

Commentary

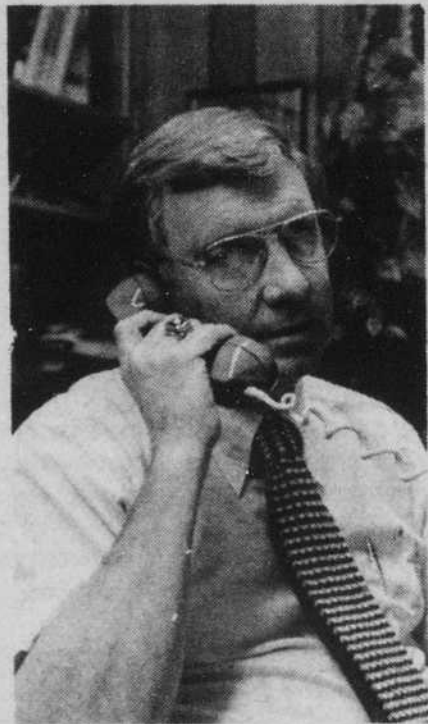
The day we judge Oregon's grid future

Mike Marino

A friend and I were walking by Mac Court the other day when he asked, "Where's Rich Brooks' Mercedes?"

I said that I wasn't sure about the car, but that Rich was probably off recruiting somewhere. And indeed, he and his entire staff have been trekking the country in search of Oregon's football future.

This Wednesday we'll see some of the results. That's the day when the NCAA allows high school football players to sign national letters-of-intent and it's the day when the Ducks can see just how well they fared against the USCs and UCLAs. Only one thing is for sure: it's a nervous time for all the Athletic Department.



John Caine
chances are good

"We're under tremendous pressure," said Oregon's AD, John Caine. "I'd like to see us all off the hook soon — our staff and myself." These days, recruiting tells the tale for a program. Good recruiting means a good program, bad recruiting means, "We've had one winning season in the past 13 years," Caine explained. "And there's an old saying in college athletics, 'You're just about as good as your recruiting effort.' And if you don't have the players, you're not going to go so far."

wants to go far. And the athletic department is staking a lot on the results. A good deal of money goes in to the business of sending coaches hither and yon, more than some people would deem feasible. But ask anybody this side of Jimmy the Greek and they'll tell you: you have to spend it to make it.

"Some people wonder how we can justify spending so much money just for football," Caine said. "But the football program has to develop over \$1 million in revenue — that's for one year." In other words, the team has got to produce to produce. And there's a little pride involved, too. Just ask yourself how you feel about 12 out of 13 losing seasons. That's how Brooks and Caine feel.

The last two of the football regimes (Don Read and Dick Enright) had the recruiting programs break down," Caine said. And that's the reason for the clean start with Brooks. He admitted when he first came here that Don Read was a fine gentleman and a good coach, but that he didn't have enough players.

"There's a lot of truth in Rich's statement," Caine assessed. "Don Read was a good coach. But so much goes back to the failure in recruiting."

Which is why you don't see Brooks around so much any more. Or his Mercedes. He and his staff, led by recruiting coordinator Ron Hudson, have been after players around the country. And there's talk that they're doing a darn good job. So good, in fact, that Brooks joked that the NCAA might wonder what went on if so many good players wind up signing their hearts to Eugene.

A few other folks might turn a head or two. Oregon's recruiting effort has expanded as far as Deep South and the chances are good to better that they'll get a big name from there. "And every time we get a big name from an area," Caine reasoned, "the other kids in the area are going to say, 'hey, if this guy goes all the way to Oregon, maybe they have something there.' And that's what we want."

With the effort put in by Oregon's "Tiger" staff, it may be what they get. The recruiting year begins in the early spring, when the coaches talk to high school people about their kids. Then comes summer and the time is spent contracting incoming freshmen. In the fall it's obviously football season, but it's also time to scout. "Our staff is gone by Thursday night," Caine said. "Often there's only one coach left for late workouts on Friday. All of the others are on the road."

And then after the season — from the third week in November until now — they're only home on weekends. And all that time they're going from place to place, selling the program and the city of Eugene.

The outcome we'll see tomorrow.

Vandy to play for S. Africa

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — A Vanderbilt University tennis player is to be one of first two blacks ever to enter Davis Cup competition for South Africa.

Peter Lamb, an 18-year-old junior from Cape Town, was picked Sunday by the South African Tennis Union for the North America Zone finals which begin at Vanderbilt on March 17. Named with him was Robbie Venter, also black. Both are to join the squad in Nashville.

Earlier, a group opposed to South African participation in the competition said it would picket the offices of Vanderbilt Chancellor Alexander Heard and President Emmett Fields this week.

Dr. Richard E. Lapchick, head of the American Committee for Equality in Sport and Society (ACCESS) announced the plan Saturday after the school officials refused once more to cancel the two-day matches. ACCESS is angered by South Africa's strict racial separation policy — apartheid.

Lamb said Saturday he would play for South Africa, if asked. His interest, he said, "is strictly from a tennis standpoint and has nothing at all to do with politics."

Heard and Fields spent two hours Saturday with Lapchick and nine community representatives. "We still have not changed our minds," Fields said afterward.

Tolford

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Two weeks ago, Schmidt won the 1,000 — meter run in the Portland Indoor Developmental Meet, running a 2:56.2.

The women also showed well in the mile, with three runners finishing in the top nine. Katy Mountain led the way, getting fifth with a time of 5:10.4. Jody Parker was seventh, running 5:14 and Debbie Richey doubled back from the two — mile to get ninth in 5:19.5.

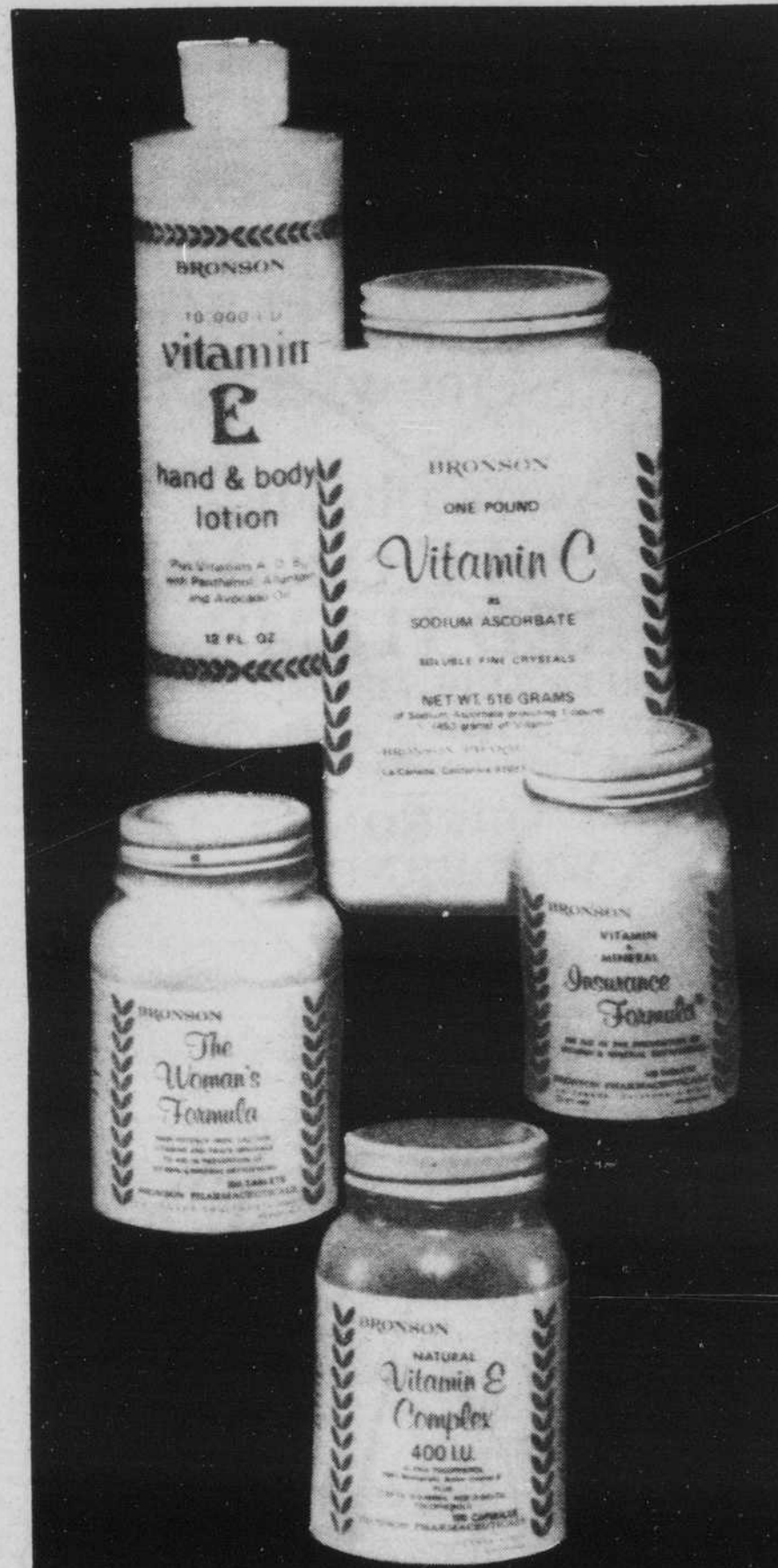
Kathy Picknell set a lifetime best in the shotput, throwing the ball 39-4¼, followed by Maggie Vonn at 39-4. Neither placed in the competition won by nationally-ranked Marsha Mecklenburg of Seattle Pacific with a 49-foot put.

Melanie Batiste was a double placer for Oregon, getting fifth in the 440 in 61 seconds, in the first time she had ever run the event. She also took second in her heat of the 60-yard dash with a 7.2 time. Rose Ann Klingerman of Oregon was fourth in the 440 with a 60.8 time.

Joan Walton finished fourth in the long jump to round out Oregon's showing.

"The matches will go on as scheduled. We told of our support for human rights and also of our support to see that blacks have their full rights. We believe

that Vanderbilt ought to be an open society and we are not endorsing apartheid by letting the South African tennis team come to play tennis."



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