

Sometimes even the can't-miss kids can miss

Beware my readers, during the next three weeks you will hear more about 40-yard dash times, SuperPrep rankings, and maybe even mysterious envelopes filled with hundred dollar bills.

That's right, it's football

recruiting season once again, the unofficial kickoff for the 1994 football season. Feb. 2 is the first day high school seniors can officially sign on with a school, but word is already out on those who have "verbally committed" to colleges.

(Switching sports for a minute, here are some quick clarifications for Oregon fans: "Verbally committed" describes what point guard Damon Stoudamire did at Oregon before compiling 159 assists for Arizona last year. "Signing a letter of intent" is what point guard Johnnie Reece did at Oregon before compiling 156 assists in two years.)

Over the next few weeks you will hear quotes from high school coaches, recruiters and those who call themselves "experts" in the field. Almost every student who signs a Division I scholarship this year will be "a can't-miss prospect" with "a great upside to him" who "reminds me a lot of John Elway" and is "the kind of kid who comes around once every 10 years."

The fact is that recruiting is an inexact science that deals with the big bodies and fragile mental states of 17- and 18-year-old

kids. Most of these kids have matured quicker than those around them and, as a result, dominated the high school leagues they played in. Don't get me wrong, they have talent as well, but it often looks greater than it is on the high school level.

Oregon's recruiting classes are usually comprised of about 20 players. Of these players, only a little more than half of them will end up starting during their career at Oregon. About another one-fourth of them will see some action in reserve, and hopefully stick around long enough to get a degree. As for the rest, they will leave the program for academic or disciplinary reasons, homesickness or just maybe to enter the NFL draft.

Yet, come Feb. 2, the coaches will be bragging about the superstar they recruited and the media will project his can't-miss future, while the kid is sitting in

his high school algebra class. At Oregon this year, the early favorite for that kid is Matt Belden, a punter/kicker who has reportedly "verbally committed" to the Ducks.

Belden is being talked about as the next Tommy Thompson, because he kicked a few long field goals in high school and had a nice punting average. The thing we forget is that these kids put up good numbers in front of 1,000 friends and family at the local high school. What happens when these kids have to make the same kick in front of 70,000 fans at Husky Stadium to win the game?

Who knows, maybe he's in the group that makes it, but maybe he isn't. The point is his high school tapes and statistics won't tell you the answer, only his play on the field will.

Steve Mims is sports editor of the Emerald.

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Women learning Pac-10 lessons

By Scott Simonson
Oregon Daily Emerald

The schedule says the league season began Jan. 6, but it was last Thursday that first-year coach Jody Runge discovered how the Pacific-10 Conference plays basketball.

It was a lesson learned the hard way. The Oregon women's basketball team received an 86-68 pounding from an Oregon State team that was more physical and more aggressive defensively. While the Beavers' style of play forced 27 turnovers and rattled the Ducks, it didn't seem to both-

er the referees.

"We weren't able to compensate for the physical game they were allowing us to play and Oregon State was," Runge said. "They played pressure defense all over the floor and fouled the daylight out of us."

"I've always heard that's the way the Pac-10 is. It wasn't my experience in the first two games. We weren't prepared to apply the same kind of (defensive) pressure they were. We played well for 30 minutes. We were within four, then they made a run at us, and we couldn't get a call or an opportunity to stop the momentum," she said.

Runge expects more of the same as Oregon, 1-2 in the Pac-10 and 7-5 overall, prepares for road games against Washington State, 1-3 and 6-7, on Thursday and against Washington, 11-2 and

3-1, on Saturday.

Washington is ranked 16th in the nation this week. The Huskies have a reputation for playing even tougher defense than Oregon State.

"Washington is just a very talented, athletic team. It can apply defensive pressure for 37 minutes and it doesn't waver," Runge said. "They rely on turnovers for a lot of their point production, not from coming down and running an offense."

Runge blamed herself for Oregon's inability to adjust to a more physical style of play against Oregon State and said that the team has been working on being more aggressive at both ends of the floor. She added that the team has been working in practice on creating defensive pressure as well as handling pressure when on offense.

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7:00 p.m. Worship Services open to all,
Monday night 6:00-7:50 p.m. and Thursday
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Newman Center

1850 Emerald, 343-7021. Wednesday
Student Mass 9:00 p.m. followed by a
social. Mass schedule: Saturdays 5:00 p.m.;
Sundays 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 7:30 p.m. &
10:00 p.m.; and daily 5:15 p.m.

Chi Alpha Christian Fellowship

Suite 5, EMU, 346-0910. Meetings, Monday
night 7:00-8:30 p.m. in Esslinger Hall, room 107.

International Student Christian Fellowship

1332 Kincaid, 345-5848. Wednesday
luncheon 11:30-1:30 p.m. Friday Fellowship
7:00 p.m.

Restoration Campus Ministry

2880 University St., 726-5480. Bible
Roundtables Thursday at 12:00 p.m. & Bible
study Monday at 7:00 p.m. in the EMU
Century Rooms. Praise Gathering Tuesdays
at 8:00 p.m. at 809 E. 11th. Exploring world
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Christian Science

344-0924. Meetings held Fridays at 1:00
p.m. in the EMU, check room listings.
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Muslim Student Association

202 EMU, 346-3798. Friday 4:30-5:30 p.m.
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