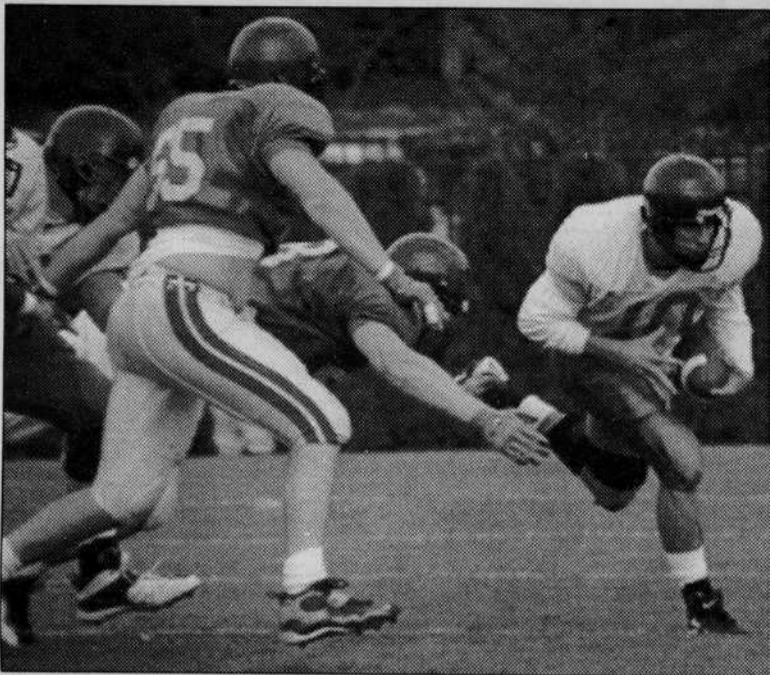


Football returns to practice field with questions



Adam Amato Emerald

Scott Vossmeier (10) is one of several quarterbacks looking to fill the shoes of departed quarterback Joey Harrington, who will likely be drafted in the NFL this season.

■ The Oregon team that finished the season at No. 2 needs to fill holes as it begins spring training

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

Just when you thought you could catch your breath, back comes football.

The year of the Duck continued Tuesday when the Oregon football team began the first of 15 practices this month, which will be capped off with the annual intrasquad Spring Game on April 27 at PGE Park in Portland.

After leading the Ducks to their most successful season in program history in 2001 — an 11-1 record and a No. 2 season-ending ranking — Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti must now find a replacement for NFL-bound quarterback Joey Harrington, who led the team to 27 wins in the last three seasons.

"That will be everyone's focus," Bellotti said of replacing Harrington. "We need to not just find out

who No. 1, is but who No. 2 and No. 3 are, because there will be an open competition."

Junior Jason Fife, Harrington's backup last season, is Oregon's only returning quarterback with playing experience, as he took snaps in three games over the last two seasons. The 6-foot-4, 216-pound Fife will battle redshirt sophomore Scott Vossmeier and redshirt freshman Kellen Clemens for the top quarterback spot.

"Certainly if we started today, Jason Fife would be the guy," Bellotti said. "But he'll be challenged. I think Scott Vossmeier is better, and Kellen Clemens has some things going for him that I think is going to make it a very interesting challenge."

Junior running back Onterio Smith and senior wideout Keenan Howry will be the Ducks' top returning offensive threats. Splitting time with Maurice Morris, Smith rushed for more than 1,000 yards last season. Howry, a third team All-American punt returner, is on

pace to become Oregon's all-time leading receiver.

"Probably if you looked at pound-for-pound who's the best performer on the football field, it would be hard to find a better player than Keenan Howry," Bellotti said. "In my mind, he's the consummate performer because he gets everything out of his size, his speed and ability."

Defensively, the Ducks return seven starters and an experienced defensive line from last year's Pacific-10 Conference champion team. The major void will be to fill the cornerback positions left by departed seniors Rashad Bauman and Steve Smith.

"With the exception of Stevie (Steven) Moore, our corner position is very raw," Bellotti said. "I think we have talent there, but it is inexperienced talent. There are a lot of prospects, but we've got to find the proven players."

E-mail sports editor Adam Jude at adamjude@dailyemerald.com.

Women's tennis finds needed success on East Coast swing

■ The women upset the No. 22 team in the country while the men struggle on the road

By Peter Martini
for the Emerald

After losing six straight matches and dropping out of the national rankings, the Oregon women's tennis team traveled to the East Coast with hopes of turning its season around.

It did. The Ducks beat three teams last week, including an upset victory over No. 22 Florida International. They lost two out of three doubles matches but won four singles matches to defeat the Golden Panthers, 4-3.

Oregon sophomores Courtney Nagle and Davina Mendiburu upset No. 27 Anneliese Rose and Cristina

Campana of FIU, 8-4, for the Ducks' only doubles win.

The addition of freshman Daria Panova allowed head coach Jack Griffin to adjust the lineup. Panova lost 6-4, 6-3, but played at No. 1 singles, which allowed the other players to compete at lower levels than they had earlier in the season.

Senior Janice Nyland, junior Monika Gieczys, senior Vickie Gunnarsson and Nagle won matches as the Ducks earned their most important victory of the season.

"It's a great win for us. They just beat a top-10 team (No. 9 Tennessee) last week," Griffin said. "It will be huge when it comes to NCAA Tournament time. It was an unbelievable team effort."

Earlier in the week, Oregon beat South Florida, 6-1, winning all six singles matches.

"We really took it to them in sin-

gles," Griffin said.

Oregon started the week with a 4-3 victory over Central Florida by winning all three doubles matches and three singles matches. Gieczys and Gunnarsson led the Ducks and finished a combined 6-0 on the trip. Panova is 2-1 in her short Oregon career.

The Ducks improved to 10-9 overall (0-8 Pacific-10). The team will travel to Louisiana State on April 13 and Tulane on April 14. On the following weekend, Oregon will wrap up the season and search for its first Pac-10 victory against Washington and Washington State.

Men struggle in Pac-10 play

The Oregon men's tennis team brought an 11-2 record into a week-long California trip and met its toughest competition of the season.

The No. 62 Ducks went 1-3, in-

cluding two Pac-10 losses, over the week. No. 5 Stanford and No. 20 California shut out Oregon to drop the Ducks' record to 12-5 (0-2 Pac-10).

Against the Golden Bears, the Ducks lost all six singles matches and three doubles matches. Oregon freshman Manuel Kost, junior Oded Teig and sophomore Greg Dubourdieu won their first sets, but were unable to earn victories.

They played worse against the Cardinal, with only Dubourdieu forcing a third set.

Oregon began the trip with a 6-1 loss to No. 74 Santa Clara. The Ducks lost two out of three doubles matches with Kost and sophomore Chris King winning 8-4. Dubourdieu won his singles match, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, to score the only point for Oregon in the contest.

"They were better at the details than we were," head coach Chris Russell said. "They made fewer mistakes."

Oregon beat Pacific, 6-1, before starting the Pac-10 season. They won five out of six singles matches and all three doubles. Teig won 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 at No. 1 singles to lead the Ducks.

The Ducks will play next on Friday and Saturday at home against Arizona State and Arizona. The following week, they host Southern California and UCLA before finishing the season at Washington on April 20.

"We played better today," Russell said after the loss to California. "But we're looking forward to playing at home."

Peter Martini is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

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SPAN 203	3:00 MW	MATH 242	4:30 UH
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