

# CIVIL WAR

OREGON VS OREGON STATE

## Gang Green lives up to its name

■ **DEFENSE:** The unit bent but never broke even though injuries were plentiful during the season

By Chris Stewart  
Sports Reporter

With the departure of defensive coordinator Nick Aliotti, the man who coined the phrase Gang Green, many people wondered what this year's defense would be like. New defensive coordinator Charlie Waters and his defensive players have been just as impressive as their predecessors.

Early last season the Ducks had struggled defensively, losing to Hawaii and Utah. It wasn't until Oregon defeated Iowa and Southern Cal with great defensive performances in the fourth and fifth weeks of the season that Gang Green really came to life. After those games Gang Green spread like the disease it was named after.

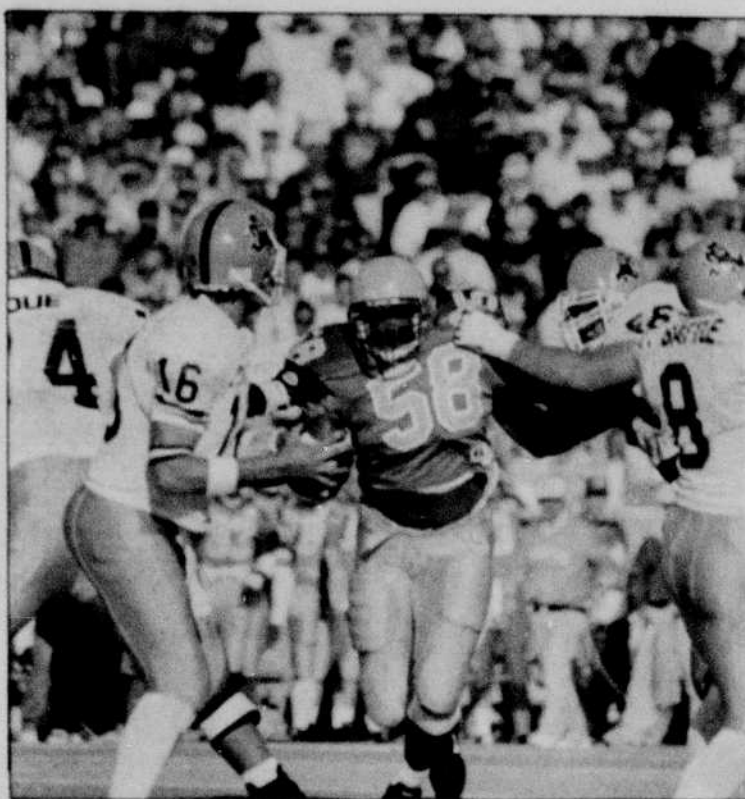
This year's defensive unit didn't take much time to develop. In fact, it was in the home opener against Illinois when the defense made its first big play. Sophomore strong safety Jaiya Figueras stepped up and not only forced but recovered a fumble for the game-winning touchdown. Even though it was Figueras' actions on the field that made the play, credit must be given to Waters for making the right call at the right time.

One of the many great team efforts came on the road in the Ducks Pacific-10 Conference opener against UCLA. With Oregon hanging onto a 38-31 lead with only seconds left to play in the game, the defense had to rise to the challenge again. And they did so with a devastating hit on Bruins' star running back Karim Abdul-Jabbar that denied him of the end zone and UCLA of any chance to win the game as time ran out.

After a frustrating loss to Stanford in which turnovers and special teams errors kept the Ducks defense with its back to the goal line for most of the game, the defense went through an injury plagued mid-season stretch in which some new faces were forced into the spotlight.

Players such as Ronnie Gipson and Derrick Barnes may not have done the scoring, but their solid play and their ability to bring their game up another level helped keep Gang Green alive and also added depth to the defense.

During the stretch the defense played somewhat similar to last year. Kenny Wheaton had a dazzling interception return for a touchdown against Pacific in a game which the visiting Tigers didn't even score until the final minutes against an Oregon



MAFIK McTYRE/Emerald

Oregon outside linebacker Derrick Barnes has been one of the key elements this year in the success of the Ducks' Gang Green defense.

Turn to DEFENSE, Page 13B

## Medical redshirt being pursued for Belden

By Andrea DeYoung  
Sports Reporter

It has been a frustrating season for Matt Belden. Actually, it hasn't been much of a season for the sophomore kicker — he hasn't played since pulling a muscle in his kicking leg the Ducks' first game this season.

Belden was expected to be out a couple of weeks. According to head coach Mike Bellotti, everyone can stop waiting — Belden isn't returning.

"He tried to kick again last week and was not able to," Bellotti said. "The muscle has taken a lot longer to heal, unfortunately. We obviously thought at some point he'd be back. We thought

by midseason and it just never responded. I think it's going to take a longer period of time to completely heal."

Because Belden has only participated in five plays this season, Oregon is pursuing a medical redshirt for him. This would give Belden three more years of eligibility, technically making next year his sophomore season. There is a good chance that he will be granted the redshirt because he did not redshirt his freshman season and because he has played so little this year.

Now that there is no question about Belden coming back, he will have the off-season to let the muscle heal.

## Options: Cotton bowl could be in Ducks' future

■ **Continued from Page 10B**

It is highly unlikely that (the Cotton Bowl) will invite the WAC champion because they don't want a team to have two losses. Oregon and Washington would be higher ranked, any way."

If Oregon finishes second in the league and doesn't get selected to go to the Cotton Bowl, then automatically the Ducks would be packing their bags for the Holiday Bowl to play the third place Big 8 team. To make matters even more complicated, the WAC champion is assured a spot in either the Cotton or Holiday Bowl.

"We would love to have Washington or Oregon represent the Pac-10," said John Romero, Director of Ticket Information at the Holiday Bowl. "Under our agreement with the Cotton Bowl, we have to wait until they pick their teams before we can pick ours. Naturally we would like to have the team with the most drawing power."

But according to a source close to the Holiday Bowl, the WAC Champion — probably BYU if they win on Saturday — will most likely end up at the Holiday Bowl, paving the way for a Pac-

10 team to go to Dallas.

If Oregon ends up third in the Pac-10, the Ducks would travel to El Paso to play the fifth place Big Ten finisher in the Sun Bowl (either Penn State or Wisconsin). This is the only Bowl scenario that is not affected by the Cotton Bowl's decision.

It is also possible that the Ducks could sink to fourth in the Pac-10 with a loss to the Beavers and wins by Washington and Stanford. If this occurs, Oregon would find themselves in Hawaii on Christmas morning in the Aloha Bowl. If the season ended right now, the Big 8 representative (number 5 or 6 in conference standings) would fight it out with Stanford.

The worst case scenario would be if Ducks loose to Oregon State with Washington, Stanford and Arizona State winning. If this happens, Oregon would drop to fifth place in the Pac-10 by virtue of the tie breaking advantages the Cardinal and Sun Devils hold over the Ducks. If this occurs, Oregon would probably end up in the Freedom or Independence Bowls against other at-large teams.



## DESIGNATED DRIVERS ARE THE LIFE OF THE PARTY.

Every 30 minutes a person in the U.S. dies as a result of an alcohol-related crash. Project Eugene is dedicated to fighting drunken driving and illegal use of alcohol by minors. We need your help. When you go out to celebrate, designate a non-drinking driver. Several bars and restaurants offer special incentives for designated drivers.

These establishments are making a difference by supporting designated drivers.

Ambrosia Restaurant & Bar  
CJ's A Top the Hilton  
Conletti's Lounge - Shilo Inn (Gateway)  
The Cooler  
El Torito  
The Embers  
Excelsior Cafe  
Field's Brew Pub & Restaurant  
G. Willicker's  
Good Times Cafe  
Great Alaskan Bush Company  
Guido's  
Holiday Inn - Coburg Rd.  
The Hungry Duck  
Jiggles Tavern

Jo Fedengo's Cafe & Bar  
Joggers Sports Bar & Grill  
John Henry's  
Kowloon & Scandal  
Marie Callenders Restaurant  
The Mill Camp  
Mona Lizza  
North Bank Restaurant  
Old Pad Tavern  
Oregon Electric Station  
Original Joe's  
Papa's Pizza - Eugene locations  
Perry's on Pearl  
Piccolo Eurobistro - Downtown Athletic Club  
Red Lion Inn (Eugene and Springfield)  
Red Robin

Red Rooster  
Relief Pitcher  
Rennie's Landing  
Rock-n-Rodeo  
Senior Frogs  
Senorita Frogs  
Shoy's of Eugene  
Sixth Street Grill  
Spencers  
Steelhead Brewery & Cafe  
Stuart Anderson's Black Angus  
Taylors College Side Inn  
Treehouse Restaurant & Bistro  
McCallums Bar & Bistro  
Valley River Inn Sweetwaters  
West Bros. Bar-B-Que

Help us fill this box and save lives. We would like your establishment to participate.

The designated driver program is endorsed by Premier Distributors, the Eugene Department of Public Safety, Oregon Restaurant Association, and the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.

513765001

PROJECT EUGENE:  
A CENTURY COUNCIL COALITION

Supported by Concerned Distillers,  
Brewers, Vintners & Wholesalers

345 Mill St., Suite 100-B, Eugene, OR 97401  
(503) 345-0076