

THURSDAY  
December 3, 1998Best Bet  
NFL  
St. Louis at Philadelphia  
5 p.m., ESPN

## Smith suffers from Oregon's lack of visibility

One quarterback threw for 3,307 yards and 30 touchdowns and completed 191 of his 325 passes.

The other threw for 2,617 yards and 18 touchdowns and completed 162 of his 288 passes.

The first led his team to an 8-3 record, two overtime losses shy of a top-10 ranking and one short of the best season in school history.

### Opinion



Rob Moseley

The second is admittedly 10-0, but he dodged more than a few bullets on his way to a probable national-title game.

The first will be remembered for thrice being named the ABC Sports player of the game in nationally broadcast games and twice being named Pacific-10 Conference player of the week.

The other will be remembered for his nationally broadcast stomach problems, resulting in a two-page, full-color spread in Sports Illustrated that featured him vomiting on the 50-yard line of the Rose Bowl.

And yet the conference powers that be for some reason felt the need to grant the Pac-10 offensive player of the year award to both quarterbacks.

The first, Oregon senior Akili Smith, deserved it. The second, UCLA's Cade McNown, did not.

Certainly, McNown's four-year accomplishments in Los Angeles are impressive. In 41 consecutive starts, the West Linn native set a Pac-10 record with his 10,415 yards of total offense and is second in career passing yards with 9,855. McNown also set school records for completions and touchdown passes and has led the Bruins to the nation's longest current winning streak, 20 games and counting, and a possible national championship.

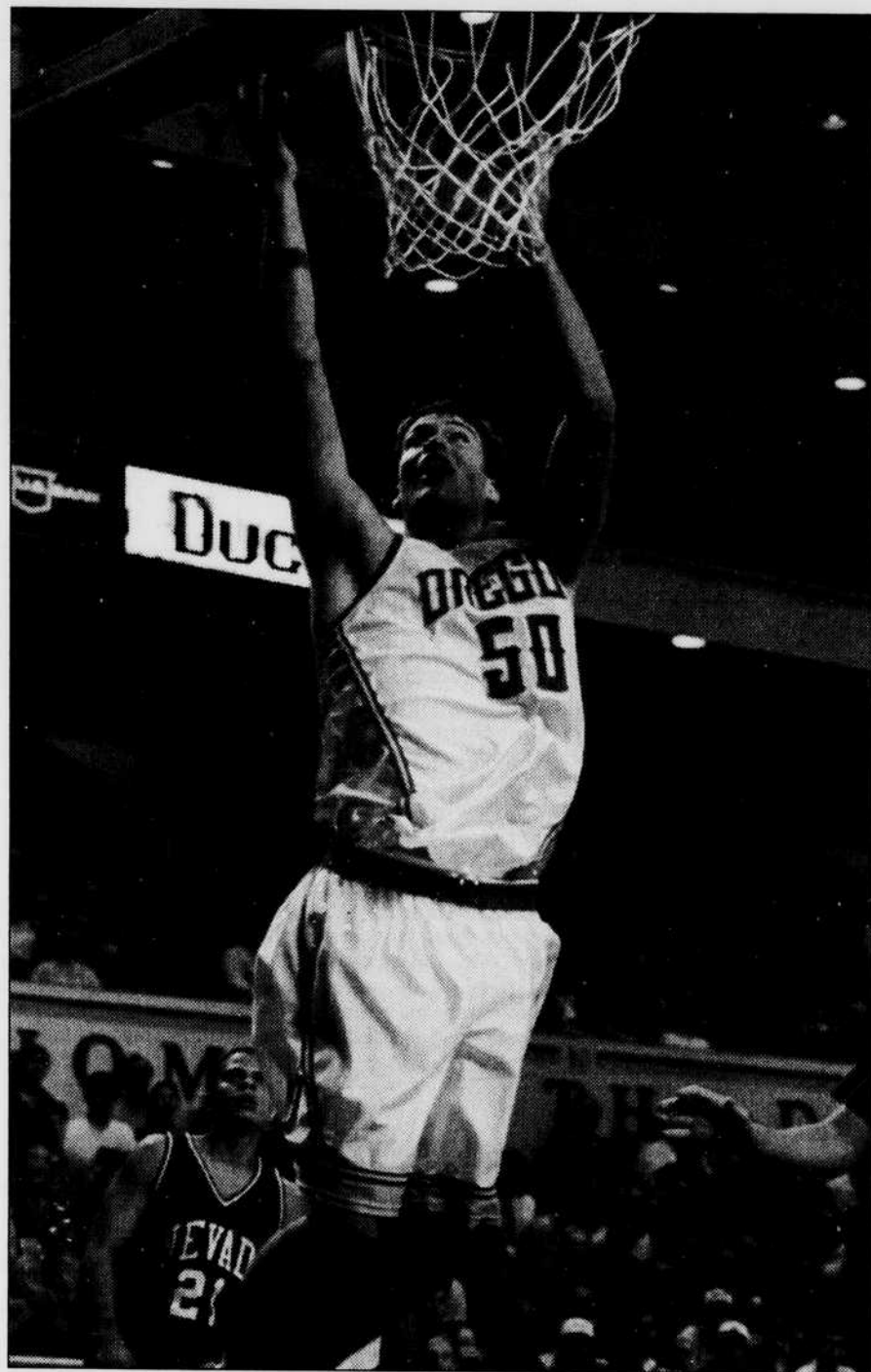
A hell of a career by all accounts. But the player of the year award is no way to recognize a stellar career, especially at the expense of a more-deserving candidate.

Akili Smith took a team of a couple stars and a bunch of tireless role players and near-

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## OREGON BASKETBALL

# UO hopes centered around Carson



Senior center Mike Carson skies to the hoop in Oregon's 86-69 victory against Nevada at McArthur Court.

After injuries sidelined him last season, Mike Carson is back for a second attempt at his senior season

By Tim Pyle

Oregon Daily Emerald

Just when the pieces were finally starting to fall into place, Mike Carson was forced to start over.

After starting the first six games at center for the Oregon men's basketball team last season and producing the most consistent play of his collegiate career, Carson suffered an ankle injury in practice to go along with an already ailing knee. The injuries kept the senior on the sidelines for the remainder of the season.

"I was just coming along with basketball and was getting my confidence going," the 7-foot, 256-pound, fifth-year senior says. "I really started feeling like I had a role on the team. Going down, I think the biggest thing was I felt like I let some of the guys down."

Carson's career would have been finished had the NCAA not granted him a medical hardship and ensuing fifth year of eligibility.

Now, Carson is back.

Back in the starting lineup, back in the paint and back looking for a fairy tale ending to his frustrating career.

Head coach Ernie Kent expects nothing less than an excellent finale from Carson.

"I'm looking for him to be one of the dominating centers in the conference, and that's what his role needs to be on this team," Kent says. "He needs to be a guy we can count on — count on to score, count on to defend and just to do his part to help."

Last season was not the worst period of anguish in Carson's career. He says his freshman season in 1994-95 takes that dubious honor.

After tearing up the Baseline League as a prep at Don Lugo High in Chino, Calif., to the tune of 21.7 points, 13.8 re-



Emerald

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## Ducks capable of competing with nation's best wrestlers

The Oregon wrestling team hopes to place higher in this season's NCAA championship than last year's third place finish

By Scott Pesznecker  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Just two matches into this season, the potential of the Oregon wrestling team is not yet in focus. But its goals are clear.

Both the players and coaches have expressed the desire to beat last year's third-place finish at the Pacific-10 Conference Championships and send more wrestlers to the NCAA Championships this season.

But the Ducks have faced both surprise and disappointment in the early going. Chael Sonnen, who finished eighth last March at the NCAA Championships in Cleveland, Ohio, has had troubles on the mat this season.

Sonnen, ranked fourth in the nation at 197 pounds, finished second in his weight class at the Southern Oregon Open in Ashland on Nov. 23. One week later, he placed third at the Mat-Town Invitational in Lockhaven, Pa. Both were tournaments that Sonnen would have liked to have won.

But head coach Chuck Kearney said last week that the Ducks are "a step ahead" of where they were last year.

The Ducks have captured two weight-class championship titles this season. In Ashland, 157-pound Daryl Christian and 184-pound Doug Lee won the titles for their respective weight classes. Christian is ranked eighth in the nation and Lee is ranked 10th.

Lee had another solid performance the following week in Lockhaven, finishing in third place. Christian lost a decision to Cornell's Leo Urbinelli to finish in sixth.

Redshirt freshman David Watson, wrestling at 141 pounds, has performed above expectations to this point. In his Oregon debut in Ashland, Watson advanced to the Championships round before losing.

The Ducks have also made some adjustments since last season. The biggest of

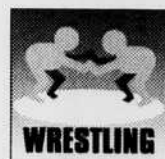
which is the move of heavyweight Kevin Keeney from the 167-pound weight class that he wrestled in last season.

Keeney did not place in the Southern Oregon Open due to the cancellation of the fifth- and sixth-place matches. At the Mat-Town Invitational, Keeney finished fourth after being pinned by Lehigh's Shawn Laughlin.

The Southern Oregon Open was a pre-season match and had no bearing on the team's standings. Oregon finished fifth overall at the Mat-Town Invitational in a field of 12 teams that included three with top-25 rankings, according to Amateur Wrestling News.

Oregon's fifth place finish at the Mat-Town Invitational showed that the Ducks are capable of competing among the nation's best teams.

The next chance for success as a team will come at home when the Ducks face UC Davis in its first dual meet of the season on Dec. 12.



SONNEN