

Halverson: Some NFL highlights come from where you least expect it

agents it will not have enough money under the salary cap because every decent player's salary is too high. It has been proven (with the Bulls of the past) that the one superstar system doesn't work. Premium NBA players will either have to take a cut in pay to play with a good team or just suffer with perpetual losing seasons.

The National Hockey League is up and coming, but it will take a lot more exposure before it attains a level that the other three major professional sports have reached at one point or another. The NHL didn't learn anything from the baseball strike and almost careened down the same path of the suicidal strike with a player lockout, but pulled things out in the last minute to salvage a nearly full season. Last year's NHL playoffs did a lot to bolster the ability of hockey to capture an American audience's attention, but unless you're a die-hard fan there isn't the name recognition of hockey stars like that of the other three sport's stars.

That leaves the NFL with a big responsibility that it is handling wonderfully so far. Pick up fans where other sports are slacking.

In the past five or six seasons, the NFL has been mediocre at best in providing excitement due to the San Francisco-Dallas rivalry, mainly because both are NFC juggernauts. Granted, those teams are still going to compete for the Super Bowl this season, but their dominating presence over the rest of the league is not so dominating this season. Teams such as Green Bay, Minnesota, and Washington in the NFC and Denver, Indianapolis and Buffalo in the AFC have only one loss after the sixth week of

play. Who would have guessed?

The sixth week of play was one of the better weeks in recent memory. Seven out of eleven games were decided by eight points or less, including two in overtime.

Unknown players were coming out of the woodwork, making big-time plays. Joe Aska led Oakland in rushing with 136 yards and a touchdown, and Jamal Anderson almost single-handedly brought Atlanta back from a 28-point deficit to make it close against Detroit. Anderson rushed for 103 yards on 16 carries and made the Lions' defense look like a bunch of girl scouts. Buffalo's back-up quarterback, Todd Collins, led the Bills to an overtime victory over Indianapolis, throwing for 309 yards and a touchdown. And the Seahawks second stringer, John Friesz, threw for 301 yards and three TDs in Seattle's upset of Miami.

Along with these emerging stars are the steadfast veterans that perform year in and year out. This week, Buffalo's Thurman Thomas became only the 11th player in history to rush for 10,000 yards.

Nick Lowry, one of the Jets' few bright spots, kicked his 373rd career field goal, tying Jan Stenerud's all-time field goal record.

This will be the first year that the Super Bowl will be totally up for grabs. Even the AFC delegate will have a legitimate chance of winning this year. Stick with your favorite teams (unless you're a Jets fan) and you will find yourself caught up in a January madness. Guaranteed.

Ryan Halverson is a sports reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald.

Oregon golf places fifth at Rolex Preview

WOMEN'S GOLF: Karen Bristow's 32nd-place finish leads all Oregon competitors

By Ryan Halverson
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's golf team held its ground against tough competition at the Rolex Fall Preview in Columbus, Ohio this past weekend.

The Ducks finished in fifth place overall, 25 shots behind top-rated Arizona, a big accomplishment considering the caliber of the rest of the field. The 19th-ranked Oregon team finished ahead of second-ranked San Jose State and fourth-ranked UCLA.

Oregon faced adverse conditions on the first day, playing in 34-degree weather and strong winds, but managed to stay in the hunt. Kylie Wilson shot a four-over par 76 to tie for sixth place individually, leading the Ducks to a tie for tenth place.

Anika Heuser and Paula Patterson led Oregon on a huge comeback in the second round. Heuser shot a tournament-best two-under par 70

and Patterson finished with the second-best round of the tournament just one shot behind. The team finished the second round with a 297, the lowest score of the tournament and moved into second place overall.

Patterson finished off the final round strong with an even-par 72, tying Janice Moodie of San Jose State for fourth place overall. Heuser, Wilson and the rest of the Ducks, Karen Bristow and Tara Keller, were off of the pace in the final round, all shooting in the mid-to-lower 80s, dropping the Ducks back into fifth place.

Bristow finished in a tie for 32nd place, Wilson tied for 33rd, Heuser finished in a tie for 40th and Keller tied for 58th overall.

Top-rated Arizona led in all three rounds of the tournament, finishing 15 shots ahead of Wake Forest for the victory.

Marisa Baena won the tournament with a three-over par 219, edging out Duke's Jenny Chuasiriporn by one stroke. The powerful Arizona team finished with four-of-their-five golfers in the top twenty to easily take the victory.

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