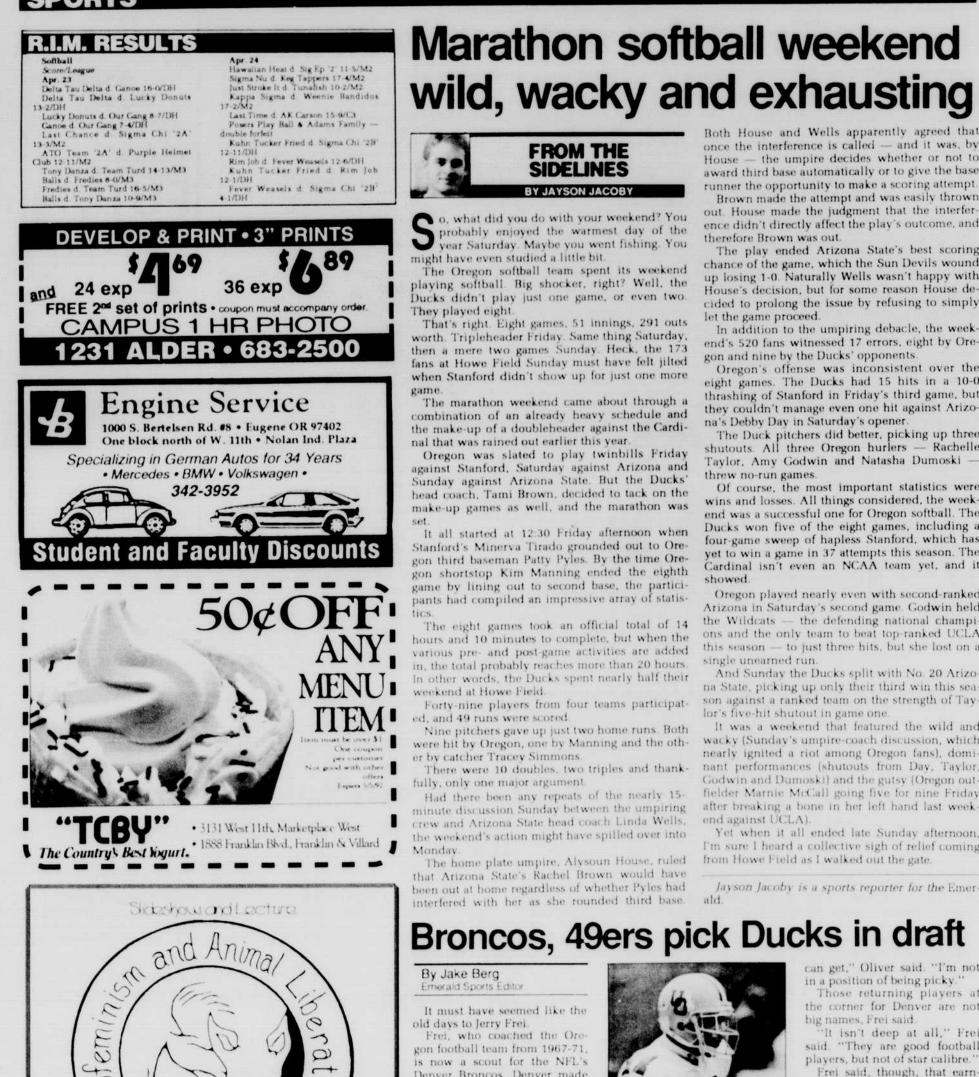
SPORTS



Both House and Wells apparently agreed that once the interference is called - and it was, by House - the umpire decides whether or not to award third base automatically or to give the base

Brown made the attempt and was easily thrown out. House made the judgment that the interference didn't directly affect the play's outcome, and therefore Brown was out.

The play ended Arizona State's best scoring chance of the game, which the Sun Devils wound up losing 1-0. Naturally Wells wasn't happy with House's decision, but for some reason House decided to prolong the issue by refusing to simply let the game proceed.

In addition to the umpiring debacle, the weekend's 520 fans witnessed 17 errors, eight by Oregon and nine by the Ducks' opponents.

Oregon's offense was inconsistent over the eight games. The Ducks had 15 hits in a 10-0 thrashing of Stanford in Friday's third game, but they couldn't manage even one hit against Arizona's Debby Day in Saturday's opener.

The Duck pitchers did better, picking up three shutouts. All three Oregon hurlers - Rachelle Taylor, Amy Godwin and Natasha Dumoski threw no-run games.

Of course, the most important statistics were wins and losses. All things considered, the weekend was a successful one for Oregon softball. The Ducks won five of the eight games, including a four-game sweep of hapless Stanford, which has yet to win a game in 37 attempts this season. The Cardinal isn't even an NCAA team yet, and it

Oregon played nearly even with second-ranked Arizona in Saturday's second game. Godwin held the Wildcats - the defending national champions and the only team to beat top-ranked UCLA this season - to just three hits, but she lost on a single unearned run.

And Sunday the Ducks split with No. 20 Arizona State, picking up only their third win this season against a ranked team on the strength of Taylor's five-hit shutout in game one.

It was a weekend that featured the wild and wacky (Sunday's umpire-coach discussion, which nearly ignited a riot among Oregon fans), dominant performances (shutouts from Day, Taylor, Godwin and Dumoski) and the gutsy (Oregon outfielder Marnie McCall going five for nine Friday after breaking a bone in her left hand last weekend against UCLA).

Yet when it all ended late Sunday afternoon, I'm sure I heard a collective sigh of relief coming from Howe Field as I walked out the gate.

Jayson Jacoby is a sports reporter for the Emer-

Broncos, 49ers pick Ducks in draft

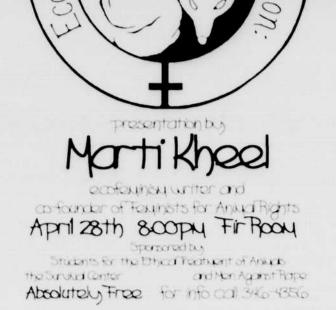
Denver Broncos. Denver made former Duck Muhammad Oliver a ninth-round draft pick



can get," Oliver said. "I'm not in a position of being picky."

Those returning players at the corner for Denver are not big names, Frei said.

'It isn't deep at all," Frei said. "They are good football players, but not of star calibre." Frei said, though, that earning a spot on the team depended more on the player's skills rather than other play



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Monday in the NFL's annual college draft.

Frei scouted Oliver last fall and said the cornerback's abilities were the biggest factor in making him the 249th player chosen. The Duck senior is a decathlete for the Oregon track and field team

"Number one is that we like his athletic skills," Frei said. 'I'm looking forward to an Oregon player coming here."

Another Duck going places is Matt LaBounty. The San Francisco 49ers made the former Oregon defensive end the 327th pick overall, near the end of the 336-player, 12-round draft.

The Broncos are looking for Oliver to compete at the cornerback position, where nothing is locked up as far as starters go,

Muhammad Oliver

Frei said.

"I think in professional football, the positions are open every year," Frei said. "There are certainly no promises, but it's like, 'Here is the opportuni-IV.

And a chance is all that Oliver is looking for, he said last week

"I'll basically take whatever I

"It's not what they are," Frei said, "it's what you are."

LaBounty said last week he figured his chances of getting drafted were small.

Billy Wilson, the 49ers scout who looked at Oregon last fall, said he liked LaBounty's skills, but questioned the lineman's moderate 6-foot-4, 260-pound frame. But Wilson said last week that size would not be as much of a factor as talent.

'He's a tough, hard-nosed kid," Wilson said.

LaBounty, who had been running in case he was drafted, didn't think he had much of a shot at getting picked, he said last week

"I just wish for the best," LaBounty had said.