

WEEK ONE
OREGON vs AUBURN

Fresh win: Nix rallies No. 16 Auburn 27-21 over No. 11 Ducks

ARLINGTON, Texas -- Bo always knows at Auburn, even a true freshman quarterback by that name.

After barely converting a fourth down with a gutsy run in the final minute, Bo Nix threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to Seth Williams with 9 seconds remaining as the 16th-ranked Tigers rallied for a 27-21 win over No. 11 Oregon on Saturday night.

"He has some savviness to him, there's no doubt," coach Gus Malzahn said of the young quarterback. "When the game is on the line, you've got to make plays, and that's the one thing he showed."

On fourth-and-3, Nix rolled to the right, then tucked and pushed forward. Only the nose of the ball, sitting at midfield, was past the chain when officials measured for a first down.

"Play of the game," Malzahn said.

"When I saw him run and saw him scrambling, I thought he was going to throw the ball to me," running back JaTarvious Whitlow said. "And then I saw him stick those feet in the ground and cut up. I was like, 'You better get it. You better get it man!'"

And Nix wasn't done. On third-and-10 from the Oregon 39 and no timeouts, he hit Williams for 13 yards. The receiver got out of bounds with 16 seconds left, with Tigers already in field goal range. But the play-calling head coach wanted to give Williams the chance to make another play -- and Nix delivered to put Auburn ahead for the first time.

The Tigers, who trailed 21-6 late in the third quarter, delivered another early blow to the Pac-12. They beat the Pac-12's highest-ranked team in a season opener for the second year in a row -- No. 6 Washington lost to them 21-16 in Atlanta last year.

"Tough, really tough one," Oregon coach Mario Cristobal said.

Nix finished 13-of-31 passing, four of those completions on Auburn's final drive, for 177 yards with two touchdowns and two interceptions. He also ran seven times for 42 yards, while Whitlow had 110 yards rushing on 24 carries.

Justin Herbert, who bypassed early entry in the NFL draft to return to Oregon, was 28-of-37 passing for 242 yards with a touchdown. He was under pressure when he threw across the field and hit Spencer Webb on a 20-yard score that made it 14-3 late in the first quarter.

Herbert wasn't on the field for a fourth-and-1 play with 5 1/2 minutes left, after banging his knee with a defender following a pass. After Herbert was tended to and came off the field, the Ducks called two timeouts -- though those stoppages didn't allow Herbert to return at that point.

"The wrong personnel was in, and we got personnel straightened out, they weren't quite sure as to who was going to do what," Cristobal said. "As a coaching staff, that's on us. ... Trying to make pieces work for a certain play."

But it didn't work when CJ Verdell, who had a 1-yard TD run on the opening drive of the game, was stuffed for a 1-yard loss.

Auburn went three-and-out, but after Oregon got a quick first down, Herbert was sacked and the Ducks punted with just over 2 minutes left.

Nix threw an 11-yard TD pass to Eli Stove late in the third quarter. When the Tigers got to the 1 with just under 10 minutes left, Joey Gatewood -- the redshirt freshman Nix beat for the starting job -- came in, leaped from the 3 and over the line with the ball extended to make it 21-20 since Auburn kicked the extra point instead of trying for two.

"We brought back a play we used to run in 2010 with Cam (Newton)," said Malzahn, the offensive coordinator of that team that beat Oregon in the BCS championship game. "He looked pretty good going over the top with it."

THE TAKEAWAY

Oregon: The Ducks had several chances to keep this game from being that close. Already up 7-0, Bryan Addison couldn't pull in a catch in the back of the end zone on their second drive right before Camden Lewis missed a 20-yard field goal. There was also an exchange of 80-yard returns in the second quarter. Jevon Holland had an 81-yard punt return to the Auburn 9, setting up a chance to go up 21-3. But Herbert fumbled on the next play. Defensive end Big Kat Bryant scooped it up and ran 83 yards to the Oregon 3, though the Tigers had to settle for a field goal.

Auburn: While Nix had some mistakes, like the sidearm throw into traffic that was picked off near the Oregon 10 in the second quarter, he made plays when the Tigers needed them and when starting his first game against one of the nation's best teams. His father and high school coach, Patrick Nix, played at Auburn from 1992-95.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Both Auburn and Oregon are Top 25 teams, but the Tigers should be the higher-ranked of the two in the next poll.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
ORE	14	0	7	0	21
AUB	3	3	7	14	27

Scoring Summary -----

	ORE	AUB
FIRST QUARTER		
ORE TD 10:13 CJ Verdell 1 Yd Run (Camden Lewis Kick)		7
11 plays, 74 yards, 4:47		0
AUB FG 3:17 Anders Carlson 40 Yd Field Goal		3
6 plays, 58 yards, 1:25	7	3
ORE TD 2:11 Spencer Webb 20 Yd pass from Justin Herbert (Camden Lewis Kick)		14
3 plays, 75 yards, 1:06	14	3
SECOND QUARTER		
AUB FG 4:41 Anders Carlson 25 Yd Field Goal		6
4 plays, -4 yards, 1:34	14	6
THIRD QUARTER		
ORE TD 9:23 Darrian Felix 6 Yd Run (Adam Stack Kick)		21
9 plays, 53 yards, 3:28		6
AUB TD 4:20 Eli Stove 11 Yd pass from Bo Nix (Anders Carlson Kick)		21
4 plays, 58 yards, 1:11	21	13
FOURTH QUARTER		
AUB TD 9:48 Joey Gatewood 1 Yd Run (Anders Carlson Kick)		21
8 plays, 69 yards, 2:56		20
AUB TD 0:09 Seth Williams 26 Yd pass from Bo Nix (Anders Carlson Kick)		21
11 plays, 60 yards, 2:05	21	27

Team Stats	ORE	AUB
First Downs	17	22
Passes for First	10	7
Rushes for First	6	13
Penalties for First	1	2
Third Down Efficiency	4-14	7-17
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-2	1-1
Total Yards	332	383
Total Plays	70	75
Avg Gain Per Play	4.7	5.1
Net Yards Rushing	90	206
Rushes	33	43
Yards Per Rush	2.7	4.8
Stat Name		
Net Yards Passing	242	177
Comp-Att	28-37	13-32
Yards Per Pass	6.5	5.5
Times Sacked	3	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-22	-8
Interceptions	0	2
Punts	7	6
Punt Average	48.9	45.0
Penalties	7	7
Penalty Yards	58	60
Fumbles	1	1
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Time of Poss	32:28	27:32

Individual Stats

RUSHING					
OREGON	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
CJ Verdell	14	76	5.4	1	37
Travis Dye	6	23	3.8	0	13
Darrian Felix	2	7	3.5	1	6
Cyrus Habibi-Likio	2	5	2.5	0	3
Team	1	-5	-5.0	0	0
Justin Herbert	8	-16	-2.0	0	7
AUBURN					
AUBURN	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
JaTarvious Whitlow	24	110	4.6	0	31
Bo Nix	7	42	6.0	0	19
Eli Stove	1	36	36.0	0	36
Kam Martin	4	11	2.8	0	7
Matthew Hill	1	7	7.0	0	7
Shaun Shivers	4	2	0.5	0	3
Joey Gatewood	1	1	1.0	1	1

PASSING							
OREGON	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Justin Herbert	28	37	242	6.5	1	0	43.4
AUBURN							
AUBURN	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Bo Nix	13	31	177	5.7	2	2	44.8

RECEIVING					
OREGON	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Johnny Johnson III	7	98	14.0	0	47
Jaylon Redd	9	64	7.1	0	14
Spencer Webb	3	28	9.3	1	20
Jacob Breeland	4	26	6.5	0	13
Josh Delgado	1	9	9.0	0	9
Travis Dye	1	7	7.0	0	7
Bryan Addison	1	6	6.0	0	6
CJ Verdell	2	4	2.0	0	3
AUBURN					
AUBURN	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Sal Cannella	2	42	21.0	0	21
Seth Williams	4	41	10.3	1	26
Will Hastings	1	38	38.0	0	38
Harold Joiner	1	28	28.0	0	28
Eli Stove	3	18	6.0	1	11
Spencer Nigh	1	9	9.0	0	9
Matthew Hill	1	1	1.0	0	1