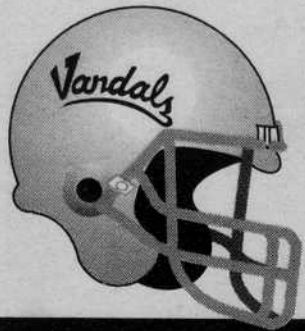


GAME DAY



Vol. 104 Oregon Daily Emerald Issue 19

Idaho vs. No. 13 Oregon

Target practice

The Ducks know that after finishing No. 2 in the country last year, every team they play this season will bring its 'A' game into Autzen

Adam Jude
Senior Sports Reporter

It's a position Oregon has known all too well. A situation with little realistic promise, only hope.

Idaho's appearance at Autzen Stadium on Saturday evokes memories of when Oregon was the perennial bottom-dweller, like the Vandals now, desperate for any glance at glory.

The Vandals are 32-point underdogs and have lost 21 straight games to the Ducks, dating back to 1951. But that doesn't mean Idaho will necessarily fold in the first quarter, especially after seeing the fight Fresno State put up last week.

For Oregon, that means playing with a large target on its back.

"The last few years, Oregon wasn't really a known program, so we'd go into games with nothing to lose," safety Keith Lewis said. "Now that Oregon is on top, people are trying to knock us off. We need to try to play with the same passion as when we're weren't anybody. I still think we still have something to prove."

Although their role has been reversed, the Ducks are trying to adjust to being the hunted while maintaining the mentality of a hunter.

"It's tough to prepare to a team when you're going in as the top dog," Lewis said.

Whether they're the pit bull or the poodle, the Ducks always seem to make games interesting — if not downright scary — in the fourth quarter. Or per-

haps it's the underdog, playing with nothing to lose, that keeps the game close.

Case in point: Oregon's 28-24 win over Fresno State last week, when the Ducks trailed by nine at the end of the third quarter, only to score 13 unanswered points in the final period.

By no means is Fresno State a pushover (the Bulldogs' two losses this year are by a combined six points), but the Ducks know they should've played better.

"Our kids have to understand that we were fortunate that we won a game we could have lost," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "We didn't always do what was in our power to do. We need to play hard for 60 minutes. We played hard at the beginning and played hard at the end when it counted (against Fresno State)."

"Great teams play hard the entire time."

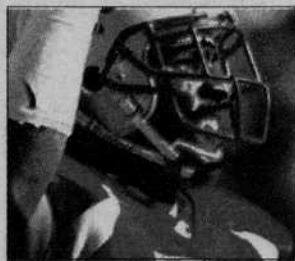
Enter Idaho, a team that Sports Illustrated ranked dead last out of 117 teams in Division I college football. A team that

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Bush league

Mike Bush leads Washington State into the Pac-10's biggest test this season, the Cougars' matchup with No. 6 Ohio St.

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Heisman hoping

Onterio Smith is one of a few early-season favorites for the Heisman Trophy, but he'll face stiff national competition.

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