

QB fulfilling potential for USC

By Steve Mims
Oregon Daily Emerald

When USC junior quarterback Rob Johnson left El Toro High School in California in 1991, he had to make the type of choices most teenagers only dream about.

Johnson declined an offer to play for the Minnesota Twins, who drafted him in the 16th round of the major league draft as a pitcher, spurned college basketball recruiters who came knocking after his junior year and instead packed his bags to play for the Trojans.

One look at Johnson's high school statistics and it is easy to see why so many different scouts and recruiters were after him. Johnson announced after his junior year that he wanted to play football in college, thus turning away college basketball recruiters who were salivating over his 17.5-, 21.8- and 25-point per game averages during his final three years on the hardwood.

"After my junior year I said I wanted to play football," Johnson said. "Before that some schools, Stanford included, came to watch me play basketball."

Would Johnson ever wander over to USC basketball coach George Raveling's office to see if he could still play?

"No way," he answered. "I don't have the jumper anymore."

Johnson's baseball dreams took a little bit longer than the basketball one to die. Johnson played for the USC baseball team during the spring of 1992 before electing to give that up so he could concentrate on football.

Johnson always wanted to be a quarterback in high school, but that dream had to wait until Steve Stenstrom, the current Stanford quarterback, graduated in 1989.

While waiting for the quarterback job, Johnson decided to play wide receiver. All he did at that position was catch 65 balls for 1,260 yards and 12 touchdowns during his junior year in 1989. Recruiters came calling for him as a wide

receiver as well.

"I could have played wide receiver at some college," Johnson said. "But I wanted to play quarterback. I only played receiver because I thought I could help the team there."

When Johnson finally got the opportunity to play quarterback during his final season, he completed 68.3 passes for 2,788 yards and 29 touchdowns on his way to being named *Super Prep* first-team All-American.

Not bad for a guy who wasn't even the best quarterback in his family when he was growing up. That honor went to his brother Bret, who played for UCLA and Michigan State and now quarterbacks the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League. Rob's father, Bob, was his high school football coach and the man Johnson credits for making him the quarterback he is today.

"My dad has produced a lot of good quarterbacks," Johnson said. "He has started a lot of careers. Bret has helped me keep a good attitude, he sticks by me and helps me out."

This season has been a breakthrough year for Johnson, although his 1992 statistics of 2,118 yards and 12 touchdown passes weren't bad, either. This year Johnson has completed nearly 70 percent of his passes for 1,236 yards and 10 touchdowns, while having only two passes picked off. He currently ranks third in the Pacific-10 Conference and 14th in the country in passing efficiency.

Johnson credits new head coach John Robinson's offensive system for his improvement.

"The offense is a lot better this year," Johnson said. "It is more of a pro-style offense. Last year, I threw a lot down field, but this year we have more of a controlled passing game. Most people think of coach Robinson as a running coach, but he knows the passing game as well."

Johnson's favorite target this year has been wide receiver Johnny Morton, who has caught

Turn to **JOHNSON**, Page 7B

Ducks like state schools, fear dogs

By Scott Simonson
Oregon Daily Emerald

NOTE: The *Emerald* does not condone gambling of any sort. The following are merely reference points for use in discussion or in friendly wagers of negligible sums, the winnings from which would undoubtedly be donated to a favorite charity.

But if you were going to make a bet about how the Ducks will do this weekend, there are a few things you might like to know. Just call it a little friendly advice:

- If Oregon beats USC, don't say you expected it. The Ducks are 1-14-1 in their last 16 meetings with the Trojans. The last win against USC came in 1987.

- Don't take the Ducks over both Washington and Washington State. Oregon has only beaten the Huskies and Cougars in the same season five times in the last 30 years. Oregon never has defeated both opponents on the road in the same season. (It's a scheduling rarity for the Ducks to play both schools in Washington in the same year.)

- Flip a coin when the Ducks face a Pacific-10 Conference opponent. Oregon is 24-26 in its last 50 conference contests.

- Don't pick the Ducks to win more than five or less than three conference games. Oregon has never had six conference wins with Rich Brooks as head coach. The Ducks have won less than three Pac-10 games only once in the past 10 years.

- Just because they're nicknamed the Ducks doesn't mean they like the rain. From 1990 to 1992, Oregon had nine wins in games where the conditions were reported as overcast, partly cloudy, cloudy or rain. They

also had nine wins when the weather was sunny, partly sunny or clear.

- Home really is sweet home. Oregon is 22-8 in their last 30 home games, compared with 13-17 in their last 30 contests away from Autzen Stadium.

- Oregon is great against states. The Ducks are 22-8 in their past 30 meetings with Oregon State, Arizona State or similarly named state universities. Oregon is 13-17 in their last 30 meetings against universities without "state" in their names.

- Don't ignore the *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom* theory. Oregon is 13-17 in its last 30 games against schools whose mascots are bears, large dogs, pretty big cats or other animals

higher than ducks on the food chain. Results were unavailable for games against teams with wimpy nicknames like Rainbows and Cardinal.

- Watch the rushing stats. Since 1988, Oregon is 12-1 in games when the Ducks rush for at least 200 yards in game. (The single loss came under exceptional circumstances in 1993 to an opponent from California whose name need not be mentioned.)

In the same period of time, Oregon is 2-7 when its opponent accumulates at least 200 yards rushing in a game.

- Don't be impressed by big

Turn to **STATS**, Page 7B

ORDERS TO GO

PHONE 343-8888

歡迎光臨

HOUSE OF CHEN

正宗中菜



RESTAURANT

Tues.-Fri. 11:30am-10:00pm
Sat.-Mon. 4:00pm-10:00pm

1861 Franklin Blvd.
Eugene, Oregon

**HOT EATS,
COOL TREATS!**
brazier

343-7512 706 E. 13TH

Imported & Domestic Wine & Beer
Large Variety of International Foods
Over 150 domestic & imported cheeses
Fresh local & organic produce in season
Dried fruits, nuts & natural foods in bulk
Vitamins & supplements at low prices
Cookbooks, healthbooks & fine literature

OPEN Mon.-Sat. 9-8
Sundays 10-5

Located on the corner of 11th & Olive

THE KIVA
342-8666
125 W. 11th Avenue
EUGENE'S DOWNTOWN NATURAL FOOD STORE SINCE 1970

THE GRAPEVINE
Wine Bar & Cafe

“★★, Excellent” — Northwest Best Places

- ☛ Serving Dinner 7 Days a Week
- ☛ Lunch Sunday-Friday; Sunday Brunch
- ☛ Mediterranean and West Coast Cuisine
- ☛ Fine Wines by the Glass, 1/2 Glass and Taste
- ☛ Tapas and Other Regional Appetizers
- ☛ Gourmet Desserts
- ☛ Non-Smoking Environment

15% discount for UO students, faculty, and staff with valid UO ID through November

30 East Broadway (on the mall) • 686-5622