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Best Bet
NHL: St. Louis at San Jose,
7 p.m., ESPN2



Tuesday, January 8, 2002

Wrestlers have mixed December

■ The Oregon wrestlers had a busy past month, including a win over powerhouse Nebraska

By Chris Cabot
Oregon Daily Emerald

While the Duck football players were battling the Buffs and enjoying their Fiesta, the Oregon wrestlers had concerns of their own.

Since the end of fall term, head coach Chuck Kearney's squad has wrestled in five different competitions — dual meets against Oregon State, competitions against Oklahoma State and Nebraska and a match Saturday against Northern Iowa. The Ducks (3-3 overall, 2-1 Pacific-10 Conference) also competed at the Tournament of Champions in Reno, Nev.

The team's schedule during their vacation from classes began on Dec. 12 in Corvallis against Pac-10 foe Oregon State. The Ducks, peculiarly, came out with a 16-16 loss. After six criteria had failed to determine a winner of the dual meet, criteria "g," which says that a winner is determined by the number of near falls, gave the Beavers the win because of their 2-0 advantage.

In the meet, freshman Martin Mitchell filled in at the 133-pound weight class for sophomore Jason Harless, who had suffered an ankle injury, and picked up his first Pac-10 win. Mitchell has started every meet since then.

The Ducks then hosted Oklahoma State four days later at McArthur Court and were handed a 30-3 spanking from the No. 2 team in the country.

Oregon's Brian Watson (141 pounds) picked up the lone win, but Kearney was also pleased with the way Mitchell and Shane Webster wrestled. The two freshmen lost their matches by a single point.

"The younger guys just came out really aggressive," Kearney said. "I'm pleased with the way they wrestled. It really bodes well for our future."

On Dec. 20th, the Ducks traveled to Reno for the Tournament of Champions where they finished seventh out of 15 teams. Senior Eugene Harris, who was ranked 10th at the time, won an individual title at the 165-pound weight class.

"If (Eugene) continues to improve, he'll have a chance to be very successful in the postseason," Kearney said.

The new year started well for the Ducks as they upset then-No. 16 Nebraska on Jan. 3. As had happened against Oregon State, the final score was tied, this time at 24-24, but this time the Ducks won by criteria "b" — the number of falls. Harris at 165, Casey Hunt at 149 and Dustin Fisher at 174 all pinned their opponents.

The Ducks traveled to Cedar Falls, Iowa, on Saturday to face No. 11 Northern Iowa. Individual wins by Harris, Watson and heavyweight Eric Webb, along with a forfeit win at 174 by Fisher, weren't enough for the Ducks to pull out another upset. Oregon lost 26-16.

The Ducks' next meet is 7:30 p.m. Friday against Michigan at Mac Court.

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A storybook ending for Harrington

■ The Heisman Trophy finalist led the Ducks to 38 wins over four years and finished with the team's biggest win ever

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

If it weren't for that ugly, left-footed punt, Joey Harrington could say it ended perfectly. But he'll just have to settle for a win and the team's best-ever ranking — No. 2.

In the biggest game of his career — under the spotlight of NFL scouts and a national audience — the senior quarterback had arguably the best game of his career in Oregon's 38-16 win over Colorado in the Fiesta Bowl Jan. 1.

"We made a statement today — 38 unanswered points — and shot down the hottest team in the country," Harrington said after the game. "We showed that we deserve to be playing for a share of the national championship."

The Ducks, of course, didn't get a share of the national championship, as Miami defeated Nebraska in the Rose Bowl to finish the season 12-0. But Harrington and the other 12 members of the senior class have been the most successful group in program history, recording 38 wins in the last four years (21 in the last two).

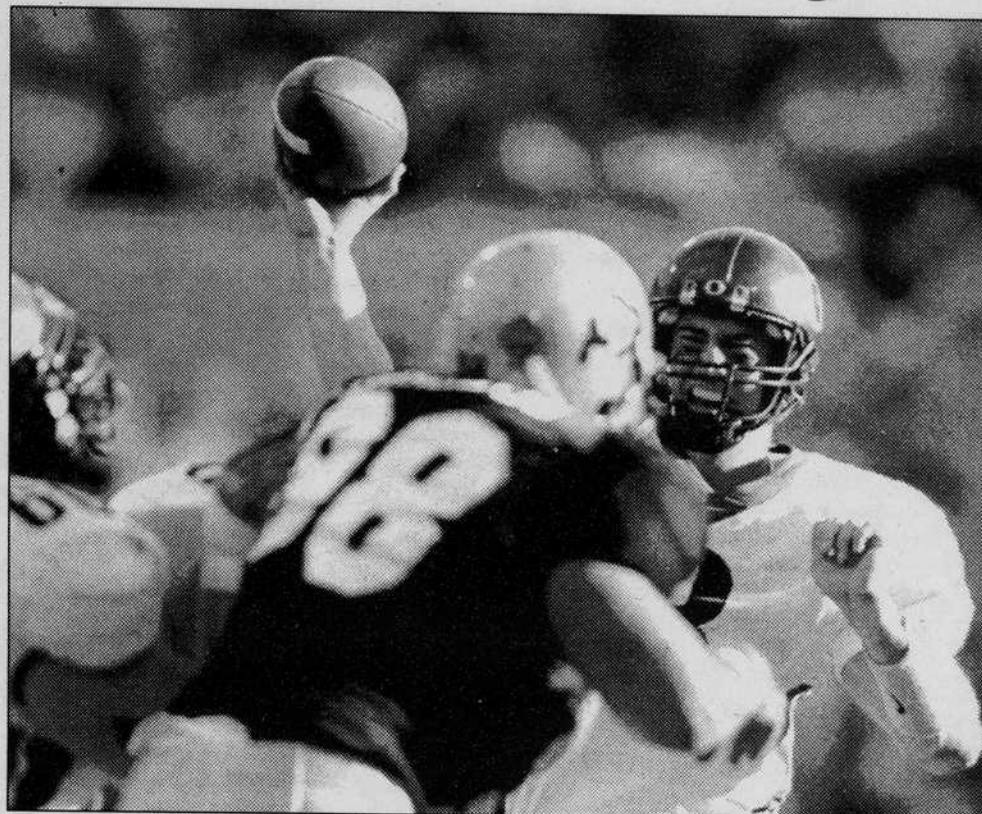
"That's something we set out to do — to raise the expectations," said Harrington, who is 25-4 as a starter. "I do believe we've raised the expectations for Ducks football."

With his performance against Colorado, Harrington may have also raised eyebrows in the NFL.

Trailing 7-0 in the first quarter, Harrington found a wide-open Keenan Howry for a 28-yard score to tie the game. From there, Harrington could seemingly do no wrong.

Like a perfect melody, Harrington, a jazz pianist, hit Samie Parker down the middle of the field early in the second quarter for a 79-yard touchdown, the longest passing play of Harrington's career.

"It was very important for him. He had an incredible game," senior offensive guard Ryan Schmid said. "We're all proud of him. I think he made a statement."



John Stoops for the Emerald

Senior Joey Harrington had four touchdown passes in Oregon's 38-16 win over Colorado in the Fiesta Bowl.

Harrington also hit tailback Onterio Smith for a six-yard score and tight end Justin Peelle for a four-yard touchdown. Besides an interception late in the first half — for which he redeemed himself with a solid tackle — Harrington's only blemish was a shanked punt that went out of bounds at the Colorado 18-yard line.

For the season, the Heisman Trophy finalist threw for 2,764 yards and 28 touchdowns (to six interceptions), while rushing for seven more scores.

The emotions of playing his final game in an Oregon uniform sunk in for Harrington prior to the Fiesta Bowl.

"It hit me last night," Harrington said after the game. "We were having our pregame meeting. Everybody was in there. We watched the highlight film and it kind of dawned on me and some of the seniors that this is the last time we are going to be spending the night together. ... It was really a special thing."

As was Harrington's performance on New Year's Day.

"Joey was Joey," linebacker Kevin Mitchell said. "He's our general."

He's also headed to the next level.

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Women's hoops searching for consistency in Pac-10

■ The Ducks are 9-6 overall and 4-2 in conference play

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

While most University students were enjoying their winter break, the women's basketball team was taking care of business.

With eight games in the last four weeks, December and early January proved to be an important stretch for the Oregon squad. And with Pacific-10 Conference play starting early due to the inaugural conference tournament in March, a fast start is more important than ever.

But conference play began ominously for head coach Bev Smith's team.

After splitting a pair of nonconference matches with Utah and Brigham Young, the Ducks traveled to Los Angeles Dec. 20 to begin their earliest conference start since the program joined the Pac-10 in the 1986-87 season.

Ahead 43-25 after one half of play at UCLA, the Ducks saw their lead shrink quickly in the second half before holding off the Bruins for a 76-67 win.

Staying down south, the Ducks faced their stiffest opposition yet, taking on the Trojans of USC. Oregon was hit with a surprise from the outset when senior Edniesha Curry

had to sit out the start of the game due to a left foot injury. She would eventually enter the game late in the first quarter, but she was not her usual self.

Despite connecting on half of their shots from the field in the first half, the Ducks were down big at the break, 43-34, and were not able to make up the difference in the second half. Junior Shaquala Williams led the Oregon attack offensively, leading the team with 29 points and posting five assists.

As was the case against UCLA, consistency plagued the Ducks. USC was vulnerable in the second half, but Oregon could not capitalize.

"Our big problem is our consistency for 40 minutes," Smith said after the game.

Sophomore forward Cathrine Kraayeveld made the first start of her career against pivotal conference foe Washington on Dec. 28. Kraayeveld, who leads the team in field goal percentage, gave the Ducks an inside presence and a shooting touch from the perimeter.

Logging 35 minutes against the

Turn to Basketball, page 3



Thomas Patterson Emerald

After missing three games with a foot injury, senior guard Edniesha Curry, a tenacious defender, returned to the hardwood Sunday.