



Ducks mess with Texas

The Ducks are led by Joey Harrington on offense and Rashad Bauman on defense, as they hold off a strong Texas team to record their 10th win

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

SAN DIEGO — As the fireworks blasted overhead after Oregon's 35-30 Holiday Bowl win over Texas, Oregon defensive tackle Jed Boice walked up to one of the happiest Oregon fans on the field.

"Money man!" Boice yelled as he went in to embrace the smiling supporter, whose eyes were barely visible underneath his green Ducks hat.

As Boice let go of his bear hug, it was seen that the fan was none other than Nike CEO Phil Knight.

Knight was on the field of Qualcomm Stadium Dec. 29, seconds after the conclusion of the Culligan Holiday Bowl, soaking up every bit of Oregon's dramatic win over the favored Texas Longhorns.

"It was a great season and what a way to end it!" said Knight, who started attending Oregon games in early November again after his much publicized dispute with the University over labor issues. "God it feels great right now. We beat Texas! I mean, Texas. Look at that team. Wow!"

"You watch this team for four years and see how hard they work, and it's just great. It was really something special, wasn't it?"

Knight's views were surely echoed by all of the Ducks and their large showing of fans among the 63,278 in attendance on this south-

ern Californian night. The victory secured the first 10-win season in Oregon football history, and helped the Ducks end the season on a positive note and get that nasty taste of the Oregon State loss out of their mouths.

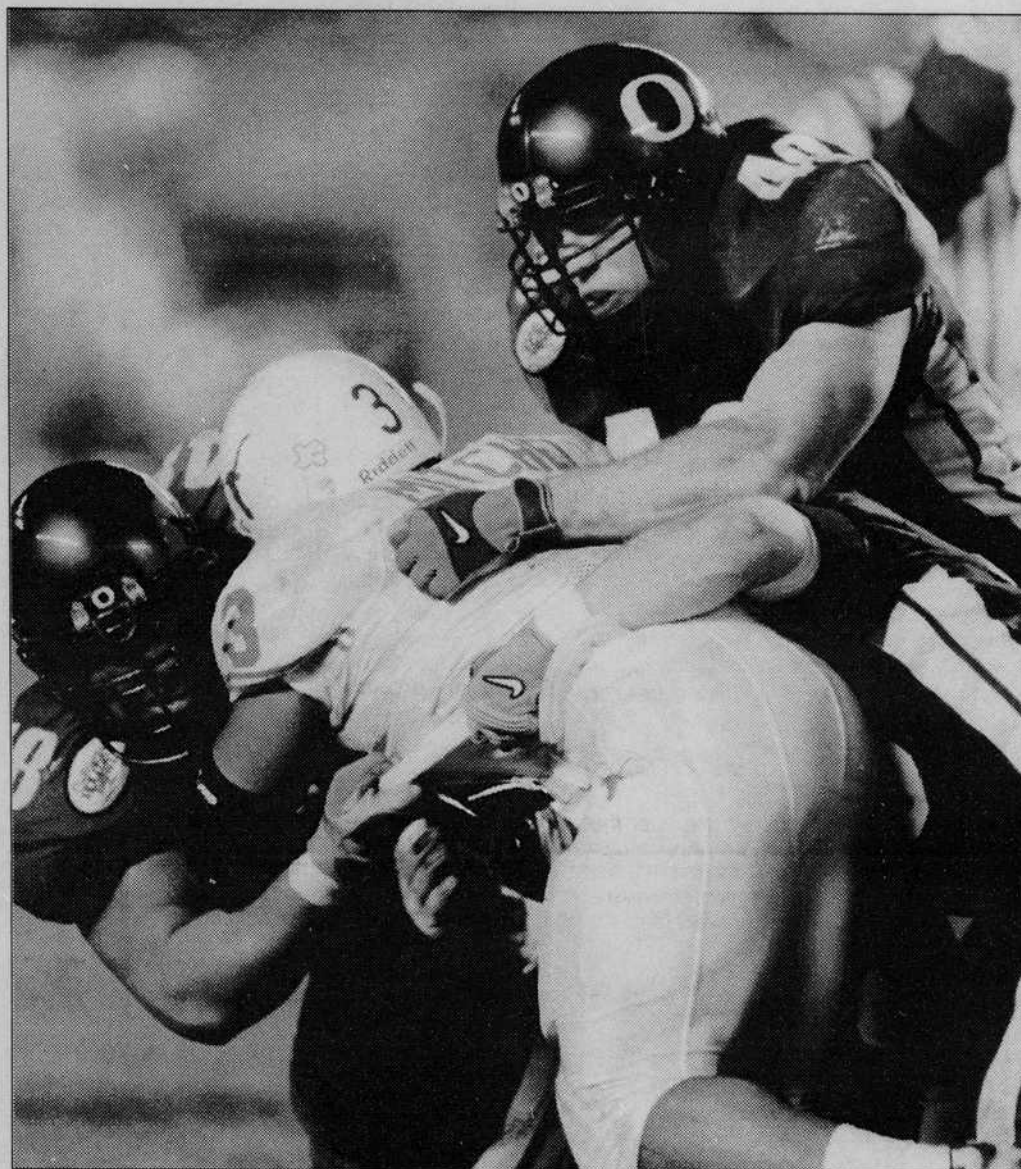
"That Oregon State game is long gone, man," defensive end Jason Nikolao said. "This game right here was our Rose Bowl and we played like it. Texas is a huge team, but we showed them that we deserve just as much respect."

"We are the Pac-10 co-champs and we showed why tonight," said rover Steve Smith, who snatched one of the more impressive interceptions of the season in the first quarter. "It was a war and there was a lot of emotion going around. Victory's so sweet. If you believe then you achieve, and that's been our motto all year."

But, as was typical of the 2000 Ducks, they had to fight and claw their way right down to the final moments of the game to capture the win. The Holiday Bowl has traditionally been a high scoring, shoot 'em out affair, and this game was no exception.

The teams entered the fourth quarter tied up at 21, with both eyeing a win that would put itself among the top-10 teams in the nation in the final rankings.

Oregon struck first in the fourth when Joey Harrington



Craig Mitchell/Dyer for the Emerald
Texas running back Hodges Mitchell experiences the wrath of an Oregon defense sandwich, as defensive end Saul Patu (left) and linebacker Matt Smith (right) bring him down. The talented Longhorn was held to just 41 yards on 17 carries.

TOMORROW:

Joey Harrington's outstanding Holiday Bowl
Oregon's senior class ends with a bang

UO men take out OSU in War

■ Oregon's Bryan Bracey, Freddie Jones and Anthony Norwood score a combined 63 points to lead the Ducks to victory

By Jeff Smith
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Oregon won the opening tip, but little else in the first 13 minutes of the game.

Missed layups, turnovers and even an airball plagued the Ducks as Oregon State took leads of 7-0, 15-3 and 28-15.

But then Duck guards Luke Ridnour and Freddie Jones knocked home back-to-back threes with five minutes in the first half. The threes sparked the Ducks to a 17-4 run that tied it up at 32 at the half in the Pacific-10 Conference opener.

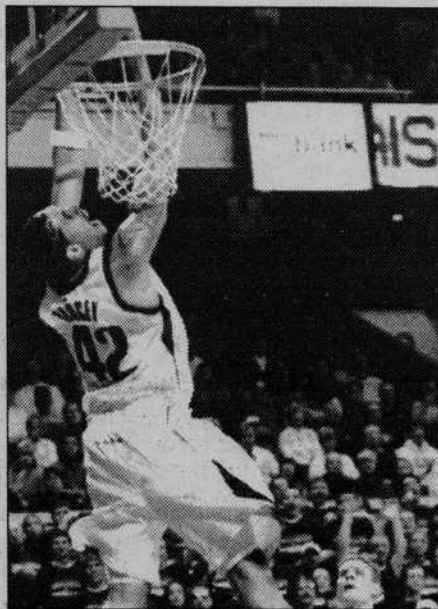
The rest of the story can be explained with these simple words from Oregon head coach Ernie Kent:

"That second half was obviously the best basketball that we've played all year."

Oregon (10-1 overall, 1-0 Pac-10) outscored the Beavers (6-7, 0-1) 21-10 to begin the final half.

The result was a solid 84-66 Civil War victory in front of a sold-out crowd of 9,087 at McArthur Court.

The win continued the best Oregon start in the Kent era and tied the 1996-97 team that also opened up at 10-1. The victory was



Adam Amato/Emerald
Oregon forward Bryan Bracey slams home the reverse jam off an alley-oop pass from Freddie Jones.

the Ducks' 14th win in their past 15 meetings with their in-state rivals and, coincidentally, it also marked their third consecutive 18-point win over Oregon State.

Turn to Men's, page 9

Ducks found inspiration in Fightertown, U.S.A.



PEZ SEZ

SCOTT PESZNECKER

SAN DIEGO — People across the country affectionately refer to San Diego as "America's Finest City." After spending just a few days there, that lofty title seems deserving.

Everything I've ever heard people talk about the city seemed right on the money: The flawless weather, the incredible winter sunsets, the non-stop social gatherings in the downtown Gaslamp Quarter and all else the downtown had to offer.

But me, I always knew San Diego for something else; something better than great weather, awesome scenery and bustling city strips.

I'd think of my all-time favorite movie, "Top Gun."

Probably the high point of my entire winter break was walking into the Kansas City

Barbecue near the downtown waterfront, where they filmed the bar scenes in "Top Gun." For me, walking into that place was like entering a sacred shrine. Movie posters of Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis adorned the walls, along with pictures of F-14 fighter planes from the movie.

I couldn't help it — I had to buy a Top Gun T-shirt before I left. That's how cool this place was.

So, back to my column. What on earth does "Top Gun" have to do with Oregon football?

Plenty. Following the Ducks' 35-30 Holiday Bowl win against Texas Dec. 29, Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti sat beneath Qualcomm Stadium and reflected on his team's emotional win.

"We wanted to play everything right on the edge," he said, the gleaming Holiday Bowl championship trophy sitting just to his right. "We wanted to play one inch out of control."

Well, the Ducks did just that. At times it paid off, other times it didn't. But make no mistake, it was that Top Gun-esque attitude among the players and coaches that won

Turn to Pez Sez, page 9