

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA VS. OREGON

KICKOFF AT 12:35 PM, L.A. COLISEUM SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2000

GAME DAY

OREGON DAILY EMERALD 13TH OF OCTOBER, 2000 BROADCAST ABC, 12:30 P.M.

SO-CAL SHOWDOWN

■ The Ducks' legs are fresh, their minds are clear and now Oregon is ready to take on USC in its first Pac-10 road game

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Ducks had just beaten Idaho back on Sept. 16 by a convincing 29 points, but senior linebacker Matt Smith was wary of what lay ahead.

Sure, Smith was excited about his team's 2-1 start, but he made sure to lay forth the caution label toward the next three opponents.

"First there's UCLA, then Washington and then a team ranked in the top-10 in those USC Trojans," Smith said after that game. "And we have to go down to L.A. on that last one. Going to be a tough test for this team."

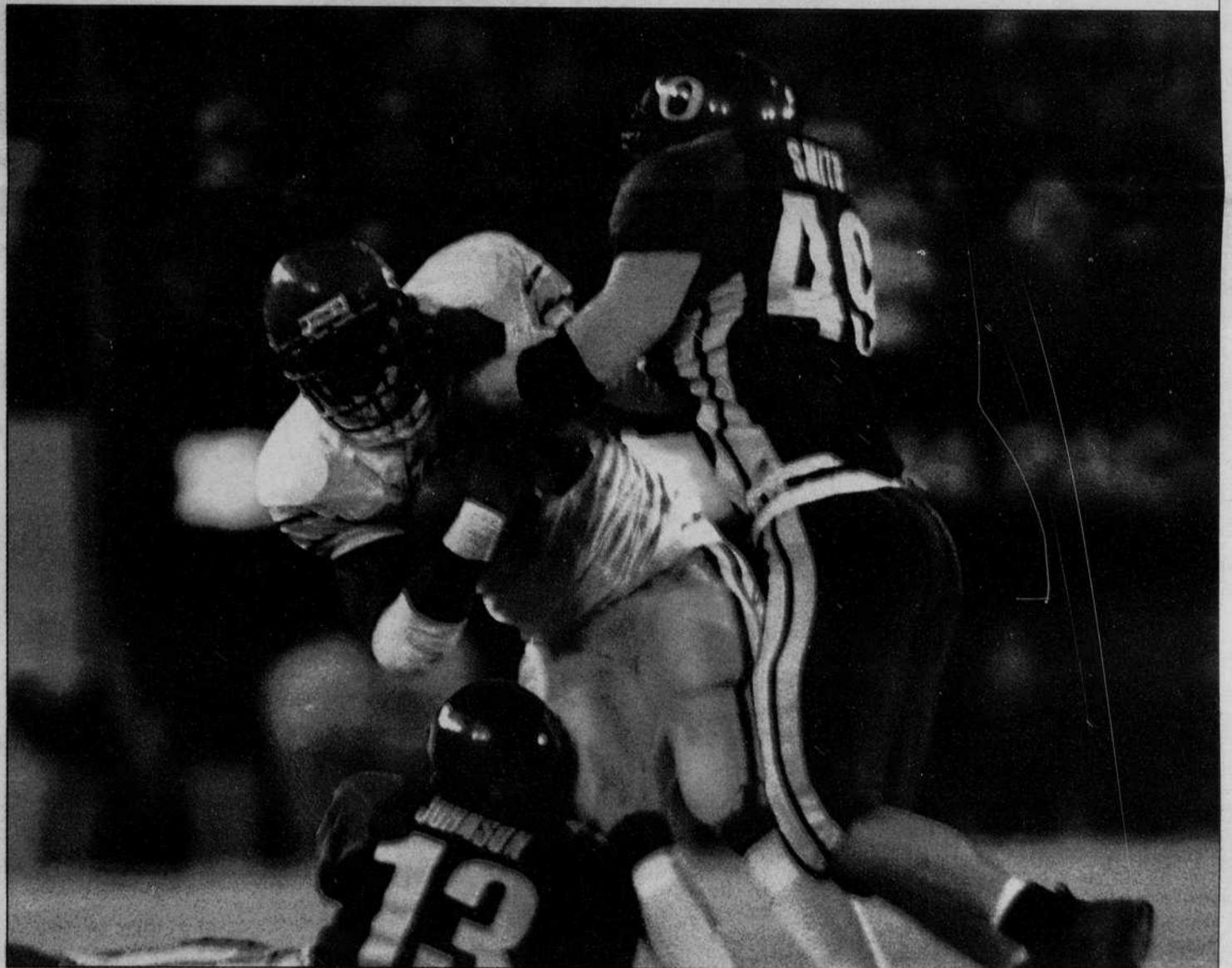
Fast forward to the present day, and yes, there will be a top-10 team on the field Saturday at 12:30 p.m. at the Los Angeles Coliseum, but it sure won't be the Trojans.

After falling to Oregon State and Arizona on consecutive weekends, the Trojans (3-2, 0-2) dropped all the way out of the polls after being ranked as high as eighth.

The Ducks (4-1, 2-0), on the other hand, have climbed up the national respect ladder and are sitting at No. 9 after taking care of business against then-No. 6 ranked UCLA and Washington.

Still, Oregon has its fair share of skeptics. The only loss for the Ducks came on the road on Sept. 9 at Wisconsin, and some people feel that if you take away the boisterous 45,000-plus die-hard Duck boost-

Turn to **Game preview**, page 11B



The Oregon defense, ranked No. 1 overall in the Pacific-10 Conference, will be tested on the road as it tries to stop the likes of USC's Carson Palmer and Sultan McCullough.

Emerald

4

Oregon's Kurtis Doerr, who entered college sports as a baseball player in Arizona, now finds himself punting footballs for the Ducks — and loving it.

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