

McCallum

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tion of many polls — put this to an end.

Meanwhile, fans are left to watch "It's a Wonderful Life" and non-conference college basketball.

What should we do with this lull in football action? Add a championship tournament.

Here's the Robbie McCallum plan: A five week, 32-team bracket that begins at the end of the college season in late November. Five rounds follow, eventually leading to a final four, which would be played in a rotation of bowls (Orange, Sugar, Fiesta, Rose and Cot-

ton). The national championship game would be played Jan. 1.

The 11 conference champions would receive automatic bids, an additional 21 teams would be given at-large bids based on overall season records and top-25 rankings. The tournament would probably include every top-25 team, plus the patsy teams from low-caliber conferences such as the Big West.

Although it sounds foreign to college football, it is the answer to all the problems associated with the Bowl Championship Series.

Imagine the excitement that a college football tournament could bring: office pool brackets, five weeks of playoff atmosphere football, bubble teams and Cinderella

teams. It would be everything that March Madness is, only on the gridiron.

In 1995, both Nebraska and Penn State finished the regular season with undefeated records. The Cornhuskers received the national champion title based on the ever-important AP poll. Under the McCallum plan, Nebraska and Penn State would have possibly faced each other in the title game.

Traditions can be hard to break, but it's time for college football to get with the program and find a way to crown the true champion.

Robbie McCallum is a sports reporter for the Emerald. He can be reached at coach_robbie@lycos.com.

Volleyball

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"In this offense, we have to be more aggressive and more physical."

Still chuggin' away

Oregon's nine victories are the most since 1997, and one more win will post the Ducks' first double-digit win total since 1996 (when the Ducks were 11-20 overall).

"We've learned so much more this year," Chute said. "We know we can play with these teams and beat them. We haven't won all the games that we want, but at times it is apparent that we can beat al-

most anyone."

The Ducks' sole Pac-10 win was at Oregon State on Oct. 20. The team is on its way to Arizona today to face the Sun Devils Thursday and the Wildcats Friday.

A block in the road

Coming into this season, the Ducks knew their biggest deficit was going to be their physicality — or lack thereof. Senior Halie Mazza has been the only consistent blocker for Oregon, although sophomore middle blocker Amanda Porter and freshman Alisha Stevens have made major contributions off the bench.

The Ducks are last in the Pac-10 in total blocks, averaging just 2.15 per game.

"Blocking is always a factor; it's the first line of defense," said Mazza, who leads the Ducks with a 0.95 blocks per game and is second with a .315 hitting percentage. "You can definitely struggle without a good blocking game. But we've worked on defense a lot, and our attitude is that nothing's going to fall."

Who's on top?

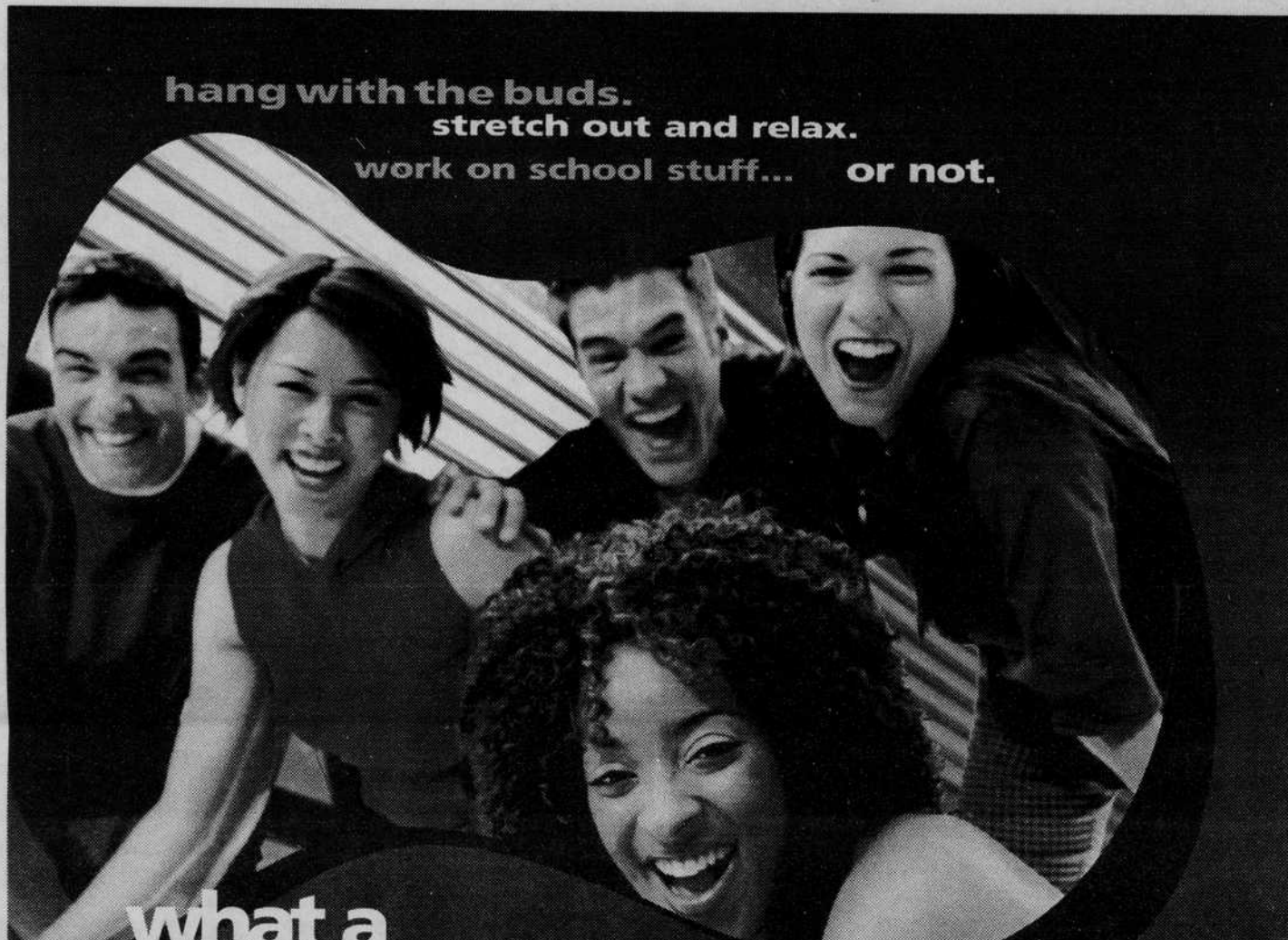
No. 3 Southern California and No. 8 UCLA face off in a cross-town rivalry Friday in what could decide the Pac-10 crown. With three weeks remaining in the conference schedule, the Trojans (19-1, 12-1) are tied with No. 4 Arizona (19-2, 12-1), while the Bruins (11-2, 16-5) sit just one game back.

Earlier this season, on their home floor, the Women of Troy defeated UCLA 3-1.

"This game is huge," UCLA senior middle blocker Elisabeth Bachman told the Daily Bruin. "The top of the Pac-10 [standings] rest on this game. They are our cross-town rivals, which helps us focus on wanting to beat them more."

Arizona will travel to Los Angeles to face USC and UCLA in two weeks.

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