

Oregon's Maurice Morris looks to run through Washington defenders on Autzen's OmniTurf. The turf was a big reason for Oregon's still existing home-winning streak.

Football

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20-game home winning streak to the loud, wild atmosphere inside of Autzen Stadium.

Opponents, however, may credit something else to the Ducks' success at home.

Autzen Stadium's aging OmniTurf has tripped up and slipped up its share of players in recent seasons. Opposing teams' quarterbacks, runningbacks and receivers sometimes name Oregon's outdated turf as one reason for losing the game.

But the turf will no longer be an issue in Oregon football, as Autzen Stadium will install NeXturf — a

turf not in use at any other collegiate facility in the nation — before the start of the 2001 season.

The Atlanta Falcons' training facility is the only place in the country, which consists of one-inch polyethylene fibers extending above the surface to simulate the grass-like blades, along with shorter texturized fibers knitted together below the surface to create a stronger, more durable fabric.

The finished product resembles natural grass in appearance, texture and performance. A one-half inch later of green rubber granules is spread throughout the turf, creating a non-abrasive surface that offers better footing and comfort for athletes. The turf is also easier

to maintain.

"We developed an evaluation consisting of 10 to 12 factors, with my main input relating to the impact on our athletes," Oregon strength and conditioning coach Jim Radcliffe said. "I was able to take a full run and slide on the surface and received no abrasions at all, which is unlike any other artificial surface we have been on."

"It also is a fast surface so it is resilient although not too soft, yet it could take a pounding without suffering any negative effects."

The NeXturf will be installed at Autzen Stadium this spring following the removal of the current OmniTurf. The project should be completed by late June.

Pac-10

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94 bottles of ...

When Washington State came out onto McArthur Court for warm-ups before Saturday's 81-66 loss to Oregon, Duck fans thought the budget might be running low in Pullman. After all, the Cougars only suited up seven players for the game.

In actuality, WSU coach Paul Graham suspended six team members — including his own son — for staying out at the Rock N' Rodeo bar in Eugene Friday night. Three of the players were underage, and all were out past the coach's curfew.

Graham told the Spokane Spokesman-Review that the team will reconsider the suspensions before the Cougars take on California and Stanford in Pullman this weekend.

Lute ... Skywalker?

The force was with Arizona coach Lute Olson in his return to the McKale Center last weekend. Less than a month after his wife

“We're back in the mix. It was a good weekend for us.”

Lute Olson
Arizona Coach

Bobbi died from ovarian cancer, Olson tried to steer his emotionally-charged team back onto the path to respectability.

It wasn't easy for the Wildcats. Arizona crushed then-No. 24 USC 71-58 Thursday night, but trailed UCLA 43-35 heading into halftime of Saturday's game. Whatever Olson said at the half worked, as Ari-

zona outscored UCLA 55-22 in the second frame to win 88-63.

"We're back in the mix," Olson told the Tucson Citizen. "It was a good weekend for us."

It's possible to replace "We're" with "I'm" and "us" with "me" in those sentences, as the coach finally returned to his second love behind his departed wife.

Beaver sightings in the Northwest

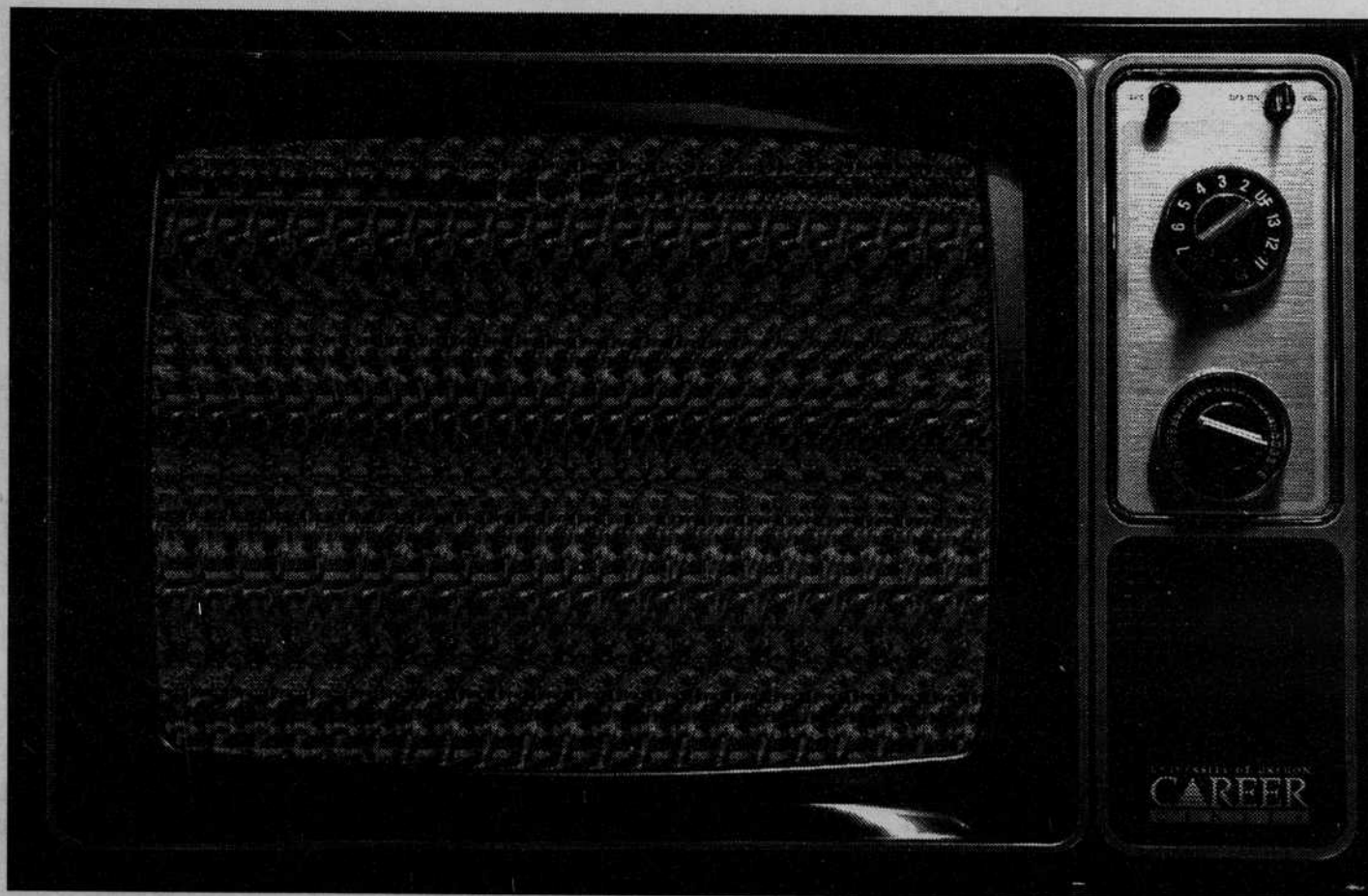
Oregon State pulled off something that in-state rival Oregon failed to do this past weekend: It beat Washington and Washington State.

Not only that, but the Beavers — who were trounced by the Ducks 84-66 in their Pac-10 opener — managed to beat the Washington schools by a combined 12 points in Corvallis. Looks like Oregon State got the best of the weekend's Northwest love-fest.



Oregon State senior guard Deandra Tanner helped lead the Beavers to solid back-to-back victories against Washington and Washington State last weekend.

Can you see it approaching?



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