



**Best Bet**  
Major League Baseball  
Cleveland at New York  
5:08 p.m., NBC

OREGON VS. PORTLAND



After scoring on Oregon State last Friday, forward T.J. Johnson will look for another goal against an in-state rival today at Portland.

Matt Hankins/Emerald

Basketball fan disappointed by greedy players

My first glimpse of the NBA came to me in the fourth grade when I won a pair of tickets to a Portland Trail Blazers game. I remember sitting maybe 15 rows behind the basket, awe-inspired by the seven-foot towers who were battling in the paint.

From that moment on, I was hooked on basketball.

I think I became interested in the sport just in the nick of time, because I got to see many great athletes whom I will someday tell my kids about. Who could ever forget the respected rivalry between Larry Bird and Magic Johnson, or the rough play of Bill Laimbeer and the Detroit Pistons?

Michael Jordan graced the nation with his aerial maneuvers, and local heroes like Clyde Drexler and Terry Porter put Portland on the map.

Who could forget watching the Dream Team playing in the Olympics in Barcelona? Simply watching the medal ceremony — with the NBA's greatest basketball players standing together atop the podium of victory — was an experience I will never forget.

Yes, a few years ago basketball was heading in the right direction, and as I sit and think about that golden age of basketball legends and world-class athletes, only one question comes to mind.

What went wrong?

Typically at this time of the year, I am ready to listen to the Trail Blazer preseason games on the radio, but not this year. And that is hard to accept for a person like me.

I love basketball, and ever since I attended that game in fourth grade, I have loved the NBA. But something has happened in the world's most exciting game that has made it more frustrating than fun.

Perhaps the problem can best be exposed by talking about an experience that my older sister had. She was at a party near the Oregon State campus when she ran into one of the basketball team's star players.

Like myself, my sister is an avid basket-

Opinion



Scott Pesznecker

Ducks challenge unbeaten Pilots

Oregon will try to hand No. 7 Portland its first loss of the season at 3 p.m. today at Merlo Field in Portland

By Tim Pyle  
Oregon Daily Emerald

With its prolific success, Portland has placed the Northwest on the collegiate soccer map.

Meanwhile, Oregon is in just its third season on the women's soccer landscape.

So today's 3 p.m. nonconference match against the No. 7 Pilots (9-0-2 overall, 1-0 West Coast Conference) at Merlo Field in Portland represents a

measuring stick of sorts for the Ducks (4-3-2, 1-0 Pacific-10 Conference), who will be finding out where they stand compared to the region's elite program for the first time.



"For us it's great to go up and experience playing a team of that level," Oregon head coach Bill Steffen said. "I think Portland's been a great role model in the sense that they've been very successful."

Successful may be an understatement. The Pilots had advanced to three straight NCAA Tournament Final Fours until they were upset in the first round by UCLA, 1-0, last season.

Head coach Clive Charles is third among active NCAA Division I-A women's soccer coaches with a winning percentage of .806. He also coaches the Portland men's team and served as an assistant coach for the U.S. men's World Cup team last summer in France.

This season, the Pilots have outscored their opponents 31-5 and have only been denied a perfect record by road ties at Virginia on Sept. 25 and at Nebraska on Oct. 9.

"They're very intelligent players, and they're also very good players," Steffen said, before noting that Portland has been reduced to two substitutes in recent games because of in-

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ESPN's Gameday will broadcast from Rose Bowl Saturday

The Oregon-UCLA game will mark College Gameday's first regular season broadcast from the West Coast

By Rob Moseley  
Oregon Daily Emerald

The No. 11 Oregon football team (5-0 overall, 2-0 Pacific-10 Conference) travels to Southern California to face No. 2 UCLA this Saturday for one of the biggest games in the history of the program.

The game's importance has apparently not been missed by the rest of the country. ESPN's College Gameday, which since 1993 has traveled to the site of the nation's best game of the week, will be on hand for its first-ever regular season broadcast from the West Coast.

"We try to be at the best game every week, and this is one of them," ESPN communications coordinator Dean Diltz said. "After both teams beat up on their opponents this weekend, it solidified the pick."

Last weekend, the Ducks downed Washington State, 51-29, in Pullman, while the then-No. 3 Bruins defeated Arizona, 52-28, in Tucson.

Diltz said the network's staff makes lists of about eight games from each week before the

season begins, then shortens the list as teams lose and games become less attractive.

"We knew UCLA would be tough, and we have people who live and breathe the sport who thought that Oregon could be good," Diltz said.

Due to various circumstances, the Oregon-UCLA matchup has been the only game considered for this weekend by ESPN for "a couple of weeks," Diltz said. Had either team lost over the past two weeks, Gameday would have been broadcast from its home in Bristol, Conn., he said.

It will actually be the second trip west for the crew, as Gameday was based at the Rose Bowl for the postseason classic in January. The producers considered traveling to Seattle for last season's Nebraska-Washington contest, but another game was deemed more attractive, Diltz said.

This weekend may actually be the start of

a trend, Diltz said, as the Ducks' Halloween night matchup with the Wildcats is still under consideration as a host site by Gameday.

"It's a slim possibility [after the Wildcats' loss to the Bruins], but it's there," Diltz said.

As for the Washington State game, the win was filled with many ups and downs for Oregon, particularly for defensive end Terry Miller and wide receiver Damon Griffin.

Miller put on a show in the first half, sacking Cougar quarterback Steve Birnbaum three times, one more than he had recorded in the rest of his career.

"I was really fired up for this game, being from Washington and all," said Miller, a native of Vancouver. "I had some family here and was really excited for this game, and that, combined with being in the right place at the right time, did it for me."

A former walk-on, Miller moved from fullback to end in the spring of 1997 and ended up starting the final eight games of

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Dean Diltz  
ESPN communications coordinator