

Sports

Ex-Oregon QB remains unsigned, awaits action

By Aaron Knox
Of the Emerald

Former Oregon quarterback Chris Miller entered the ninth day of his holdout with the Atlanta Falcons today no closer to signing a contract than on the day it officially began.

Miller was the top choice of the Falcons in this year's NFL draft, and the 13th player selected overall. Only two players (Tampa Bay quarterback Vinnie Testaverde and Detroit defensive end Reggie Rogers) selected ahead of Miller have

signed to date. The Falcons have inked only seven of their 11 1987 draft choices to contracts, and nine veterans also remain unsigned.

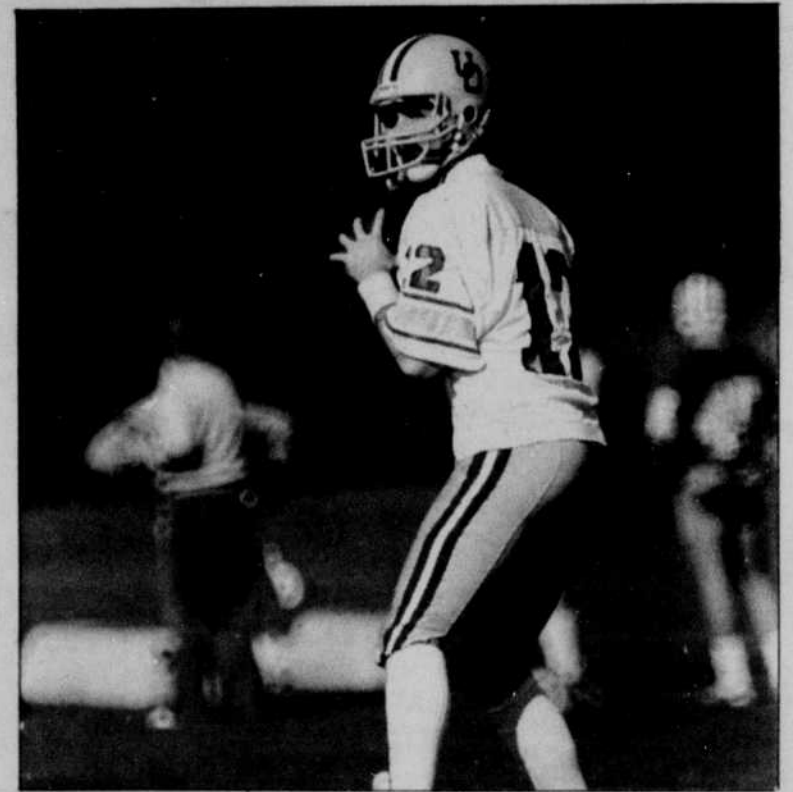
Of the four quarterbacks selected in the first round, only Testaverde has come to terms with his team. Kelly Stouffer was the sixth pick overall, by the St. Louis Cardinals, and University of Michigan graduate Jim Harbaugh was tabbed by the Chicago Bears.

The domino theory of draft choice signings places a lot of emphasis on what other players of similar draft positions and skills sign for. Therefore, movement on Miller's contract negotiations is largely incumbent upon the progress between the Cardinals and Stouffer as well as the draft choices immediately preceding Miller.

"It's basically a waiting game now," Miller said in a wire service interview last Thursday. "It's frustrating but it's a part of it."

Miller reportedly is asking for around \$2.5 million over 4 years. The Falcons first countered with an offer of about \$1.5 million, which they reportedly increased last week to \$1.75 million.

The Falcons opened training camp for rookies and free agents



File photo

Chris Miller, who threw his way into the University record book, is still in negotiations with the Atlanta Falcons, who drafted him in the first round of the NFL draft.

on July 26. Veterans joined the squad on July 30 and began working out on Saturday. Atlanta opens its preseason schedule Aug. 15.

While Miller's holdout is still in its earliest stages, Atlanta head coach Marion Campbell said last Wednesday that his absence was already beginning to hurt him. "Whether you're a

rookie or not, it's harmful to miss camp. It will be costly," Campbell said in wire service report.

Miller and his agent, Frank Bauer, have remained far apart from their negotiations with the Falcons since Atlanta made Miller the third of four quarterbacks chosen in the first round of the annual NFL draft.

Hayward gets new face

By Aaron Knox
Of the Emerald

Workers began applying the textured overcoat to the new Pro-Turf surface on Stevenson Track on Monday as the Hayward Field renovation project moved closer to completion of the first of five construction phases in time for the U.S. Masters Track and Field Championships, which begin Aug. 14.

Herb Yamanaka, Athletic Department senior special assistant who has oversight authority for the entire project, said Monday that the one-week cushion built into the track resurfacing schedule has been exhausted, and University officials are crossing their fingers in hope the track is ready in time for the Masters meet.

Yamanaka said the texturing of the track, which involves blowing pebble-faced polyurethane over the Pro-Turf foundation, should continue through Thursday. Workers began on the infield surfaces Monday and will then move to the track itself, hopefully today.

As soon as the textured coating dries, painters will begin marking the lanes and boundaries, according to Yamanaka. "If the painters start by Sunday, we can be done by Thursday," Yamanaka estimated.

That is just one day before the scheduled start of the Masters meet, which doesn't leave much margin for error. "We are doing everything in our power to try to get this finished in time," Yamanaka said.

The resurfacing of Stevenson Track is the first stage of the projected five-phase Hayward Field renovation project. Other goals include upgrading the electrical, fire prevention and restroom facilities of the East grandstand, improving the jogging paths around the field, and slightly renovating the West grandstand.

The first phase, which is near completion, has been paid for up front, according to Yamanaka. Work on the East grandstand will not begin until September, when the University is authorized by the state to sell \$1 million in revenue bonds to finance the project.

The actual amount to be financed depends on the projected costs which are currently being bid, and on the amount the University feels able to repay.

"We are limited to borrowing what we honestly feel we can pay back," Yamanaka said. He called the fundraising process "slow and tedious", but added that the other phases of the renovation would not interfere with use of the facility.

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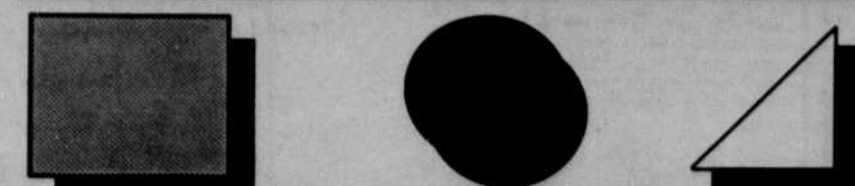
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