

SPORTS

Sports editor:
Brad Schmidt
bradschmidt@dailyemerald.com.

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OSU hunts for athletic director, financial answers

The school's athletic department is aiming to eliminate its massive debt, and is looking for a new sports leader to do so

By Brad Schmidt
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon State University Athletic Department has had its share of problems over the years — maybe even more than the school's sports teams. Of these woes, none stands out more than OSU's intercollegiate debt that, in the 1990s, reached close to a jaw-dropping \$12 million.

But to the relief of Beaver faithful, Athletic Director Mitch Barnhart was always there to pick up the pieces.

Until last week, that is.

OSU, now without its sports leader, is searching for a new athletic director that will see to, among other things, the elimination of

a debt that currently registers about \$5.6 million. Barnhart, who resigned July 15 to take a similar position at the University of Kentucky, had been instrumental in the reduction of the school's athletic debt.

"(Barnhart) did an extraordinary job in reducing debt," Oregon University System spokesman Bob Bruce said. "These kinds of deficits aren't common, at that magnitude, in intercollegiate athletics."

OSU Vice President of Finance and Administration Mark McCambridge said that before Barnhart arrived, the school was spending more money annually than it was receiving. But beginning in 1998 with Barnhart at the helm, expenses were reduced while revenues and private donations increased, McCambridge said.

And with the resurgence of OSU's football team and some Barnhart cost-cutting, the school was able to alleviate some of the

fiscal hemorrhaging that had plagued it since the 1980s.

Ducking the problem

Some intercollegiate debt, however, is common, said Tom Larson, University of Oregon assistant athletic director.

In fact, Oregon found itself in about \$1.8 million in the red in 1990. It was only through "belt tightening," Larson said, that the Athletic Department was able to make up for what he called "optimistic spending."

"Through most of the '80s, the department was in a deficit position," said Larson, who is also the department's chief financial officer.

Oregon's football successes in 1989 and 1994, however, placed the Ducks in the Independence Bowl and Rose Bowl and allowed the Athletic Department to dig itself out of financial troubles by 1996, Larson said.

But even now, after the monumental success of the football and men's basketball teams, Oregon still maintains a goal of "break even," he said. Numbers from fiscal years 2001 and 2002 saw such trends. In 2003, he said, repayment on a bond for the expansion of Autzen Stadium will cut into profits and render a near-even financial finish.

Much of the time, Larson said, athletic departments reinvest profits of previous years immediately while hoping to keep up with expenses. In 2004, he said, Oregon plans to use profits to expand its programs by adding another women's varsity team. From 1996 to 2002, Larson said, the department had only a "couple hundred thousand" dollars in reserve.

"We don't really have a large reserve, per se," he said. "We don't have a large pot of money sitting around."

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No Joey? Historians worry not of QB loss

Where's Joey Harrington when you need him?

With little more than a month before the Ducks' season opener against Mississippi State, Internet research reveals that sports "analysts" have asked themselves that same question. Many rendered an answer of "somewhere other than Eugene" and wrote off Oregon.

Rest assured, however. The Ducks will have the last quack, er, laugh.

According to collegesports.com, 15 independent organizations have submitted 2002 pre-season football rankings, and Oregon — last season's No. 2 finisher — has taken a dramatic hit. On average, the Ducks are ranked somewhere between 14th and 15th in the nation.

The good news: Oregon is ranked in the top 10 in one-third of the polls. The bad news: The Ducks' highest ranking is only a meager No. 7 and, in one poll, the team dropped to the distasteful position of No. 25.

All this comes a year after an unexpected run at the National Championship, a Pacific-10 Conference title and a 38-16 Fiesta Bowl blowout.

With no star quarterback, Oregon was dropped 13 spots down a group of charts that, come autumn, matter more than the New York Stock Exchange. The Ducks will prove that drop has no wings.

Oregon will be good — damn good. History has a tendency of repeating itself.

Three years ago, Oregon was in the same uncertain predicament. The Ducks lost Akili Smith — their starting quarterback. The loss came at the hands of Cincinnati — a Midwest NFL team. The Bengals had a high pick in

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A site to remember

Staff Writers
Oregon Daily Emerald

Last week, the Emerald published an in-depth look at the "new" Autzen Stadium.

For nearly 35 years, however, the stadium stood virtually untouched. Here is a look back at the original construction of the "old" Autzen Stadium — a structure that, to so many, housed more than a quarter-century worth of priceless memories.

Breaking ground

Construction has begun on Autzen Stadium, scheduled to be completed in the fall of 1967. The \$2.3 million stadium will seat 40,000 people.

— Oct. 21, 1966

Looking back at Autzen Stadium as it was this past October, not much difference can be seen between then and now, but construction is reported ahead of the revised schedule.

— Feb. 24, 1967

Students squawk over seating

Students protesting the proposed student seating arrangements at the new Autzen Stadium will carry signs and hand out fliers at the Saturday basketball game between the University and Stanford.

"Seeing how this is the worst seating of the other PAC schools, we will be presenting a plan that is at least comparable to what we have in the old stadium," ASUO



Autzen Stadium, seen here in a photo from Sept. 19, 1967, made its debut on Sept. 23, 1967 at the Ducks' season opener.

senator Dan Allison said.

Two plans were presented (by the University) to the students Feb. 9.

Plan I provides for University student seating to begin at the 20-yard line and extend to the 10-yard line on the other side of the field.

Plan II starts the student seating section at the 30-yard line and ex-

tends it around to the end zone.

— Feb. 24, 1967

The buy of the century

It's beginning to look like a stadium! What looked like a huge pile of mud and dirt not so long ago is taking form as the bowl-shaped Autzen Stadium, which will be the scene of Oregon football games for years to come.

The stadium is located on a picturesque 89-acre site across the Willamette River from campus, and is a short ten-minute drive from the University.

The Athletic Department calls the facility the "stadium buy of the century." Two and a quarter million is considered a small price to pay for 41,000 seats.

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Kent coaches men's junior USA Basketball team

The University coach will lead the 2002 USA Men's Junior World Championship Qualifying Team in Venezuela this week

By Brad Schmidt
Oregon Daily Emerald

Last season, Oregon head coach Ernie Kent had both the opportunity and the challenge of guiding what many call the most talented and gifted men's basketball team in the history of the program.

This week, he probably won't top that achievement — but he might come close.

Kent will coach the 2002 USA Men's Junior



KENT

This marks Kent's second appearance with a USA Basketball team. Last year, Kent served

World Championship Qualifying Team, a group of the nation's best players 18 years old or younger, Wednesday through Sunday in Venezuela. With a successful run in the tournament, the team would qualify for a spot in the 2003 FIBA Junior World Championships, which will be held next year in Malaysia.

as an assistant coach to a team that consisted of players 21 years old or younger. Kent led Oregon to a 26-9 record this past year, a Pacific-10 Conference championship, an appearance in the NCAA Tournament's Elite Eight and a tie for No. 6 in national polls.

Kent was selected to head the team May 2 by the USA Basketball Men's Senior National Team Committee and was approved by USA Basketball's Executive Committee.

The 12-member USA team arrived July 14 in Miami for training at the practice facilities of the NBA's Miami Heat before traveling Monday to Isla de Margarita, Venezuela.

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