

Sports

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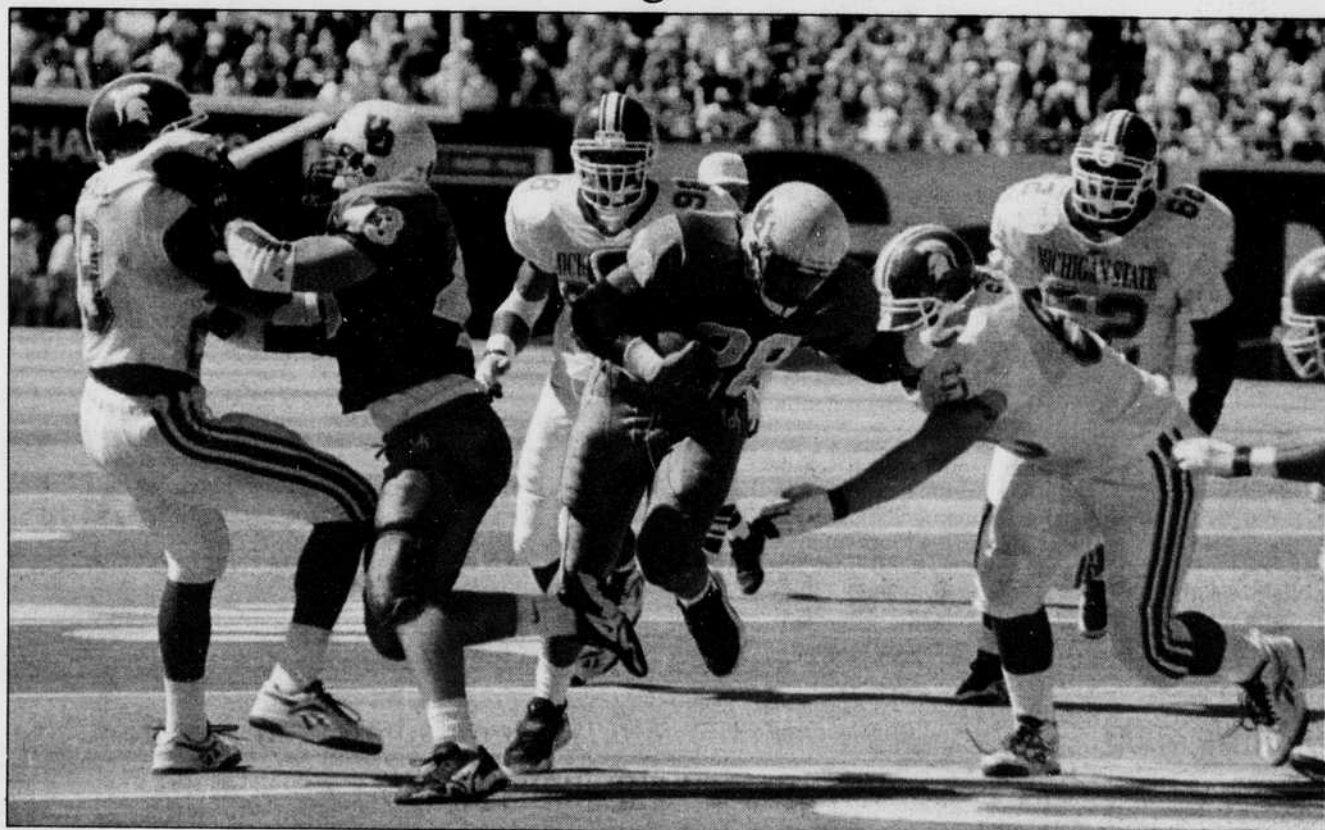
Both the Oregon men's and women's teams have experience and talent returning/5E

Droughts

The junior-college transfer leads the Oregon rushing attack/20E



1998 Oregon Football



Herman Ho-Ching breaks through the Michigan State defensive line en route to a surprising 48-14 victory on Sept. 5. LAURA GOSS/Emerald

Oregon grinds down early opponents

By Rob Moseley
Associate Editor

Mike Bellotti has done a few things right in his three-year tenure as head coach of the Oregon football team.

Bellotti became the first coach in Oregon history to lead his team to postseason appearances in two of his first three seasons by following up a 1996 Cotton Bowl appearance with a win in the Las Vegas Bowl last season.

The Ducks' 22 wins represent the highest total ever during the first three years of a coach's term.

This season, Bellotti will attempt to do

something that's happened just twice in the history of Oregon football — lead the Ducks to consecutive postseason bowl appearances.



"I truly believe we have the talent and the athleticism to win every game," Bellotti said before this season. "The chemistry that allows you to do that, the energy, the belief, the trust, all those things are going to be fostered and cemented in fall camp, and in the first couple games of the season that we play.

That's why a good start for us is very important."

Bellotti got his wish, as the Ducks began the season 2-0, including a crushing defeat of then-No. 23 Michigan State on national TV to open the season.

The difference-maker for the Ducks in each of their first two games — the second being a 33-26 squeaker over UTEP on Sept. 12 — has been a different player at what was presumed to be one of the Ducks' weaker positions entering the season.

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Veterans will lead young Volleyball team

By Allison Ross
Oregon Daily Emerald

The 1998 Oregon volleyball team came into the season with a new attitude, a new assistant coach, high expectations, and a goal of reaching the NCAA Tournament.

The Ducks feature five returning letter winners, including senior Alli White, who missed most of the 1997 season with a knee injury, and senior Madeline Ernst, who led the Ducks in kills in 22 of the 28 matches played last season.

Annie Pogue comes off a redshirt year ready to be a major force in the Ducks success. Pogue joins six incoming freshmen and three junior college transfers, all of whom were recruited by head coach Cathy Nelson. Having her own recruits is something Nelson feels will make this season different.



VOLLEYBALL: Annie Pogue begins her first season with Ducks. Feature/Page 9E

"There's no denying that there is more of a connection between me and the players that are on the floor this year than we ever had last year," Nelson said. "That's just part of taking over a program. I think that's going to make a huge difference this year and down the road as I continue to get my own players here."

One of the strongest additions is 6-foot freshman setter Julie Gerlach, who Nelson said is "someone who I think will be the best setter Oregon has ever had."

Regardless of the youth and inexperience of this season's team, the Ducks are confident that this is the season meant for change in the program.

"I think this needs to be the year that we really turn the program around," Pogue said. "This year we set a precedent to go to the NCAA Tournament. I think we need to accomplish a winning season as a team."

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Third-year Ducks shoot for more after best-ever start

Bolstered by the contributions of several newcomers, Oregon is off to a hot start

By Tim Pyle
Oregon Daily Emerald

Head coach Bill Steffen is pleased with the efforts of the Oregon women's soccer team through the first two weeks of the season.

But that doesn't mean that he — or the rest of the Ducks — are satisfied.

After a 3-2 overtime loss to Wake Forest and a 1-0 shutout of Florida International in the Adidas Invitational at Portland on Sept. 12, Oregon is off to the best start of its three-year existence with a 3-1 record.

"We're getting solid results," Steffen said. "A lot of my expectations have been met. Once the players meet those expectations, I raise them and challenge them for more. The girls have a lot of aspirations. They want to go as far as they can."

Freshman forward Chalise Baysa has sparked the Ducks to their early-season success, scoring all five Oregon goals in the first

two games of the season. Comparatively, Kristi Morris and Sierra Marsh tied for the team-lead with five goals for the entire 1997 season.

Baysa's scoring touch allowed the Ducks to debut their brand-new Papé Field in style, with 3-1 and 2-0 wins over Tennessee and UNC-Greensboro, respectively. Last season, the Spartans blasted the Ducks 6-0 in Greensboro, N.C.

The fast and aggressive Baysa, from Oak Harbor, Wash., was just the remedy Oregon needed after scoring only 25 goals last season on its way to a 5-14-1 record.

"She is amazing," junior fullback Carrie McLanahan said. "She just makes everybody want to play so much better. She always wants the ball. We can always see her. She's



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Freshman forward Chalise Baysa bursts to the ball in practice. LAURA GOSS/Emerald