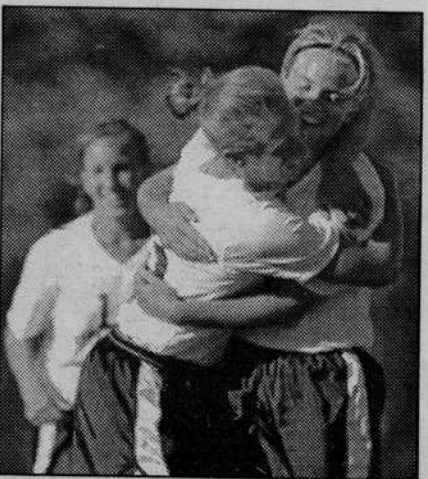
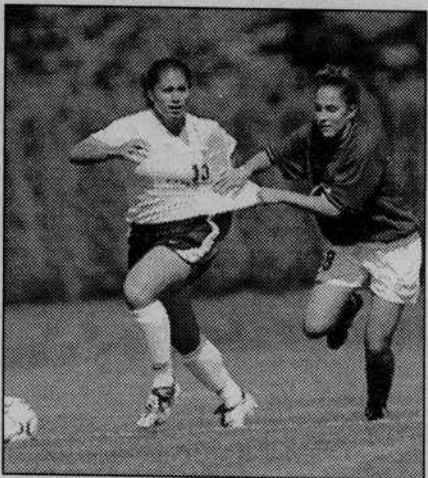
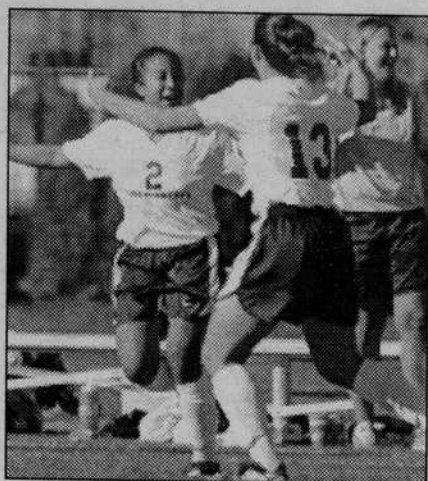
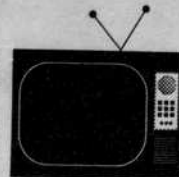


SPORTS

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Wednesday, October 3, 2001

Best Bet

NHL: Colorado at Pittsburgh,
5 p.m., ESPN

Offensive

■ The soccer team has vastly improved this season and no area has benefited as much as the offense

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

Suddenly, soccer.

After years of weak-as-water offense, under-seige defense and battered goalkeeping, the Oregon soccer team has found its boots this fall.

The result? A 5-1-1 record, the best start in school history, and a victory over a top-25 team with another top-ranked foe — No. 4 Portland — coming to Eugene today at 3 p.m.

"As much as last year was one step backward, we're now taking two steps forward," Oregon head coach Bill Steffen said.

While the entire Oregon squad has lifted off, no improvement is as visible as the Ducks' offense. Oregon scored eight goals in victories over No. 19 San Diego and Eastern Washington last weekend and has already scored 17 goals on the season. The Ducks' season record is 27.

Steffen said the offense is benefiting from the improved play of the entire team.

"The entire team is playing offense," Steffen said. "We're

attacking with 11 players."

The new Oregon offense must have opponents cringing at the names and goal totals. Freshman Nicole Garbin has

"The entire team is playing offense. We're attacking with 11 players."

Bill Steffen
Oregon head coach

five goals, including a school-record four game-winners. Senior Chalise Baysa — Oregon's all time leading goal-scorer — has four this season. Senior Beth Bowler has three. Sophomore Ann Westermark has three assists and one goal.

Garbin describes the team's new killer instinct in terms of history, despite her newcomer status.

"In the past, they haven't done so well," Garbin said. "Now they want to beat teams 7-0, 8-0."

Baysa is the star-of-all-stars for Oregon. She holds all of the school's major offensive records, and she is the focus of opposing defenses. Among Baysa's Oregon records are career goals, career points, season goals, goals in a game, career game-winning goals and games played in a season.

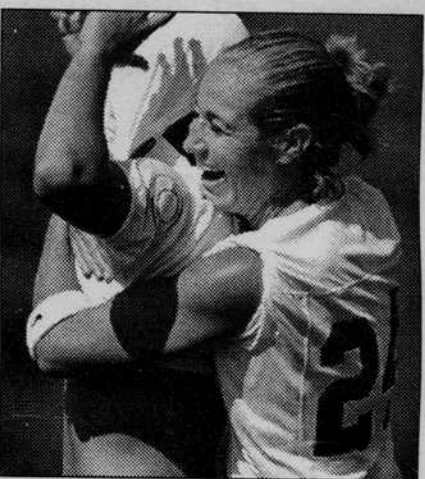
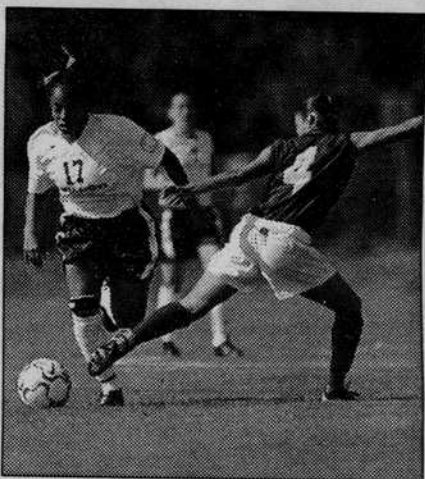
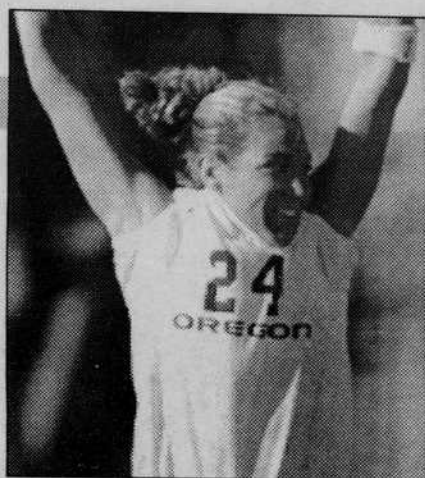
Garbin is the star for the future. The freshman has scored a goal in four of Oregon's five wins, and notched an assist in the one game she didn't net a goal in. When Garbin gets a point, Oregon is 5-0-0 this season; when she doesn't score, the Ducks are 0-1-1.

"Nicole is a great player," Westermark said.

Bowler is the up-and-coming star, as a senior. A forward trapped in a midfielder's body, Bowler has taken every chance she's been given to fire away this season, and the results have been three goals and two assists. Bowler leads the team in shots, with 27, and also ranks among the Pacific-10 Conference leaders in that category, after she took only 29 shots all last season.

"I'm just trying to finish strong," said Bowler, who echoed the sentiments of the team when she said the Ducks have a goal of their first

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Photos by Adam Amato Emerald

Kick started by an explosive offense, the Oregon soccer team is off to its best start ever at 5-1-1. Pictured above: Chalise Baysa (2) and Nicole Garbin (top left); Garbin (middle left); Ann Westermark and Elise Minvielle (bottom left); Beth Bowler (top right); Crystal David (middle right); Garbin and Bowler (bottom right).

Redshirt freshman receiver sparkles in starters' absences

■ Oregon needed a young receiver to step in and make an impact Saturday, and Keith Allen proved to be the one

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

First, starting wide receiver Jason Willis went down with a concussion.

Then, the other starter, Keenan Howry, was sent to the sidelines for the rest of the game after suffering a rib contusion late in the first half.

And just like that, all eyes were on redshirt freshman Keith Allen.

Granted, the setting Saturday night was Romney Stadium in Logan, Utah, and not the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, but it was still a big spot for a young wide receiver entering Oregon's game against Utah State with only one career reception.

With the team's leading receivers out for the rest of the game, Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti approached Allen and told him to be ready.

"He walked up to me and said, 'Hey, you gotta' go out there and make plays. Go do what you have to do,'" Allen said.

One would imagine that the butterflies began multiplying in Allen's stomach as he stepped onto the field, but Allen said they didn't stay in there for long.

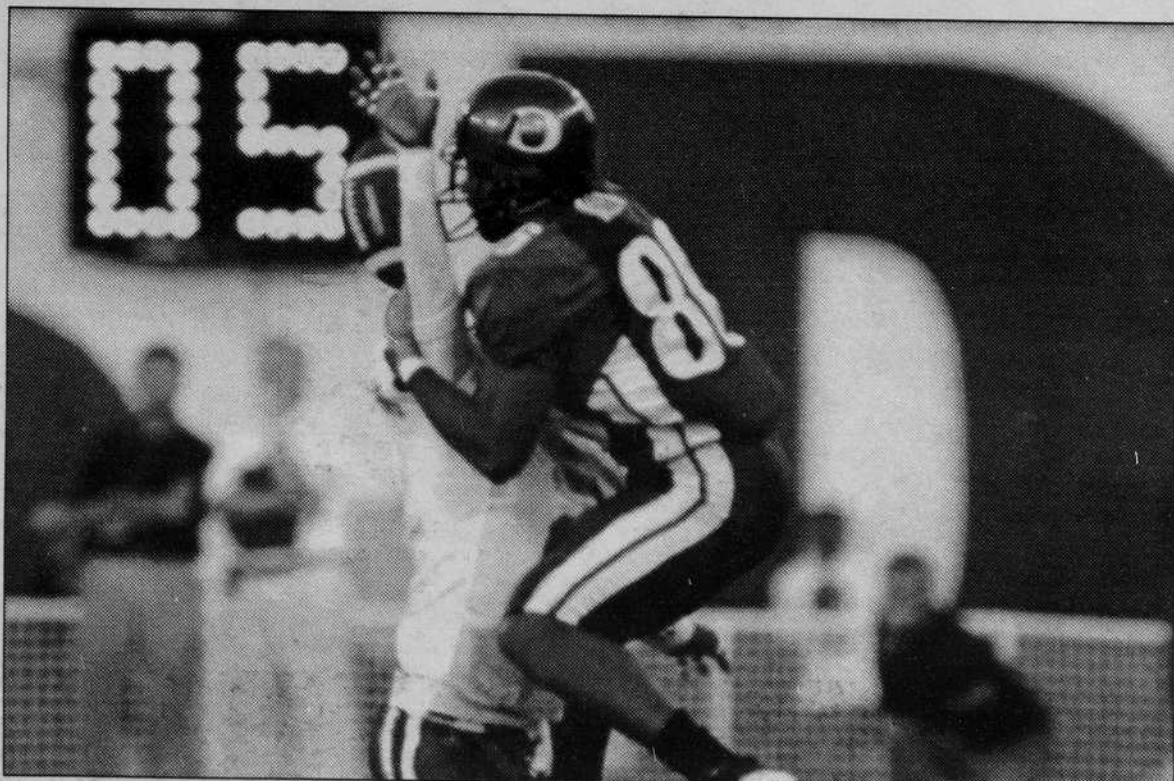
"I was a little nervous when I first got in there, but after the first catch, it kind of went away," Allen said. "I wasn't surprised at all by my catches. It just felt good to be out there."

Allen, who was the offensive scout team's player of the week twice last season, was Oregon's leading receiver Saturday after pulling in four catches for 92 yards.

"It gave me a lot of confidence because I got to see what I could do out there," Allen said. "I really didn't know because I hadn't really got the chance. I was just waiting my turn this whole season and the time came and I went in there and stepped it up. It felt great."

Bellotti said Tuesday that Willis has fully recovered from his concussion and will play this week

Turn to Football, page 12



Adam Amato Emerald

Oregon redshirt freshman Keith Allen came off the bench to play a huge role in Saturday's 38-21 victory at Utah State. His four catches for 92 yards was enough to make him the team's top receiver for the game.