

Men recover, take fifth at tournament

After starting the day in 12th place, the Ducks' final-round score of 288 was enough to capture fifth at the U.S. Intercollegiate

By Tim Pyle
Sports Reporter

The final round of the U.S. Intercollegiate at Stanford on Monday could be the defining moment of the Oregon men's golf team's season if it goes on to enjoy any postseason success.

Then again, so could Oregon head coach Steve Nosler's speech at a team meeting Sunday night, when the Ducks found themselves in 12th place out of 20 teams after 36 holes of the 54-hole tournament.

Either way, it is evident that the two instances collectively awoke the slumbering Ducks just in time.

"We dug ourselves such a deep hole, we had no chance [to win the tournament]," Nosler said. "All we were playing for was respectability, and then we finished ahead of a whole bunch of teams that could have hurt us [in our post-season bid]."



By shooting the lowest one-round score of the tournament Monday, Oregon captured fifth place and put a resounding end to a stretch of disappointing play.

After the Ducks finished 18th of 20 teams at the Western Intercollegiate in Santa Cruz,

Calif., their last time out and again were in the second half of the standings Sunday, Nosler knew that his team needed to get its act together fast. He called a team meeting and gave his players some food for thought.

He asked them why they had been struggling. The Ducks had no answers; they were just as perplexed as their coach about their poor play.

But they answered their coach Monday with a 288 to finish 12 strokes behind first-place UCLA.

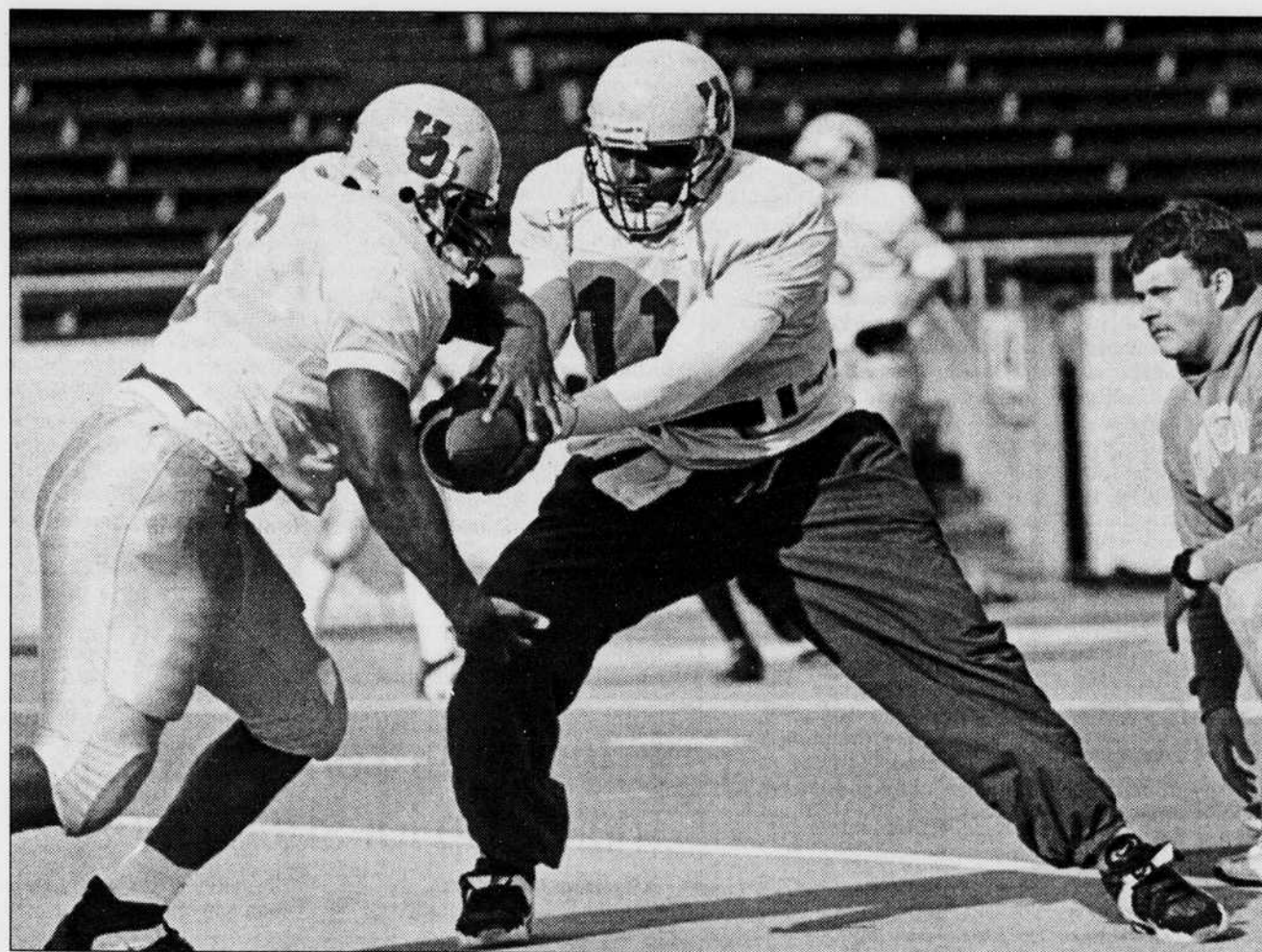
"I had two of them come up to me and say, 'Coach, I don't know. Of everything you've



CRANE

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Spring ball



Akili Smith (11) practices the exchange with Todd Brooks during drills at Autzen Stadium. Monday's workout was the fifth of 15 spring practices the Ducks are allowed by the NCAA. The main objectives for the Ducks this spring are to find replacements for wide receiver Pat Johnson, running back Saladin McCullough and tight end Blake Spence as well as introduce two new offensive coordinators. Spring drills end with a final scrimmage May 2 in Keizer.

NICK MEDLEY/Emerald

NFL teams looking for speed in draft

Speed kills, and in Saturday's National Football League draft it will be the biggest factor that determines whether a player is considered a first- or fifth-round pick.

Consider the fate of these two players:

Skip Hicks, RB, UCLA

Hicks — who finished last season tied for second in the nation with 25 total touchdowns and was a unanimous all-Pacific-10 Conference first-team selection — is projected as a mid-second or even a third-round pick by most draft prognosticators.

ESPN draft analyst Mel Kiper Jr. rates the 6-0, 228-pound Hicks as the fifth best tailback in the draft, behind four backs who each ran a faster time in the 40. Hicks' 4.55

speed in the 40-yard dash is the slowest of the top 15 projected running backs in the draft, making him a real gamble in the eyes of most pro scouts.

Duane Starks, CB, Miami (Fla.)

Pro Football Weekly rates Starks as the 11th overall NFL prospect in this year's draft. Starks, who ran a 4.37 40 at the NFL combine in Indianapolis earlier this year, is second only to Heisman Trophy winner Charles Woodson on the magazine's depth chart at cornerback, despite some serious concerns.

Although it says Starks is an "exceptional athlete" with good make-up speed, Pro Football Weekly lists among his negatives: a lack of size and physical presence, poor tackling ability, and at times a lapse in coverage as a result of poor concentration.

That doesn't sound like the scouting report for an NFL cornerback of any caliber. However, Starks is rated higher than both UCLA's Shaun Williams and Southern California's Brian Kelly, each of whom were all-Pac-10 first-team selections last season.

Where speed is most crucial is at wide receiver, and likewise, draft analysts predict as many as five receivers going in the first two rounds. And Pro Football Weekly has 10 receivers rated in its top 51 players.

What does this all mean?

It means that speed is the largest determining factor in what makes an NFL prospect. It's not heart, it's not the knowledge of the game, it's speed. And if recent trends continue, speed will determine the draft order at nearly every position.

That being said, here are the top five fastest players in this year's draft according to Pro Football Weekly and their 40 time:

1. Pat Johnson, WR, Oregon, 4.30

His speed will likely make him one of the top receivers taken in the draft, despite

OPINION



Joel Hood

Women fall victim to No. 21 Trojans

The Ducks 6-0 loss to Southern California drops Oregon's overall record to 3-16 and 0-8 in the Pac-10

By Rob Moseley
Sports Reporter

A disturbing trend emerged between the Oregon men's and women's tennis teams in the last four days when the women were swept 6-0 by No. 21 Southern California in Los Angeles on Monday.

The loss to the Trojans followed a near sweep of the Ducks by No. 16 UCLA on Sunday in which Oregon's only win of the match, and thus the road trip, was a victory by No. 1 singles player Alina Wygonowska over UCLA's Annica Cooper, the 14th-ranked player in the nation.

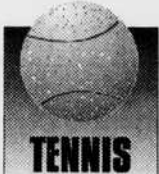
This after the Oregon men were swept by the No. 9 Trojans at home on Friday, then barely missed being swept by the No. 8 Bruins on Saturday when Erwan Kergroach won the No. 1 singles match for the Ducks over UCLA's Jean-Noel Grinda, the 12th-ranked player in the collegiate ranks.

The loss by the women dropped their record to 3-16

overall and 0-8 in the Pacific-10 Conference. The cancellation of all three doubles matches against UCLA accounts for the 6-0 final score.

Wygonowska continued her steady play from the day before, narrowly losing the opening set to USC's Ditta Huber 7-6 before dropping the second 6-4. Her record for the season now stands at 16-16.

In other action for the Ducks, Andreea Petrovic fell to USC's Jacqui Boyd 6-1, 6-1. Oregon's Alison Sosnow lost to Veronika Safarova by the same scores, Kara Warkentin beat Shanelle Kaneshiro 6-4, 6-2, and Karolina Bakalarova downed Jaime Martin, 6-0, 6-2.



Finally, at No. 6 singles, walk-on Milena Glusac played only her second match of the season after recovering from a stress fracture in her lower back. Glusac, an all-American distance runner in track and field for Oregon, lost to USC's Amber Basica in straight sets 6-1, 6-2. She lost by the same scores to UCLA's Becky Rajfer on Sunday.

Oregon entered the weekend on the heels of a suc-

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Results

SINGLES

1. Huber (USC) def. Wygonowska (UO) 7-6, 6-4

2. Boyd (USC) def. Petrovic (UO) 6-1, 6-1

3. Safarova (USC) def. Sosnow (UO) 6-1, 6-1

4. Warkentin (USC) def. Kaneshiro (UO) 6-4, 6-2

5. Bakalarova (USC) def. Martin (UO) 6-0, 6-2

6. Basica (USC) def. Glusac (UO) 6-1, 6-2.

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