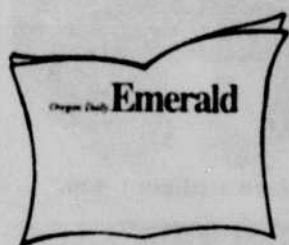


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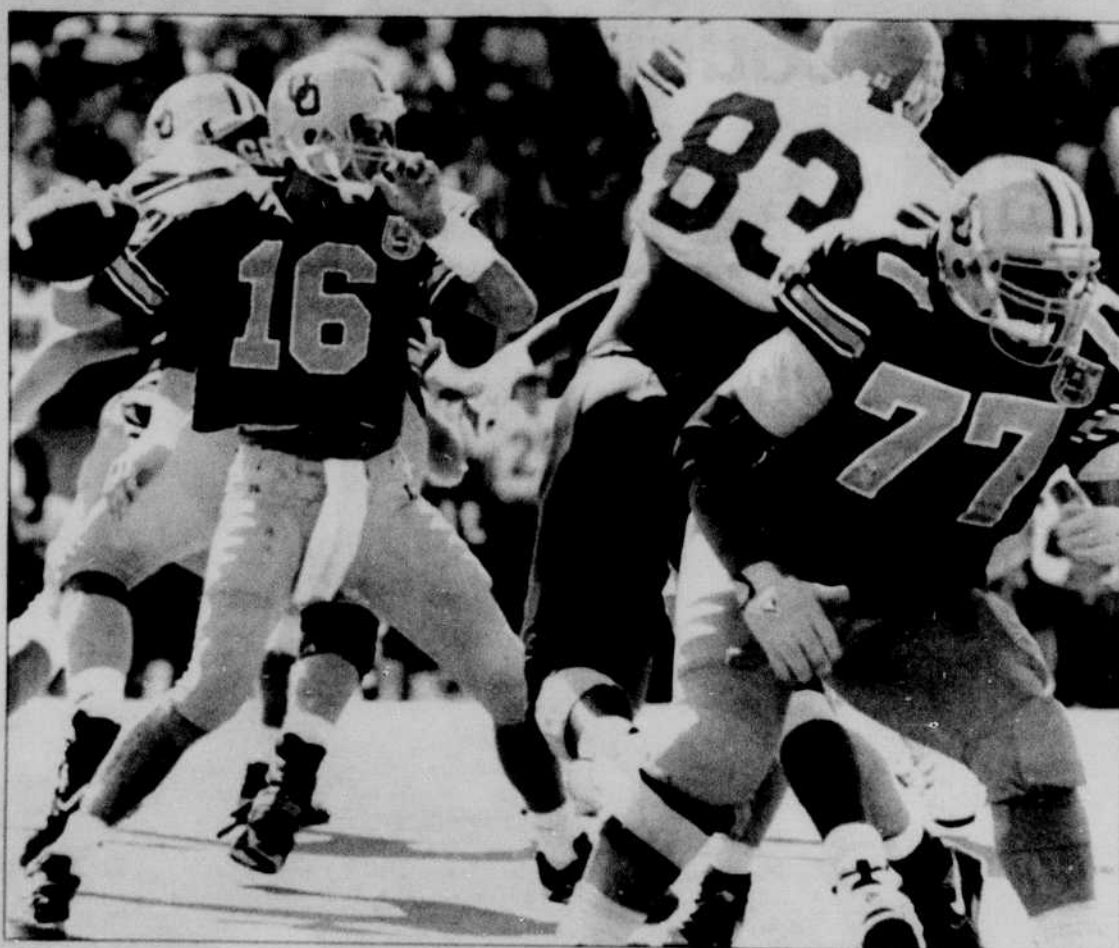
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## SPORTS EXTRA FOOTBALL



MICHAEL SHINDLER/ Emerald

Quarterback Danny O'Neil is back at the helm of the Oregon offense that looks to get back on track and make amends for last year's devastating loss to California.

## Ducks haven't forgotten Cal loss

Chris Metz  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Every loss is damaging to a college football coach and his team, but perhaps no single game in recent memory has been more devastating to the Oregon Ducks than last season's 42-41 shocking loss to the California Golden Bears.

In what turned out to be the largest comeback in Pacific-10 history and the third-greatest comeback in NCAA history, the Bears rallied back from a 30-0 first-half deficit to down the stunned Ducks and set the tone for the rest of their season — a season that would see them only win two of their last seven games.

"After Cal's game last year, we just weren't the same team," sophomore tight end Josh Wilcox said, "so it kind of fires me up to try to go out and do the same thing to them."

The Ducks entered last year's contest with Cal after winning all three of their non-conference games, and a win over the heavily-favored Bears would have made the Ducks 4-0 with a possible national ranking in the works. The loss not only gave the Ducks their first Pac-10 loss, but it also set the tone for the remainder of a season that, at halftime in Berkeley, looked to be right on track. The Ducks never managed to regroup after the Cal loss and finished with a 5-6 record, a statistical marker of a game, and a season, that quite possibly slipped away with Dave Barr's two-point conversion toss to Mike Caldwell.

"It, in a sense, was the key to our unsuccessful year last year," senior quarterback Danny O'Neil said. "After that we never bounced back."

"Certainly in the off season it was a reminder to us, as it has been this week, about how we had a huge lead . . . and lost the game," Brooks said.

The bowl talk was that was so prevalent before and during the game, took a nose dive with the worst yet to come in a season that had so much potential.

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Everybody knows who we're playing and what happened last year.

— Danny O'Neil  
Quarterback

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After Cal's game last year, we just weren't the same team, so it kind of fires me up to try to go out and do the same thing to them.

— Josh Wilcox  
Tight end

This year's stakes are just as high as the Ducks and Bears are truly at turning points in their sometimes confusing seasons. California dropped its first two games in 1994 before coming up with three-straight wins, including a 2-0 Pac-10 mark. And with conference powers Washington and Arizona remaining on the slate for the Ducks, revenge or no revenge, the players know it's time to win if the Ducks have any aspirations of making it to a bowl game in 1994.

"It's a big game for this year alone," O'Neil said. "We're at a pivotal point of our season."

No one needs to remind Brooks about last year's loss at the hands of the Bears. The Ducks amassed an amazing 614 yards in total offense, including scores on their first five possessions — one of the finest offensive days in Duck history. The rigorous Pac-10 schedule rarely allows a team that squanders such an opportunity the chance to recover and remain at the top of conference, something that Brooks is well aware of this season also.

"If we want to stay in the race

and be a factor in the upper-division of the Pac-10," Brooks said, "then this is a very important game."

The game has taken on an interesting flair after the injury to Cal quarterback Dave Barr and several key injuries to the Ducks, who have yet to successfully field an injury-free team. It's hard to gauge how much the absence of Barr will affect the Bears as backup Kerry McGonigal played well in relief of Barr last week, but a lack of experience will definitely put McGonigal to the test.

O'Neil returns as Oregon's starter after missing the USC game two weeks ago, and not operating at 100 percent in a relief appearance for sophomore Tony Graziani, who went down with an ankle injury early in last week's game with Washington State.

O'Neil still feels the frustration of last year's contest that saw the quarterback throw for 333 yards and three touchdowns, all for naught.

"Everybody knows who we're playing and what happened last year," O'Neil said.