

Injured Ducks play must-win game

■ **PREVIEW:** Oregon looks to get back on the winning track Saturday with a non-conference game against Pacific

By **Andrea DeYoung**
Sports Reporter

After two weeks off, the Ducks return to the field this Saturday to face Pacific at Autzen Stadium.

The two teams have not played each other since 1984 when Oregon won 30-14. The overall series is tied at three games apiece.

The Tigers come in with a record of 1-3, their one win coming from a 23-10 victory over Oregon State. They also played Arizona and Nebraska this season, and because of the Tigers' experience Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti did not want to categorize this game as an easy win.

"They played great football teams, so I don't think they're going to look at us as any different challenge," Bellotti said.

Oregon looked to use their bye to recuperate from many injuries suffered in its loss to Stanford on September 23. Despite this time off, many of the team's key players will not be playing against the Tigers.

For Gang Green, senior defensive end Troy Bailey and sophomore strong safety Jaiy Figueras are injured. Sophomore fullback Aaron Jelks and junior center Mark Gregg are both out, causing problems for the offense. Bellotti was disappointed with all of the injuries.

"We didn't get healthy as I hoped we would over the bye,"

Bellotti stated.

The loss against Stanford served as a wake-up call for the team. The Ducks are defending their Pac-10 championship, but Bellotti knows that the team must stay focused in order to play well.

"Practice-wise, I think that there has been renewed commitment to the purpose of this season, which is to defend the conference championship," Bellotti said.

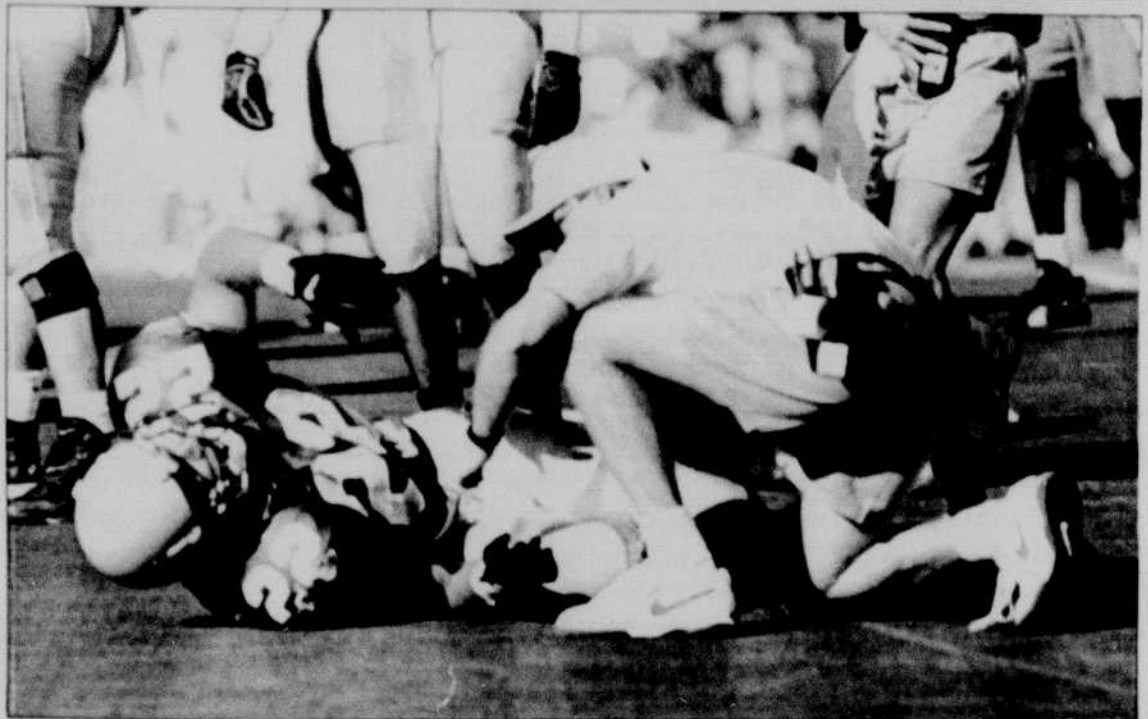
Oregon spent its week off working on specific areas that they are concerned about, including special teams. The Ducks also spent one day looking toward the future by examining redshirt freshmen and other squad players.

This week, though, the focus was on beating the Tigers. According to Bellotti, the way to do this is for the team to "stay hungry and respect your opponent."

Oregon realizes that turnovers have been a major factor to all of the close scores in the games they have played. Not only do the Ducks want to avoid giving up fumbles and interceptions, they also are looking to create more turnovers for their offense to take advantage of. In practice, they worked on the second and third tacklers stripping the ball in the pile and also on stealing the ball from the quarterback. If they can do this, Bellotti believes that the Ducks will have a good chance of winning the game.

When the Tigers take the field on Saturday, Oregon will be focusing on a few key Pacific players. Senior running back Joe

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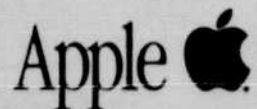
The Ducks will have to play Pacific on Saturday without several key players, including Jaiy Figueras, who broke his leg during the Stanford game.

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