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Lock down the hatches and players

Warning: The following column is based on an unsubstantiated story, one of those friend-of-a-friend-of-a-friend type things. You have been warned.

Hey Joey ... no more Taylor's, buddy. Forget about Rennie's Landing, and say "hasta la vista" to Rock 'n' Rodeo.

No more drinking for you, buddy. Time to play football.

You see, that friend-of-a-friend saw you throwing back a Full Sail at the bar the other night. My advice to you, buddy (you don't mind if I call you "buddy"), is to lay off the booze for a while.



Peter

Hockaday

Two minutes for
crosschecking

ranked up the wazoo and can't afford to have a hung-over quarterback come Sept. 1.

That goes for you, too, Onterio. Man, you came here from Tennessee and thought you could get away with some drunk driving? No more speeding, no more alcohol, no more nothing.

And don't think you're not accountable here, Coach B. You need to keep these boys in line. If I ran the Oregon football team, I would quarantine those boys in the University Inn, with shackles on their arms when they weren't practicing, so they wouldn't try to break free.

That's what we've come to, isn't it? Don't tell me you don't feel this hype. Don't tell me the Sports Illustrated, the ESPN, The Associated Press all mean nothing. It's different now.

You want respect? You got it, Ducks. Don't screw it up.

If you screw this up, forget about respect next year. Forget about ESPN calling you "the team to beat" in the Pacific-10 Conference. Forget about the 100-foot billboards.

It's taken a while to build this. Coach B., you know that.

Before Coach B. except for that Rose Bowl year, of course, people used to go "Oregon? Where the heck is Oregon?"

Then you won a few choice games last year, and they went, "Oh, I get it, there's Oregon."

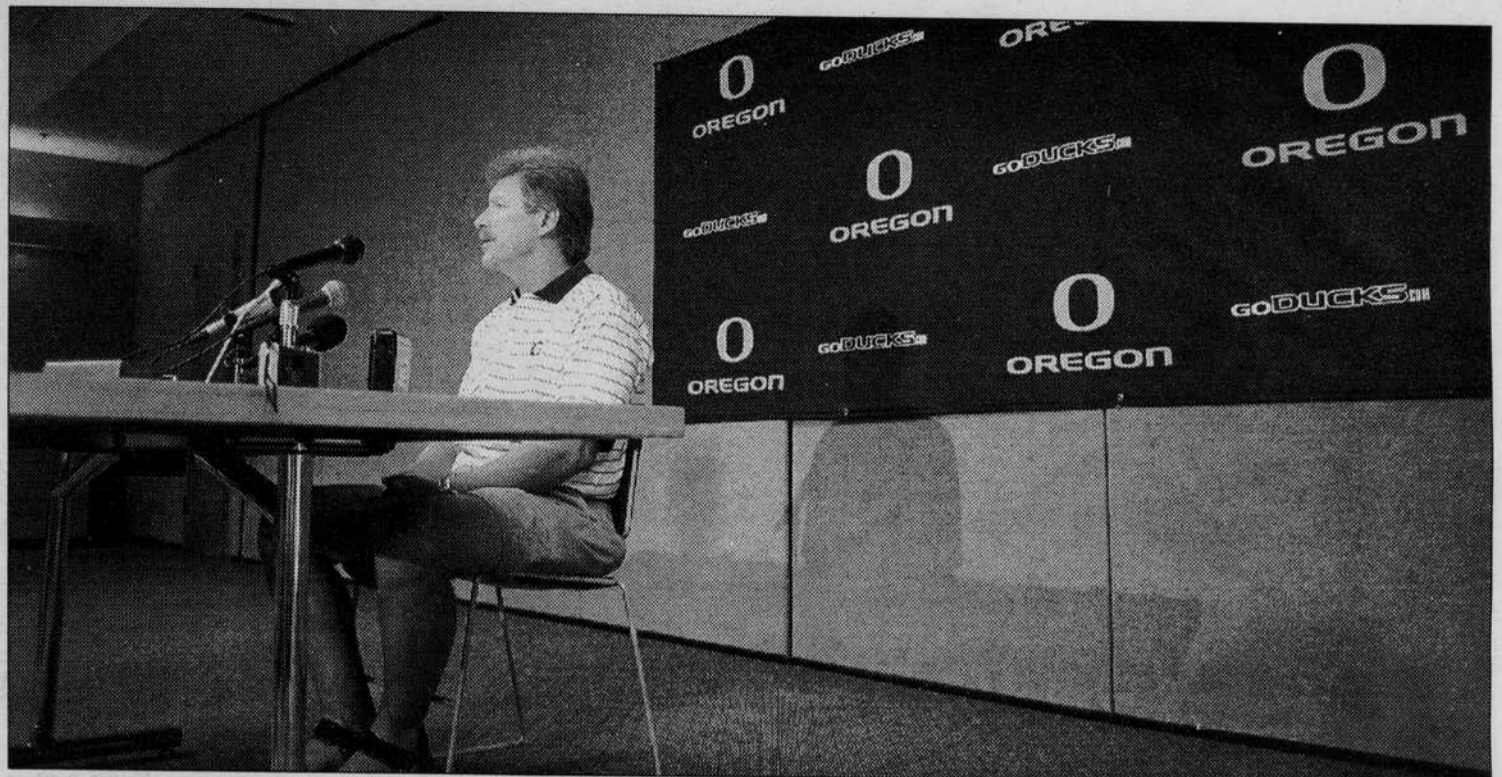
Then, you lost that little Civil War thing (did I even have to bring it up?), and they went, "Oh, I get it, Oregon STATE is where it's at."

So far this year, they've been going, "Civil War, man, that's the thing. That's the game to watch."

And Joey goes, "You know it."

"I feel like I didn't put my team in a position to win that game last year," Harrington said at Oregon's media day Friday. "That's what I want to do this

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Jessie Swimeley Emerald

Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti addresses members of the media Friday. Bellotti said that the Ducks are 'excited' about the nation's high expectations of Oregon.

Ducks ready to start playing football

■ Oregon tried to ignore the preseason hype and spoke of getting down to business at its annual media day Friday

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Joey Harrington summed up the thoughts of the Oregon football team in a few words at the Ducks' media day Friday.

"We've just been talking about the season," Harrington said. "Now it's time to play."

At their last official talk session before the start of daily double practices, Harrington and the rest of the Ducks tried desperately to cut through the hype —

Oregon was ranked No. 7 by The Associated Press Saturday — and just talk football.

The offense will be good. The secondary will be better. The special teams are a problem.

The season can't get here fast enough.

"This season began the day after we beat the University of Texas in the Holiday Bowl," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "It's about time we got started playing."

The Ducks' veterans began twice-daily practices Saturday after the newcomers reported last week.

Bellotti and Harrington, among others, touted the Ducks' offense as the team's bright spot

heading into fall camp.

"I've never seen this much talent on a football team," Harrington said. "I think defenses are going to have a tough time preparing for every facet of our offense."

Oregon will return many of last year's top skill-position players, including Harrington, running backs Maurice Morris and Allan Amundson, tight end Justin Peelle, and receivers Keenan Howry and Samie Parker.

"This is the best offense I've ever played on," Amundson said. "Some people say it could be Oregon's best offense ever."

The defense is more of a question, one that Bellotti said needs

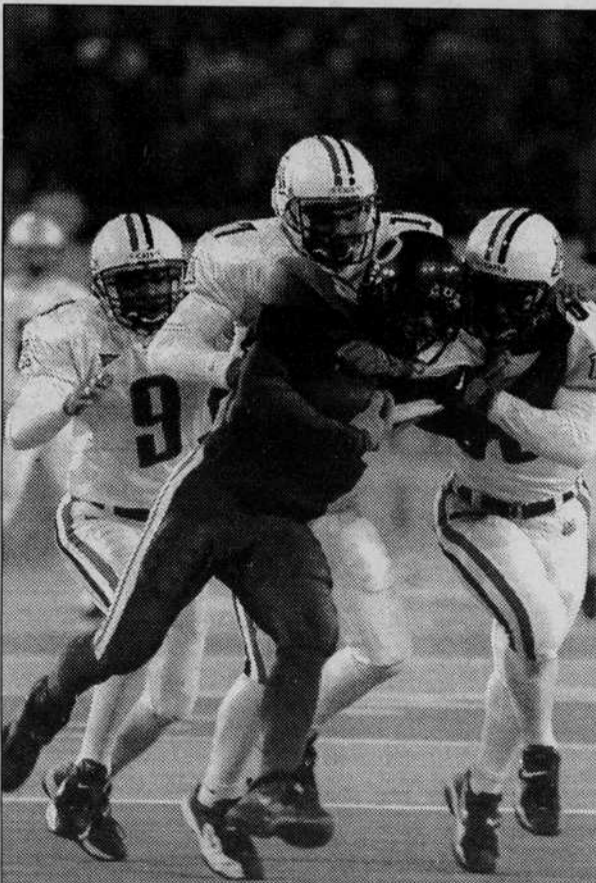
to be addressed in fall camp. The secondary is strong, and returning cornerbacks Rashad Bauman and Steve Smith are considered among the best in the Pacific-10 Conference. But the defensive line lost key players in Saul Patu and Jason Nikolao.

The Ducks don't see that as a problem.

"The defense will be different because we lost some guys," linebacker Kevin Mitchell said. "But every year guys step up. We look good and fast."

Although the players wanted to avoid it, the hype eventually crept into media day. Reporters fired off questions about the

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Emerald

Allan Amundson (34) hopes to keep his feet on Autzen's new turf.

New turf should give Ducks same old Autzen advantage

■ The Oregon football team says that Autzen's new NeXturf is fast and should help the Ducks this season

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Allan Amundson likes NeXturf. Allan Amundson ran a blistering 40 time of 4.33 seconds on NeXturf.

Any questions? Many people, including Oregon players and coaches, have been wondering whether their new turf will provide the same home-field advantage as the old, thin AstroTurf that lay on Autzen Stadium's floor until last year.

The verdict? "It's going to continue to give us a home-field advantage," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "This turf is just the next generation of what we had."

"It's a little faster than the old turf," linebacker Kevin Mitchell said. "But it's going to affect other teams as well." Mitchell's next four words summed it up perfectly.

"It's still Autzen Stadium."

While the Ducks will have only a month to prepare on the turf before their home opener against Wisconsin Sept. 1, other teams won't be able to prepare for it at all. Oregon is the first college to lay down the revolutionary playing surface.

Some Ducks, such as running backs Amundson and Maurice Morris, will surely benefit from the faster turf. Both backs have outside-running ability, and the fast surface will help them around the corners.

The Ducks hope to keep Morris fresh this season, as the running back tailed off toward the end of the season.

"We ran him down a bit last year," Bellotti said. "Our hope is to get Maurice some more rest this year."

Morris will get help from Amundson and transfer tailback Onterio Smith, who came to the Ducks from Tennessee this offseason. Smith had 189 yards on 31 carries as a freshman at Tennessee, before violations of

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