 54-yard touchdown run down the sidelines and dove into the end zone, taunting the pursuing Sun Devils. Rich Brooks, head coach, ran down the sidelines and pulled Whittle out of the game and publicly reminded him there is no "I" in team. It was a vivid lesson, and everyone watching the game knew what was going on, and still, to this day, appreciated it.

The fans at Autzen deserve much credit: one, for showing up after the dismal showing by the Ducks in Seattle, and two, for the weather and late start for the game. When the stadium lights went out, the crowd increased its enthusiasm and backing of the Ducks. Even as the Bears increased their lead, the crowd stayed with it and in the end, put out some positive vibes for the team. Watching the team come into the Moshofsky Center before the game, through the traditional tunnel of fans (come and check it out, 2 1/2 hours before game time), you saw a wide variety of "game faces." Some were intense. Frightfully, there were many that seemed impassioned, bored or detached. When the team comes out of the tunnel before the game, it doesn't seem like a team excited about playing football. There were spots of team enthusiasm Saturday night, but there appears still to be a number of players who spend considerable time figuring out how to make themselves noticed after a "big play" or any play, for that matter. In the fourth quarter Demetrius Williams caught a fourth down pass and sped downfield for 19 yards before being pushed out of bounds. He left the ball for the official, clapped his hands and ran back to the huddle, joining his teammates. I really appreciated that play, and how it effected the outcome. It was Duck football like we all remembered it.

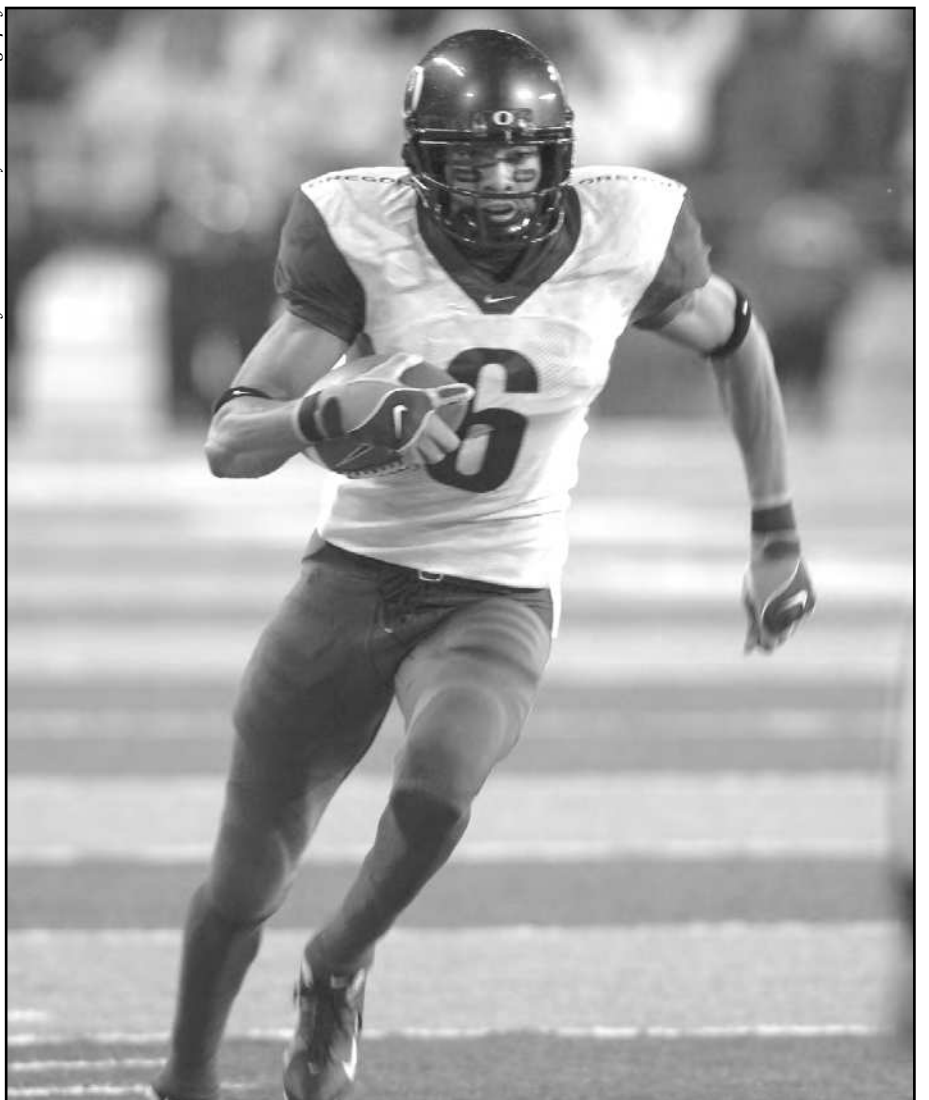
Up Next: A Wounded Bruin

The Ducks get to go to LA and face UCLA's Bruins, who are on a two-game losing streak (Stanford and WSU). Knowing that their opponent is squarely where Oregon has been this year (fighting for redemption), the Ducks will have to bear down in practice and keep improving. UCLA's head coach Karl Dorrell is having a bit of a quarterback controversy of his own, starting Matt Moore against Stanford and WSU, but having to go later in the game to Drew Olson, who has been more effective statistically (27 points higher in pass efficiency). The Bruins have three outstanding running backs in Tyler Ebell, Maurice Drew and Manuel White, all who have rushed for 400 yards this season; and a wide receiver who can fly deep, Craig Bragg. The Ducks, who apparently simplified some

Look for the Webfoots to exploit that weakness. Oregon's biggest challenge will be UCLA's defense, which in many categories, is ranked second in the Pac-10. Oregon coaches will watch closely how WSU was able to run the ball successfully on the Bruins. Throwing the ball will be a challenge, largely due to an outstanding pass rush and in particular, from the defensive ends, Dave Ball and his brother Matt. Dave is the Pac-10's sack leader and will be a challenge for whichever Duck is playing left tackle. Look for the Ducks to help their offensive tackles out in pass blocking by a variety of methods, with a running back, tight end, or guard.

The Ducks own a four-game winning streak over UCLA and lately, seem to play well in the Rose Bowl. If the Ducks can keep defensive third down conversions under 38%, have zero turnovers and keep the "us" in team, they may very well be pleased with the outcome of this one. Team

Photo by: Walt Cronitana of Walt's Photography



Demetrius Williams' 4th down & two reception for 19 yards was a huge play for the Ducks.

of their coverages against Cal, will have to keep improving: giving up a touchdown on third and 18 to Cal was inexcusable for a team that sees itself fit for a bowl game. The Ducks are still reluctant to blitz much, they brought a strong safety/linebacker blitz that put excellent pressure on Cal's Rogers in the first half, but never went back to it later in the game. However, the defense played well enough to win, which was an excellent accomplishment and shut Cal down three successful drives in the fourth quarter when it mattered most. Look for the Bruins to work hard to run the ball on the Ducks, much like the Huskies did.

UCLA's punt game, coverage and return, has hurt them the past two losses.

leader Kevin Mitchell commented after the Cal win: "Hopefully now we realize what it takes to win." There's more to it than that. The Michigan game showed **what** it takes to win. The Ducks get in trouble when they seem to forget **how** to do what it takes to win. Let's see if they remember this week. **O**

Ken Woody played defensive back, wide receiver and place kicker for the UO from 1966-70. He coached college football for 18 years, including stints at the UO, UW, and WSU. He was a head coach twice, at Whitman College and Washington University-St. Louis. He also did television football color commentary for KCPQ (Seattle-Tacoma) and Fox Sports Northwest for 14 years.