

# There're plenty of reasons to smile about sports



## HAKUNA MATATA

JEFF SMITH

**H**ey, you, don't look so glum. Sure it's February, and sure the clouds just keep hovering over you, along with those professors and those schoolbooks you haven't even opened.

And yes, it's easy to get stuck in that same ol' wake up—go to class—watch TV—go to your other class—watch more TV—attempt to do your homework—and go to bed routine.

But, for the sake of sports, smile.

Smile because pitchers and catchers have reported for spring training.

Smile because March Madness is just around the corner, as well as CBS' Big Dance theme song.

Smile because the Portland Beavers return this season as the Triple-A baseball team of the San

Diego Padres.

Smile because the Portland Trail Blazers have the best record in the Western Conference.

Smile because Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant are still bickering.

Smile because of ESPN's "SportsCenter."

Smile because Big 5 Sporting Goods in Springfield is offering decent basketball shoes for less than \$25.

Smile because of [www.sportspages.com](http://www.sportspages.com), where you can go straight to the sports sections of many of the nation's top newspapers.

Smile because Mario Lemieux has returned to the NHL out of retirement in mint condition.

Smile because Michael Jordan hasn't decided to attempt to be a professional golfer thus far in his second retirement.

Smile because the Oklahoma State men's basketball team is continuing its season with passion and tremendous courage, despite the fatal plane crash that killed 10 people associated with the team less than a month ago.

Smile because "it never rains at Autzen."

Smile because the two Lukes on

the Oregon men's basketball team are only freshmen.

Smile because Dennis Rodman hasn't been in the news in forever.

Smile because where there is a VCR, there is a possibility of watching a sports movie.

Smile because Tony Gwynn, 40, is still with the same team that he started his career with back in 1981 and he still hits for over .300, even with bad knees, a sore back and a belly a tad bit too large.

Smile because of Wrigley Field and Fenway Park.

Smile because there have been six different teams in the past three Super Bowls.

Smile because Tiger Woods hasn't won a PGA Tour event since the Canadian Open on Sept. 10 (although he did capture the "prestigious" Johnnie Walker Classic on Nov. 19 for his only win since).

Smile because there are seats at Seattle's Safeco Field for only \$6.

Smile because you can search the name "Bobby Knight" on Napster, and it will let you listen to an actual audio clip of the red-faced, red-sweatered former Indiana coach just tearing into his players during halftime of some random game.

Smile because of the unpredictability of NCAA basketball, where a 1-10 Clemson team can beat a 11-0 top-ranked North Carolina team.

Smile because at this exact second, some 11-year old child is shooting baskets on some empty court and into a hoop with no net because of the love of the game and not the number on the check.

Smile because of "When The Crowd Goes Wild" and "And The Fans Roared," two must-have books that let you relive sports' greatest moments with colorful pictures, vivid written descriptions and an accompanying CD that contains the actual broadcast of that one-of-a-kind moment.

Smile because of buzzer beaters.

Smile because for the next 40 days until baseball's Opening Day, every single team believes it has a chance to reach the World Series.

Smile because of Oregon Lottery's Sports Action.

Smile because former Washington Huskies safety Curtis Williams has been released from the hospital for the first time since suffering a devastating spinal cord injury during an Oct. 28 game that left him paralyzed

from the neck down.

Smile because baseball great Lou Brock once said, "Show me a guy who's afraid to look bad, and I'll show you a guy you can beat every time."

Smile because you live on the West Coast where late sporting events don't start at 10 p.m.

Smile because Bill Walton's ear-splitting voice and analysis have been relatively non-existent thus far on NBA on NBC television broadcasts.

Smile because there is no joy in Mudville.

Smile because Eugene golfer Casey Martin took his case to the Supreme Court and stood up — on his bad right leg no less — for what he believed in.

And yes, even in such heart-aching, tragic moments as NASCAR legend Dale Earnhardt's shocking death during the final lap of the Daytona 500 Sunday, there's reason to smile.

Smile because Earnhardt went out doing what he loved. (We should all be so lucky.)

Hakuna Matata, folks.

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## Ultimate and rugby highlight Club Sports weekend

■ The Oregon ultimate teams prove to be strong in San Diego while rugby teaches its opponents a lesson

By Jesse Thomas  
for the Emerald

The Oregon Club Sports ultimate frisbee teams performed admirably last weekend, with the men advancing to the semifinals and the women to the quarterfinals, respectively, in the San Diego President's Day Tournament.

On the women's side, Oregon finished second in its pool on Saturday, going 2-2, and advanced to the quarterfinals in Sunday's pool, where it went 1-2.

The Ducks' first game on Sunday was against Berkeley, where the women found themselves down 5-1 early, but fought hard to secure the 11-10 comeback win. Oregon then met British Columbia, which entered the tournament ranked first, and defeated B.C. 14-7.

"We had to step it up and be the best team we could be," women's coordinator Izzy Stohler said.

The men started the tournament finishing 4-0 in their pool on Saturday, and had continued success, placing second in their pool on Sunday by winning big games down the stretch. The Ducks upset higher-ranked UC-San Diego 13-10

and made a strong comeback against British Columbia, after being down 3-6, to pull out the 13-9 victory.

"We scored some big games against powerhouse teams," men's coach Joshua Greenough said.

Then came Oregon State, who didn't cause any trouble for Oregon as the Ducks won by a count of 15-9. Next came the semifinals, with Oregon and Colorado facing off. The Ducks stayed close and made a strong push at the end, but lost 15-13. Colorado went on to win the tournament.

"The game against Colorado was huge," Greenough said.

Oregon will soon have another chance, though, when it will likely meet Colorado again in the Stanford Invitational on March 10-11.

The women will also be traveling to Stanford on March 3-4, where the Ducks will have another chance at British Columbia, along with other top competitors.

"Everyone played better than I have ever seen them play before this weekend," Stohler said.

**Rugby teams cruise to victory**

After the beating it took against Brigham Young, the Oregon Club Sports men's rugby team was fired up to capture a win and had no trouble doing so against Washington.

vidual race after shooting a 3-under-par 69 to give her a total score of 147. The round of 69 ties her career best. White must finish strong today if she wants to make a run at Duke's Candy Hanne-mann, who is leading the tournament, but is only seven strokes ahead of White.

Oregon junior Kathy Cho continued her solid play with a round of 77 that has her tied for 29th. Dawn Berry (77th), Lacy Erickson (tied for 82nd) and Katie Cunningham (92nd) round out the Oregon individuals.

The tournament wraps up today as host Arizona looks to protect its four-stroke advantage over second-place Duke.

The A-team dominated the Huskies, 47-6, and the B-team put on a strong performance as well, pounding Washington 27-15.

Washington only scored against Oregon on the B-team toward the end because of line-up changes that consisted of less experienced players. The men are currently 2-2 with two conference games remaining.

"We were due to break through," coach Bob Snyder said. "It is always really nice to beat Washington."

Oregon was satisfied to see all of its hard work pay dividends. Freshman Tim Schulze had a breakthrough game for the B-team and senior forward Jake Hays was strong for the A-team, scoring four times.

"It was reaffirming that we could put a good game together against a solid team like Washington," Hays said.

The defending league champions host Central Washington this weekend and then in-state rival Oregon State on March 10. The Ducks will need to defeat both teams in order to advance to the

32-team national tournament at UC-Davis.

"When we play our game, we are almost unbeatable, and our chance for nationals is good," Snyder said.

On the women's side, the club rugby team destroyed Southern Oregon, 80-0, last weekend in Ashland. The women have a lot of new players this year and are 1-0 for the winter.

"Everyone stepped up and played very well," senior coordinator Shelby Frail said. "It wasn't much of a competition for us."



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### Golf brief

The Oregon women's golf team improved upon its first-round score by 22 strokes, but only climbed one spot in the standings from a last-place 16th to 15th.

Led by the play of senior Jerilyn White, the Ducks shot a 303 Tuesday in the second round of the three-day Wildcat Invitational in Tucson, Ariz. While the odds for a dramatic final day comeback for the overall team are slim, the chances for White finishing high among individuals are strong.

White rose all the way to the No. 9 spot from No. 44 in the indi-