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Small Autzen alterations ready for fall kickoff

■ Oregon football will get a slight facelift this season, and fans should see minor changes around the stadium come September

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

When Oregon football fans set foot in Autzen Stadium for the team's first game against Wisconsin Sept. 1, it'll be a whole new ballgame.

Not only will Brooks Field feature brand-new NeXturf — a surface that supposedly looks and plays like grass — fans will also be treated to minor changes around the stadium, according to Oregon spokesman Dave Williford.

"Everything that had been targeted to be done will be done by that first game," Williford said.

"Phase Two" of the multi-million dol-

lar Autzen expansion project includes many changes that will prepare the stadium for the addition of seats next year.

Fans driving down Centennial Boulevard this summer may see the giant concrete structure being built behind the existing location of the scoreboard. That structure will be the new home of the giant scoreboard, as the expansion includes the addition of seats to the west end zone.

A second structure that fans will notice right away is a new ticket booth on the north side of the stadium, on Centennial Boulevard. The ticket booth will serve as a will-call and information booth as well.

The new ticket booth betrays another Autzen change. The Lane Transit District drop-off has been moved from the north end of the stadium to the south end. Buses will now drive up Leo Harris Parkway instead of clogging Centen-

nial, which takes the brunt of traffic for the games.

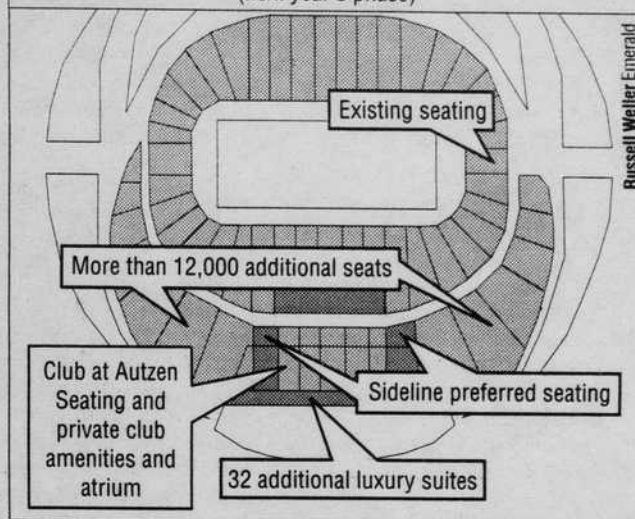
Finally, the expansion has shifted some fences that should make getting around Autzen easier next year. Fans will no longer have to take a "pass out" in order to pass out at the Moshofsky Center. Autzen's exterior walkway will be surrounded by a permanent fence that will make it part of the stadium.

"The main stadium entrances will now be on the north and south sides," Williford said. "People will find it much easier to get around."

While the changes to Autzen Stadium are minor and can't help bring the Ducks some wins, fans will still see differences in their beloved football shrine. Ideally, that won't mean too many differences in Oregon's winning ways.

Autzen Stadium Expansion

(next year's phase)



Eugene fends off NWL's best team to end eight-game slide



Jessie Swimeley/Emerald

Emeralds shortstop Jason Bartlett swings for the fences in a recent home game against Spokane. Bartlett and the Ems had little success on the road, going 1-7 last week.

■ The Emeralds return home after a 1-7 road trip against two of the league's top teams

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Eugene Emeralds' recent spate of games conjures up memories of that old McDonald's commercial with the little kid in the swing, who on the upswing catches glimpses of the golden arches.

Up. Laugh.

Down. Cry.

Up.

Well, you get the point. The Emeralds followed a seven-game winning streak with an eight-game losing streak last week on the road at Everett, Wash., and Boise, Idaho. The Ems broke that losing streak with a 5-4 victory Monday night over the Hawks of Boise.

The two streaks took the Ems from worst to first, then back to worst again in the Northwest League's West division. Eugene is now 14-19 on the season and at least 5 1/2 games behind the league lead.

Before Monday's game, Eugene manager Jeff Gardner was disappointed in his team's play, but he said he still holds hope for the rest of the season.

"Coming off that seven-game win streak, this road trip hasn't gone the way we wanted," Gardner told KPNW radio. "But it's a long season."

The Ems' recent losing streak came against two of the Northwest League's

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Itching, scratching, generally waiting for football

Do you remember San Diego? Can you recall the Ducks beating up on Texas in the Holiday Bowl to cap a near-perfect season?

Do you remember Corvallis? Those haunting images of Joey Harrington throwing interception after interception?

Reach back into your memory for last year's Rose Bowl. Do you remember Washington? Can you see, in your mind's eye, the Huskies getting all the credit for the Pacific-10 Conference's resurgence? Can you remember Tempe, and the Beavers getting even more credit (and bad press for being bad boys) for beating up on Notre Dame? Do you know why it won't happen again



Two minutes for cross-checking

this year?

Autzen Stadium, that's why. Twenty straight home wins, that's why.

Do you remember Autzen with flowers in her hair? Can you see the Willamette flowing by, and the Autzen decibel level flowing higher? Do you recall Washington wilting under that pressure? Can you see UCLA and Arizona and lowly California also wilting? Most teams would have

been disappointed about losing a trip to a major bowl in the regular season's final game. Most teams would have gone home with tails between legs.

Oregon licked its chops.

Starting Sept. 1, the Ducks will get another crack at the national scene. And thanks to last year's Oregon State loss, Oregon will once again be the underdogs. Once again, the Ducks will enter the season with an underrated defense, a looked-over receiving corps and a "weak" offensive line.

And, once again, Oregon will use that position to prove all the doubters wrong.

This season, Oregon has an ace up its sleeve. This time, the Ducks have the upper hand.

The Ducks have every major test, except UCLA, at home. Wisconsin, Utah, Southern California, Stanford, Arizona State and especially Oregon State must earn victories in the hostile confines of Autzen Stadium. Oregon's road games include Utah State, Arizona, California and Washington State.

But how about that UCLA game? If the Ducks are 9-0 heading into that game, or even 8-1, the Bruins will represent a major roadblock to a successful season. If Oregon can get over that hump, Oregon State could represent the most important game in Oregon football history.

The Ducks will have another strong cos-

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