

Class of 1996 says good-bye

The 24 players were the most successful group in Oregon history

By Andrea De Young
Assistant Sports Editor

How many times does a person get to put on green pants? For a group of Oregon seniors, Saturday may be their last time.

It's the annual Civil War game, and as much as the rivalry means to the whole team, for 24 players it also marks their final regular-season game as a Duck.

Oregon fans will say goodbye to Derek Allen, Christian Anderson, Fred Aulava, Bob Baldwin, Derrick Barnes, Kaon-Jabbar East, Ronnie Gipson, Tony Graziani, Mark Gregg, Jibri Hodge, Bryant Jackson, Reggie Jordan, Pulou Malepeai, Tasi Malepeai, Matt Nichols, Jerome Perryman, Ryan Perry-Smith, Dameron Ricketts, Willy Rife, Mark Schmidt, Paul Wiggins, Josh Wilcox, Rob Williams and LaMont Woods.

These seniors have seen the Oregon program undergo many changes in the past five years. Not only have coaches come and gone, but expectations for the team that used to be fairly low have now risen to a high level.

"When my brother played football for the University of Oregon, he told me that this was an up and coming program," Woods said. "That's one of the reasons that I came here."

"When I first came here, if we got into a bowl game, that was a very great season," Wilcox said. "Now we expect to go to one every year. I think the overall commitment is to making football the most important thing."

When the seniors were new to the team, it was already apparent that there would soon be a changing of the guard.

"When we got here, our scout teams were beating our first teams (in practice)," Schmidt said. "Our scout defense, which I played on, would just run through the offense like it was another scout team. We strived to be better than them. We put everything we had into the program."

"We always had great talent on both sides of the ball," Ricketts said, "but the last two years are special because everybody knew that all the talk was gone and we had the talent. We just needed to win the big games and dominate games and make it to nice bowls. We did that for the past two years. A lot of talent that we had made up for a lot of things."

This senior class, from quarterbacks to defensive

MARK SCHMIDT



Defensive End

"My senior class is my best memory. Meeting these guys, becoming good friends with them and hanging out has been a great experience, and I wouldn't change it for anything in the world."

backs, has made an impact both in starting and reserve roles.

"[The senior class] has brought a level of excellence to this program of guys that want to work hard and play football," Wilcox said. "We weren't supposed to be one of the best classes that Oregon has had, but we have just gotten it done. It's not always pretty, but we just came out to play football, and that's all we did."

"We added a whole new attitude," Graziani said. "When we got here, we thought we could win, but I think now we know we can win and we expect to win. I think we have the attitude that we can win every game."

This attitude, along with hard work, has helped lead the Ducks to a record for the most victories in a four-year span. Since the 1993 season, Oregon has gone 27-18, traveled to two New Year's Day bowl games in a row for the first time and seen several players get into the Oregon record book.

Graziani and Perry-Smith have combined to be the only duo in school history to each pass for more than 1,000 yards in a season, and both are in the Oregon career-passing record book.

Wilcox is not only one of Oregon's greatest tight ends ever — he tied the record for catches in a game when he grabbed 11 passes in the 1995 Rose Bowl — but also is eleventh on the career receiving list.

The defensive unit was part of the nationally recognized Gang Green. Although many of Gang Green's members graduated last season and this season has not been too spectacular, there is still a feeling of loss after this season.

"I feel that we haven't lived up to Gang Green this year," Schmidt said. "But there are still some pivotal players who were with Gang Green last year and are still with the program now. The last of the last is moving out this year."

As these players move out, they leave behind memories that are both separate and the same, of individual triumphs and team successes.

"I think I'll look back and be thankful that I had the opportunity to play college football at the University of Oregon," Jackson said. "I enjoyed the fans and the program that they have here and helping build this program and bring it to a new level. I've enjoyed everything, the ups and downs, all of it."

When the seniors don their Oregon uniforms and take the field at Parker Stadium on Saturday, it will be the last regular-season game of their college careers.

"It's weird because I've been around this place my whole life," Wilcox said. "As far as Civil War, I can't think of a better opportunity to go out and be a winner than to beat Oregon State."

TONY GRAZIANI



Quarterback

"I think the Rose Bowl and Cotton Bowl are definitely the highlights of my career. Being a part of those teams was special. It's something I will never forget."

REGGIE JORDAN



Outside Linebacker

"My favorite memory is playing against Oregon State my freshman year. That was my first significant action. Although we lost the game, it was the beginning of my career. I got my first tackle."

JOSH WILCOX



Tight End

"I like Kenny Wheaton's pick because it topped off everything from that Washington rivalry. That kind of propelled us to the Rose Bowl. Watching him run down the sidelines was the greatest memory I have ever had."

Discover the Joy!

Worship Services:
New Celebration 9:45 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM

First Christian Church
1166 Oak • 344-1425

PASTOR DAN BEGINS TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY THE SUGGESTION TO HIRE A YOUTH DIRECTOR.

KENNY ROGER'S

Holiday Turkey or Ham Feasts

Take home a whole delicious, 10-12 lb. wood-fire roasted Turkey or Ham, 4 large side dishes and 9 of Kenny's famous muffins. Serves up to 8 people.

48 hours advance orders only

747-7760 Gateway Mall in front of Sears

HANA'S restaurant

Korean & Japanese Cuisine
Low Fat
Low Calories
Brown Rice Available.
1219 Alder St.
Across the Street from Sacred Heart Hospital

More than 15 New Dishes!
TRY ONE TODAY!

50¢ OFF ALL DISHES OVER \$3.75*
*Expires Nov. 24, 1996

HAPPY HOURS
Mon-Fri
3pm-5pm
Every dish \$1.00 off

If all else fails...
Enjoy Yourself!

EXCLUSIVELY Adult

VIDEOS • TOYS • GIFTS • LINGERIE
1166 South A Springfield,
726-6969
Open 24 Hours (Almost)

It doesn't have to be dirty to be good...

Oregon Daily Emerald
P.O. BOX 3159, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

Sports: Mark McTyre, editor.
Andrea DeYoung, assistant editor.
Chris Hansen, Ryan Frank, Ryan Halvorsen

Copy Desk: Kendra Smith
Presentation: Dennis Bolt, editor. Matt Garton
Photography: Mathew Stiffler, editor. Shannon Kilduff

Editor-in-Chief: Steven Asbury
Managing Editor: Jennifer Carter
General Manager: Judy Riedl

Advertising: Becky Merchant, director. Anne Amador, Lee Yen Beh, Marco Ching, Yujin Chi, Matt Johnson, Anne Miller, Trina Shanaman, Rose Soll, Matt Solomon, Greg Walsh

Classified: Tara Sloan, manager. Natasha Lumpkin, Debbie Levy, Heather Moye

Production: Michele Ross, manager. Ingrid White, coordinator. Shawna Abele, Laura Daniel, Susan Head, Trevor Kearney, Tara Knight, Melissa LeBahn, Molly McCanta, Allison Stormo, Mike Young

Business: Kathy Carbone, supervisor. Judy Connolly
Distribution: John Long, John Paull, Ferenc Rakocz

Spoletos 2nd Annual
BEAUJOLAIS NOUVEAU
DINING PARTY
SATURDAY EVENING, NOV. 23
Seating begins at 6:00 p.m.

~ Featuring ~
Classical Guitarist Martin Fitzpatrick
~ Classic French Entrees ~
~ Desserts by Victoria ~

922 NW KINGS • 752-9625 • Corvallis

Tennis & Racquetball Restring Specials

\$9.95 Tournament Nylon
Reg. \$15.00 15g, 16g

\$12.95 Synthetic Gut
Reg. \$20.00 15g, 16g

COURTSIDE TENNIS & APPAREL
1122 West 7th • 342-7208
Open 7 days a week

Expires 11/29/96