

### Getting his Chance

Junior tailback Derien Latimer will finally get a chance to excel on Saturday after spending most of his first three seasons on the bench / PAGE 3



# GAME DAY



Oregon Ducks vs.  
Southern California Trojans  
3:30 p.m. at Autzen Stadium



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## the Box

<b>Scoring</b>	
<b>Offense</b>	
Oregon	1st
USC	3rd
<b>Total</b>	
<b>Offense</b>	
Oregon	1st
USC	6th
<b>Rushing</b>	
<b>Defense</b>	
Oregon	7th
USC	5th
<b>Total</b>	
<b>Defense</b>	
Oregon	7th
USC	3rd
<b>Turnover</b>	
<b>Margin</b>	
Oregon	8th
USC	3rd

\* Pac-10 rank

### Quotable

"Obviously, it impacts what we do offensively because he was the best running back in the conference. We have to have others take up the slack."  
— Mike Bellotti, UO head coach, on the season-ending injury to tailback Reuben Droughns

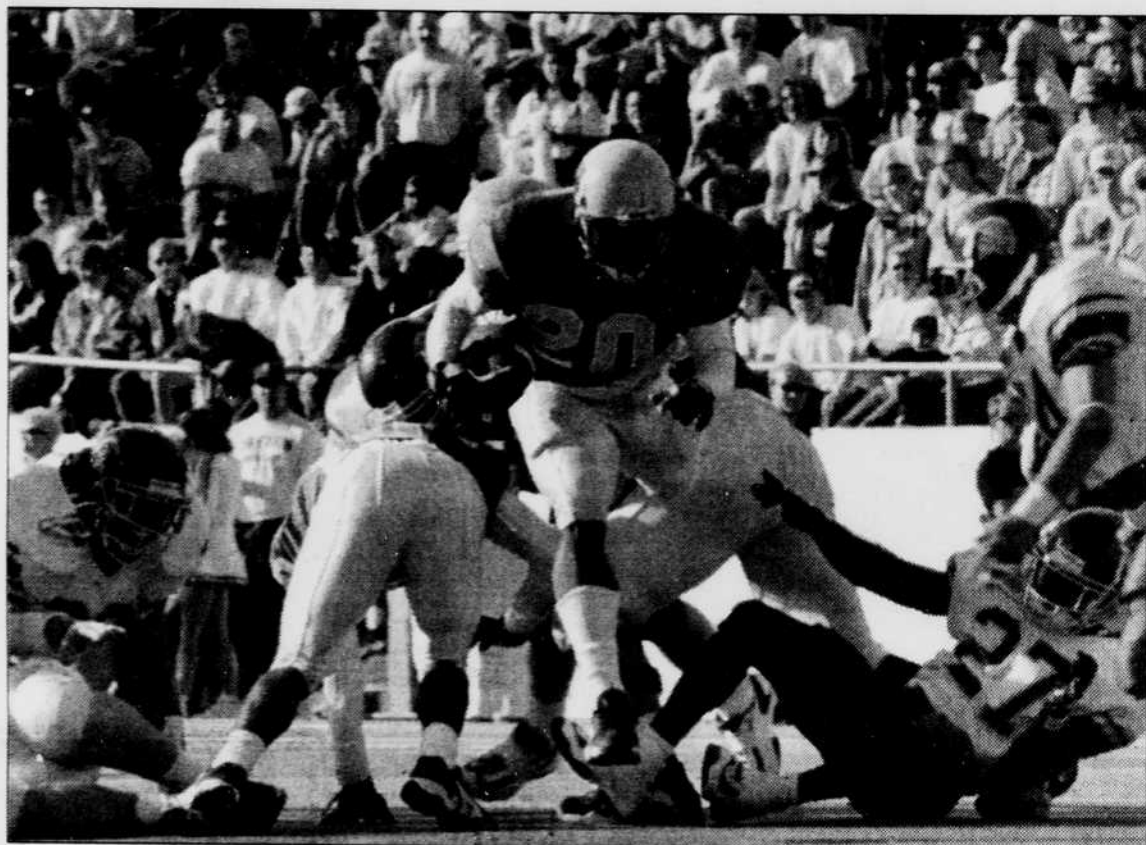
### Key Player

**Nathan Villegas**

With three of Oregon's offensive starters sidelined with injuries, Villegas may be relied on to kick the Ducks to victory, thereby exorcising the ghost of last year's loss to the Trojans.



## Oregon tries to rebound from loss



The offensive-minded Ducks must overcome a tough Trojan defense and a rash of injuries

By Rob Moseley  
Oregon Daily Emerald

For four weeks the No. 12 Oregon Ducks entered games on the high of a winning streak. Include the Las Vegas Bowl and Oregon played its first five games of this season after a win.

Now comes the hard part, as the Ducks (5-1 overall, 2-1 Pacific-10 Conference) enter Saturday's 3:30 p.m. matchup with Southern California at Autzen Stadium after a bitter 41-38 overtime loss to No. 2 UCLA last weekend.

"We're a tad disappointed," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "To play that hard and to get that close and to not win is difficult."

The Ducks tied the game with 22 seconds remaining in regulation, only to be stopped on their first overtime possession. UCLA kicker Chris Sailer then atoned for two earlier misses with a game-ending field goal on the Bruins' first possession.

"I told the kids that they had a couple of hours to be disappointed, but that we are not discouraged," Bellotti said. "We're 5-1 and just took the second-ranked team in the nation to overtime. The other thing I said was that, win or lose, every game we play after that is going to be tremendously important."

The Trojans (5-2, 3-1) disposed of Washington State 42-14 last weekend, one week after Oregon did the same, 51-29.

USC is bolstered by a defense that boasts size and speed, Bellotti said, and that could pose significant problems for the Ducks. Oregon is dealing with major injuries to key players on both the offensive line and in the starting backfield.

Tackle Marco Aguirre partially tore ligaments in his right knee, while tailback Reuben Droughns will miss the rest of the season with a broken right leg.

Starting in Droughns' place will be junior Derien Latimer, the Ducks' fourth-leading rusher this season with 101 yards on 26 car-

Jason Cooper is one of three Oregon tailbacks who will be expected to make up for the loss of injured Pac-10 rushing leader Reuben Droughns

## USC game could mean déjà vu for Ducks

### Opinion



Joel Hood

Kenny Wheaton is usually the player given credit for ushering in the new era of Oregon football. His 97-yard interception return against Washington in 1994 was the most dramatic play in a remarkable season for the Ducks, culminating in a Rose Bowl berth.

But the new era of Duck football actually began three weeks earlier with a road victory against then-No. 19 Southern California.

Oregon was 2-2 following a convincing victory against Iowa at Autzen Stadium but entered its first Pacific-10 Conference game as a 19-point underdog and had to start back-up Tony Graziani at quarterback.

Playing in the Los Angeles Coliseum, where they hadn't beaten the Trojans since 1971, the Ducks stormed out to a 10-0 first-quarter lead and never looked back. A 19-yard pass from Graziani to flanker Cristin McLemore widened the Duck lead to 16-7 at halftime. Matt Belden added a pair of second-half field goals as Oregon cruised to a 22-7 victory in front of 44,232 dejected Trojan fans and another million at home watching the game on television.

It was the first game that season that Oregon dominated. I mean really dominated. The defense held Keyshawn Johnson to be-

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## Hackett working to get legendary program back on track

USC has encountered a rocky road since its last trip to the Rose Bowl after the 1995 season

By Tim Pyle  
Oregon Daily Emerald

In Southern California's storied football history it has won eight national titles, produced 120 all-Americans, played in 28 Rose Bowls and had four players win the Heisman Trophy.

Not surprisingly, the Trojans hold a commanding 33-11-2 edge against Oregon, which dates back to a 34-0 Ducks' win in 1915. In the last 19 meetings, USC has been even more dominant, compiling a 16-2-1 mark.

Recently, however, the tides of success for these two programs have turned.

While Oregon has played in three bowl games in the last four seasons, USC has not

appeared in the postseason since the 1996 Rose Bowl.

That type of mediocrity is not acceptable to Trojan alumni. Thus, head coach John Robinson was fired after last season, and Paul Hackett, formerly of the Kansas City Chiefs, was brought in to try and bring back the winning Trojan tradition.

It has worked so far this season for USC (5-2 overall, 3-1 Pacific-10 Conference) heading into its game against the No. 12 Ducks in Eugene on Saturday.

USC rebounded from a devastating home loss to California — in which the Trojans had a 31-10 lead before losing, 32-31 — with an impressive 42-14 drubbing of Washington State last Saturday.

"That was a good win for us and a good

bounce back after the debacle against the Golden Bears," Hackett said. "It was nice to go up into a foreign situation and play in the rain, with the crowd noise, on the Astro-Turf. That'll get us ready for Eugene."

Offensively, the Trojans average 31.4 points per game. Quarterbacks Mike Van Raaphorst and Carson Palmer have both played in each of USC's seven games.

Van Raaphorst has played more minutes, completing 47.6 percent of his passes with seven touchdowns and three interceptions. Palmer, a freshman, has completed nearly 43 percent of his throws and has three touchdown tosses and one interception.

"The thing that is improving every game is their passing attack," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "Their quarterbacks are both very young, but they're getting better and better."

### On tap

WHO: No. 12 Oregon (5-1, 2-1) vs. USC (5-2, 3-1)  
WHAT: Pacific-10 Conference football  
WHERE: Autzen Stadium  
WHEN: Saturday, Oct. 24 at 3:30p.m.

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