



## Bellotti reportedly top option for USC

■ Oregon coach Mike Bellotti has emerged as a candidate for the vacant USC head coaching position

By Scott Pesznecker  
Oregon Daily Emerald

If the rumors are true, Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti may not be satisfied with a 9-2 overall record, top-notch facilities and a still-growing football program.

News reports that surfaced

Thursday afternoon said that Bellotti was in San Francisco talking with Southern California officials about becoming the Trojans' next head coach.

Bellotti was in the Bay Area on a recruiting trip when the stories broke.

Reports say that Southern California is offering Bellotti up to \$1.5 million for five seasons. Bellotti, who has led the Ducks to a 48-22 record in six seasons, is making about \$600,000 annually.

The Emerald could not reach

Oregon athletic director Bill Moos for comment, but Moos spoke with reporters earlier in the day.

"His name keeps coming up at various places — we know that, of course," Moos told CBSSportsline.com, "but we also know there's more than just buying Mike Bellotti. He and his family love living here, and we've got a pretty damn good football program going right here, too."

Apparently, Bellotti would only accept the coaching job at USC — assuming that talks are even taking

place — if Trojan athletic director Mike Garrett can sell Los Angeles as a place where Bellotti can settle with his family.

Also on CBSSportsline.com, from an anonymous friend of Bellotti: "He and his family are very comfortable in Eugene, and it's up to Garrett to convince him that they can be as happy in Los Angeles as they are at Oregon."

Moos said that Garrett hadn't called him to ask permission to court Bellotti, which is normal procedure, but that he knows of con-

tacts made between USC and Oregon's head coach.

Trojan coach Paul Hackett was fired Nov. 27 after his team finished tied-for-last place in the Pacific-10 Conference with a 5-7 overall record. In his three seasons as head coach, Hackett compiled a mediocre 19-18 record.

The Los Angeles Times reported this week that Oregon State head coach Dennis Erickson rejected a five-year, \$7.2-million offer to coach the Trojans.

## Oregon women race for the Rose Garden



Catharine Kendall Emerald

Junior forward Ndidi Unaka looks to play as well against Santa Clara as she did against Portland last Saturday, when she scored 12 points.

■ The Ducks stay focused on facing Santa Clara Saturday, despite some tough ranked opponents coming up

By Adam Jude  
Oregon Daily Emerald

A little unconventionally, the Ducks will be migrating north this winter. Well, OK, for just one game, and only about 100 miles to Portland.

Nonetheless, a change of scenery is in store for the 12th-ranked Oregon women's basketball team (3-0 overall) as it takes on Santa Clara in the annual Papé Jam at the Rose Garden. Tipoff is set for 6 p.m. Saturday.

The confines of the Portland Trailblazers' home, with seating for more than 20,000 fans, is a unique experience for the Ducks, who are used to the tight yet boisterous McArthur Court.

Oregon has won its last two contests at the Rose Garden, with victories against Portland State, 79-42, last year and DePaul, 86-57, in 1998.

"I've enjoyed playing there," junior guard Jamie Craighead said. "It's not as loud as Mac Court, but it's definitely a different atmosphere, and will be good preparation for Texas Tech."

Oregon will attempt to defeat its third ranked opponent of the year on Dec. 13 when it heads to No. 10 Texas Tech.



**On Tap:**

**Who:** Oregon women vs. Santa Clara

Oregon men vs. Massachusetts

**What:** The Papé Jam

**Where:** The Rose Garden

**When:** Women at 6 p.m.

Men at 8:30 p.m.

Turn to Women's, page 11

## UO men studying to pass tough test against UMass

Oregon gets an opportunity to bounce back from Tuesday's frustrating win

By Jeff Smith  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Head coach Ernie Kent is giving his Ducks an early start to final exam week Saturday when Oregon faces Massachusetts in Portland's Papé Jam.

Kent, who lately has been sounding like a professor grading his students, considers Saturday's game at the Rose Garden the first major yardstick for his 4-0 team.

"Saturday's test is going to be huge," Kent said. "Maybe [like] final exams before final exam week."

Kent is not expecting his players to ace this "test," but he would like to see some improvement from the current C-plus grade that he gives them.

"We're 4-0 playing C-plus basketball," Kent said. "We're not at an A level right now, yet we're going to get tested big-time this Saturday [and] that's going to give us an opportunity to get to that level."

The Ducks were not pleased with Tuesday's lethargic 66-60 victory against Portland but took solace in the fact that despite not playing their best basketball, they still remained undefeated. Many of the players believe they will step up their level of play because the game will be played

Turn to Men's, page 16



Catharine Kendall Emerald

Oregon coach Ernie Kent expects freshman Luke Jackson and the rest of the Ducks to improve.

