

Patu

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nationally in total defense. The Ducks are also ninth in the nation in guarding the pass and in the top-30 in stopping the run.

This will be the biggest challenge thus far in the season, as Tuia-sosopo possesses many skills that can confuse and disrupt a defense.

"As a defense, we're excited about the opportunity to shut down the Huskies," Patu said. "I expect Marques to be at the top of his game and I expect our defense to be at the top of our game as well."

An interesting side note to the Patu-Tuia-sosopo battle will be that the two Samoans share some of the same cousins.

"It's nice to see another Samoan out there," Patu said.

Back to the books

It's tough enough that the Ducks have to switch focus from one Top-10 opponent to another in back-to-back weeks, but they will also have to deal with the added pressure of attending class this week. The players will have to add some Economic, Communication and Sociology books to their collection of playbooks.

No problem, they say.

"I think there won't be that big an adjustment," wide receiver Keenan Howry said. "Anytime you have a chance to take a break and relax outside of football it's good. Because you once you get out to practice, your whole focus has to be football and U-Dub, and that's it."

Once a Duck, always a Duck

A face from the past was on hand last Saturday to provide special encouragement to his former teammates.

Former Oregon tailback Reuben Droughns, now of the NFL's Detroit Lions, returned to Eugene watch the Ducks take on the then-No. 6 UCLA Bruins.

"It was great seeing Reuben be-

“I don't pay much attention to the ducklings as they are not a big rival.”

“Dawgfan”

A Husky fan joining in some message board fun

cause he's one of those guys that when you just look at him you see that fire in his eyes that lets you know he could strap on the pads at any time and go to battle," Howry said.

Droughns separated his shoulder in the preseason with the Lions and has been on injured reserve since Aug. 22. He also traveled to Madison, Wis., to be there for Oregon's loss against Wisconsin.

"I know it's tough for him to not be playing, but I know he'll be out there again in no time," Howry said.

Message board trash talk

There certainly has been no idle moments in the cyberspace battle among Northwest college football fans this week.

For example, "Dawgfan" had this to say about this week's contest against the Ducks on the

Huskyfan.com message board:

"I don't pay much attention to the ducklings as they are not a big rival," the fan wrote. "We will beat you again and move on to another Pac-10 title. Face it, you're not much of a rival. Press on and shoot for another trip to Hawaii. Washington 35, Oregon 13."

Meanwhile, over on the Duck message boards, the fans have tried to stay somewhat objective in their discussion about the game, but with the rivalry as intense as it is, that is often tough to do.

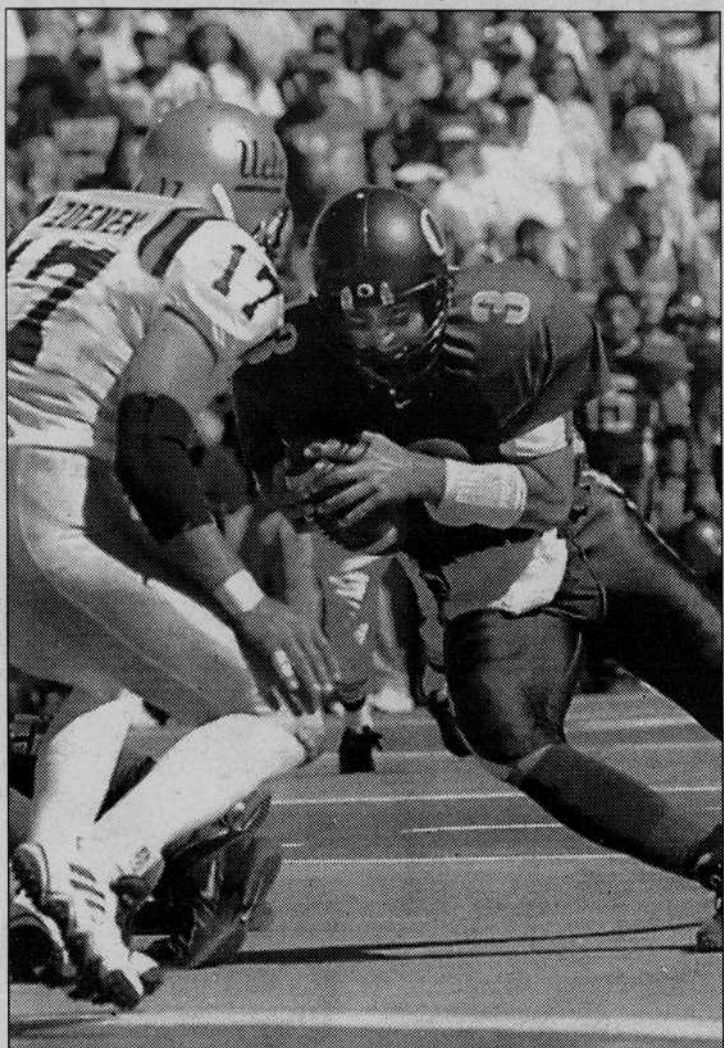
"I hate the arrogant Huskies and I'm sure I'm not the only one who feels that way," "Portland Duck" said. "I hope Tui gets the crap kicked out of him and Neuweasel wipes that smirk off his face after we beat the snot out of his team."

The best comment about the game didn't even come from one of the fan sites. It came from CBS SportsLine.com when talking about this weekend's game being one of the premier showdowns of the week.

"We don't want to say the two teams hate each other, but let's just say that if the players' paths ever cross again in life — and one was on the ground dying of thirst — the other wouldn't give him a drink of water. 'I'd let the vultures get you,' he'd say."

The quote was taken in context from Sue's vicious speech toward Kelly in the final episode of CBS' hit television show, "Survivor."

Fitting, because many people believe that the winner of Saturday's contest will be the ultimate survivor of the Pacific-10 Conference.



Catharine Kendall Emerald
Oregon quarterback Joey Harrington will lead the charge against their bitter Northwest rival, the Washington Huskies. The winner will be the early Pac-10 leader.

Soccer

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offensive threats.

After only four goals in two years at USF, David already has three as a Duck, tying for the team lead.

She leads the team in points

with eight and would equal her career point total at USF with just six more.

Go, go goalie arms

With Jeanine Norstad mostly healthy but still questionable for Sunday's game, Peters will likely be the Ducks' starting goalie on Sunday. Peters has begun to have more of a "presence," according to

Steffen, on the field.

But even though Peters played well Sunday against James Madison, Steffen says he will have the goalkeepers continue competing for the starting spot. Peters has a 3.44 goals-against-average, with 67 saves, while Norstad has a 2.14 GAA with nine saves.

Pac-ing the rankings

Florida State will be Oregon's final game before the Ducks start Pacific-10 Conference play. The Pac-10 is well represented in the national rankings with five teams in the top-20. The highest-ranked team is UCLA, ranked fifth, while California is ranked eighth and Washington tenth.

Bring on Florida State

Florida State's football prowess

must have rubbed off on its women's soccer team. Florida State is 8-4 on the year, with losses to No. 24 Missouri, Ohio State, No. 2 Clemson and No. 11 Duke. All those losses were by a mere one goal. Florida State also notched an impressive 4-1 victory over No. 9 Texas A&M earlier this month.

"Florida State is a very good team," Steffen said. "For us to win, it's going to demand a lot of us."



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