

Bowl disease arrives

Since Oregon's football team beat Cal 24-17 Saturday at Autzen Stadium, the Ducks and the student body have been infected with a curious disease.

The disease is called Rose Bowl fever, and it's spreading quickly. Even Oregon coach Rich Brooks seems to have a touch of the red flu.

"I wouldn't say we're in the midst of the Rose Bowl race, but until proven otherwise, we've as much a chance as anyone," said Brooks in a jubilant Oregon locker room following the Bears' downfall.

commentary doug levy

To his credit, Oregon's seventh-year coach is not climbing out on any limbs. However, several others have New Year's Day festivity thoughts floating in their minds.

Linebacker E.J. Duffy mentioned that someone handed out roses at a team meeting the Friday before the Ducks upset Cal, and more than one Duck backer has hurled a Rose Bowl chant my direction.

Now, I consider myself as much of a quackerbacker as the next guy, and I admit I subscribe to the "on any given day" theory.

But the Rose Bowl? Sure, the Ducks turned in a virtuoso offensive show in beating the Bears, and granted, Oregon is 1-0 in the Pac-10.

Still, let's not forget that the Ducks lost 21-15 to a less-than-formidable Pacific team Sept. 3. The Tigers are 0-5 since their victory at Autzen. And recall that Oregon's defense was on automatic pilot Oct. 1 as San Jose State chewed up the Ducks, 44-34.

Of course, I'd be the first to agree that Oregon is a completely different team after silencing Houston and its option game 15-14, and out-showboating the Bears. The defense, too, can hold its head high after stopping Gale Gilbert and the Bears dead in their tracks. Take away the one-man show of Ron Rivera, and Oregon beats Cal by a bigger margin than 24-17.

That isn't to say the Ducks are dominant. Even offensive coordinator Bob Toledo cautioned that his club is "by no means a great team."

Besides, Brooks might agree that it is better for his players to forget about the Rose Bowl and remember playing well against Washington, UCLA and Arizona.

Certainly, Brooks can point to the 1981 season, when he stamped Oregon a valid contender for a Rose Bowl berth. Instead, the Ducks went 2-9. If you like, refer to '81 as "The Days of Whine and Roses" — Brooks predicted Oregon would vie for the roses, and when they didn't, Duck fans whined.

All in all, though, I confess I like hearing Rose Bowl talk. The Ducks have been playing well, the offense is beginning to jell, the defense knows its role, and... The disease is spreading faster than I thought.

Cagers receive two new players

From Associated Press reports

Two new athletes have enrolled at the University of Oregon and will play on the Ducks' basketball team, Oregon coach Don Monson said Monday.

He said the new players are David Girley, a freshman from Poly High School in Long Beach, Calif., and Jeff Stevens from Philomath High School.

Girley, a 5-foot-10 point guard, was an honorable mention on the all-city team in Long Beach. He averaged 11 points and 4 assists per game in his senior year.

The 5-10 Girley will join 6-1 sophomore Donald Dutton, 6-4 senior Gary Gatewood, 6-6 Bryan Trendell and 6-3 Greg Bell in Oregon's backcourt.

Gatewood, also from Los Angeles, and Dutton saw the majority of the playing time for the Ducks last year.

Stevens, a 6-foot-9 forward-center, was an all-state Class AA player. He will combine with 6-7 David Brantley, 6-7 Mike Matheson and 6-6 redshirt freshman Kenny Sprague at forward spots.

One of Oregon's departed players, 6-8 Jerry Adams, was expected by Monson to start at a power forward and spell 7-0 Blair Rasmussen at center.

But when Adams and 6-8 Kenny Thompson left Oregon because of academic problems, Monson was left with no players taller than Brantley and Matheson. Undoubtedly, he will look to Stevens as relief help for all-Pac-10 selection Rasmussen.

Girley will provide Monson with additional backcourt quickness, something he coveted during his coaching reign with the University of Idaho.

Remember quiz

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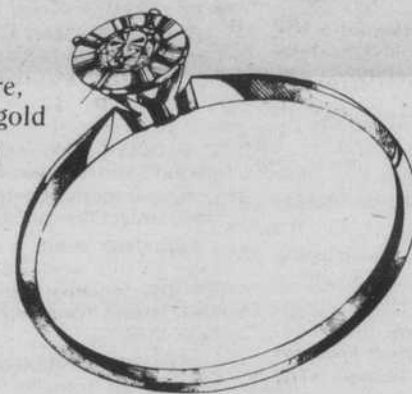
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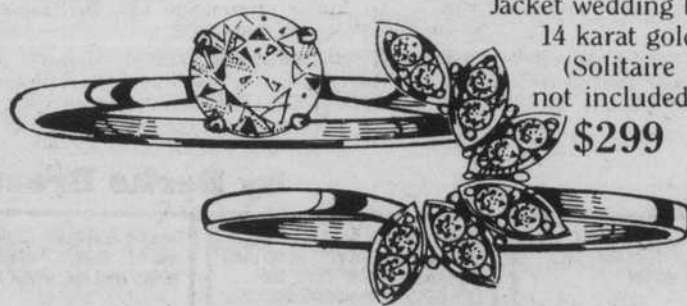
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