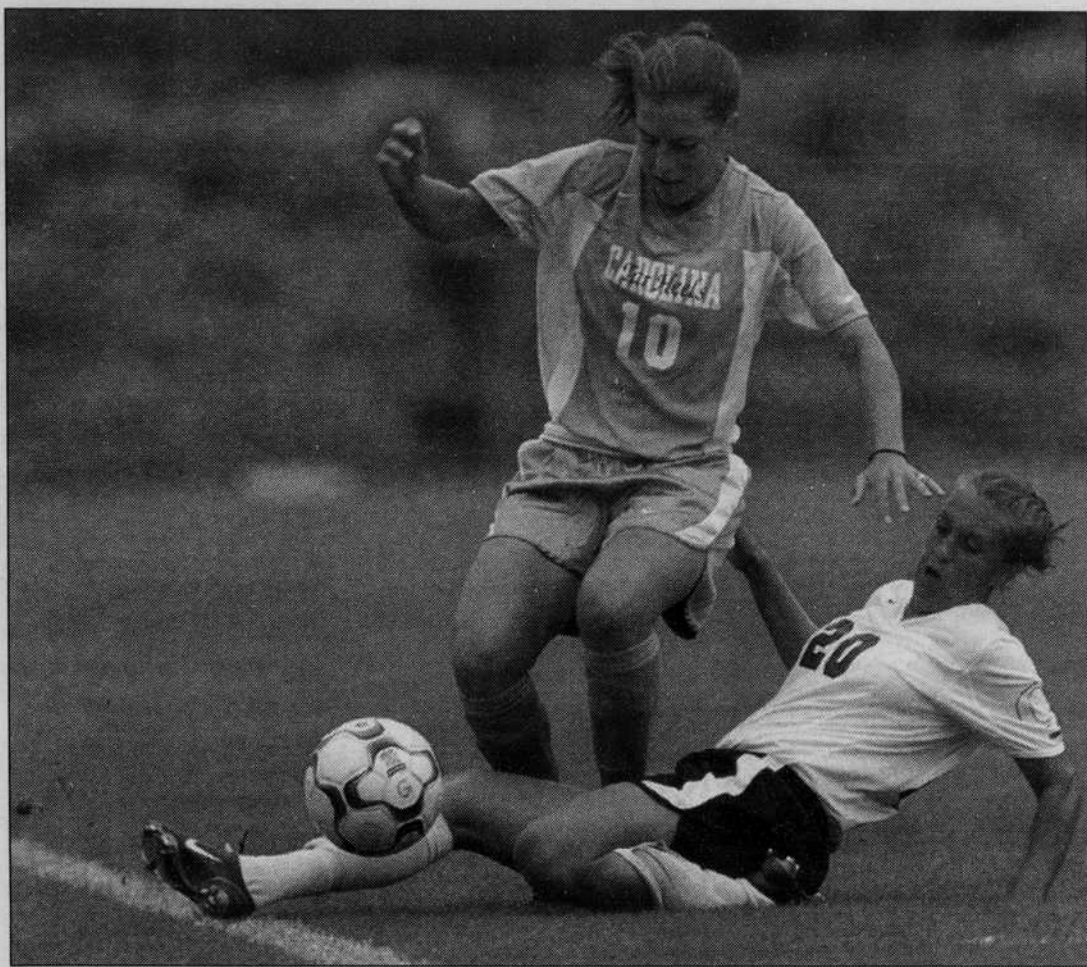


SPORTS

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Best bet
NFL: Denver at Baltimore
6 p.m., ABC

Monday, September 30, 2002



Adam Amato Emerald

Oregon sophomore Kelly Baird (20) takes out North Carolina's Sara Randolph Sunday. The Ducks eventually fell to UNC.

Ducks get Heel-ed by top-ranked UNC

Oregon battles with the perennial-contender Tar Heels, but the Ducks fall in the end, 3-0 at Papé Field

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's soccer team had its work cut out for it as it faced off against No. 1-ranked North Carolina at Papé Field on Sunday in front of a record 1,558 screaming fans.

The Tar Heels walked off with a 3-0 win in their first meeting with Oregon since 2000.

"It's the kind of game we've got to get better from," Oregon head coach Bill Steffen said. "Sometimes we got a little bit excited once we got to the attack, and we just have to build off of this."

Oregon (1-5-1) was outplayed by North Carolina (8-0-2) from the start, despite the Ducks' strong effort on defense.

The Tar Heels had a commanding presence from the beginning. Their first shot came only four minutes into play. On North Carolina's second attempt with 34:50 on the clock, sophomore forward Anne Morrell scored from within five feet to put the team on the scoreboard.

The Ducks continued to play hard and match North Carolina's intensity, and momentum swung their way as they pressured the goal with 27 minutes left.

Four minutes later, forward Sarah Denner broke away to give senior Amanda Orand a shot at a header which fell short of the goal for Oregon's first shot attempt. "We played really hard," Orand said. "It shows us what level we can play at, and it helps us step up to their level."

North Carolina soon regained control, and goalkeeper Sarah Peters was put to the test as she had two more shots come her way with 20 minutes to go, but didn't let them pass.

Peters had a season-high 10 saves, with nine of them coming in the second half.

"She's the best goalkeeper we've seen all year," North Carolina coach Anson Dorrance said. "She has the potential to play in the WUSA. She's that good."

The Tar Heels fired off four more shots before Oregon found life again with 14 minutes left in the first half. Forward Valerie Mayer had a golden opportunity in the 32nd minute but was called offside.

The Ducks seized momentum towards the end of the first half, holding the

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Carolina gives Oregon a blueprint for success

The Tar Heels humble the Ducks on Sunday, but Oregon learns from the experience

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

Dean Smith, the legendary North Carolina basketball coach, once wryly noted that his school wasn't a basketball school, despite the rich tradition surrounding the hoops powerhouse.

No, he said, North Carolina is a women's soccer school.

On Sunday, the Oregon Ducks found out why that's true as they put up a monumental effort and still fell to the Tar Heels, 3-0 at Papé Field.

North Carolina has a list of accomplishments longer than a Sarah Peters goal kick, and at times Sunday it felt like the Ducks were playing a media guide instead of a soccer team. The Tar Heels have won 17 national championships in this fashion, by intimidating and bullying opponents.

But two Oregon coaches spent Sunday staring down the present,

not the past.

"We love the challenge, we want to coach against the best," Oregon assistant coach Keri Sanchez said.

Sanchez and head coach Bill Steffen both have close ties to the soccer powerhouse from Chapel Hill. Sanchez was a standout player for North Carolina from 1991-94, and among other accomplishments scored the winning goals in the Tar Heels' national championship games in 1992 and 1993.

Steffen was an assistant coach at North Carolina, focusing on the de-

fense and goalkeepers, from 1993-95.

"It was more emotional from a standpoint of, 'What can we do against them?'" Steffen said. "We want to know where we stack up against the best team in the country."

Steffen's defense showed North Carolina-esque tendencies in holding the Tar Heels to only three goals. But that may have had more to do with Peters, the Oregon goalie who Tar Heel coach Anson Dorrance called "the best goalkeeper we've seen all year." Peters made several

leaping saves and showed poise in net.

Dorrance said that Steffen's deft handling of 'keepers is not something he learned at Chapel Hill.

"He came in with everything he needed," Dorrance said, laughing.

Dorrance has crafted the most successful college sports program in history — going back to Dean Smith's comments, North Carolina is known nation-wide for its soccer program — by building a system that

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Arizona looms as Ducks begin Pac-10 title defense

Despite being 4-0, Oregon seeks consistency in its offense as it opens Pac-10 play Saturday in Arizona

Adam Jude
Senior Sports Reporter

And now the fun begins.

After opening the season with four home wins over four non-conference teams it was favored to beat, the Oregon football squad begins defense of its Pacific-10 Conference crown Saturday at Arizona.

From an outsider's perspective, it's easy to start matching up the Ducks' future opponents. UCLA awaits in two weeks for a rematch at the Rose Bowl. No. 20 USC comes to town Oct. 26 in what is always an entertaining battle. In November, the Ducks will face Washington State, Washington and Oregon State in consecutive weeks.

But Oregon's calendar apparently doesn't read any further than Saturday.

"We're not looking past Ari-

zona," said head coach Mike Bellotti, whose team jumped up a spot Sunday to No. 7 in the ESPN/USA Today coaches' poll, despite not playing last week.

"We're the defending Pac-10 champions. We gotta go out there and get it," he said.

Getting a third straight conference championship (the Ducks shared the title in 2000) won't be easy. Seven Pac-10 teams were ranked in the top-25 at some point during the preseason. Even California, a team that finished with only one win last year, is among the top teams in the Pac-10.

"The Pac-10 is the best conference in the nation, there's no doubt about that," said Bellotti, who is 37-19 in the Pac-10 in seven seasons.

Bellotti has said if a team goes undefeated in the Pac-10, it should be playing for the national championship.

"We're going to run through the Pac-10 — you can quote me on that," said junior safety Keith Lewis, who sat out with an injury

in Oregon's only loss last year, a 49-42 Stanford victory at Autzen Stadium.

The run must start this week in Tucson, where the Joey Harrington-led Ducks torched the Wildcats for 63 points last season.

This season, Arizona finished 3-1 in the preseason, narrowly defeating North Texas 14-9 at home Saturday. The Wildcats lost to Wisconsin 31-10 on Sept. 21.

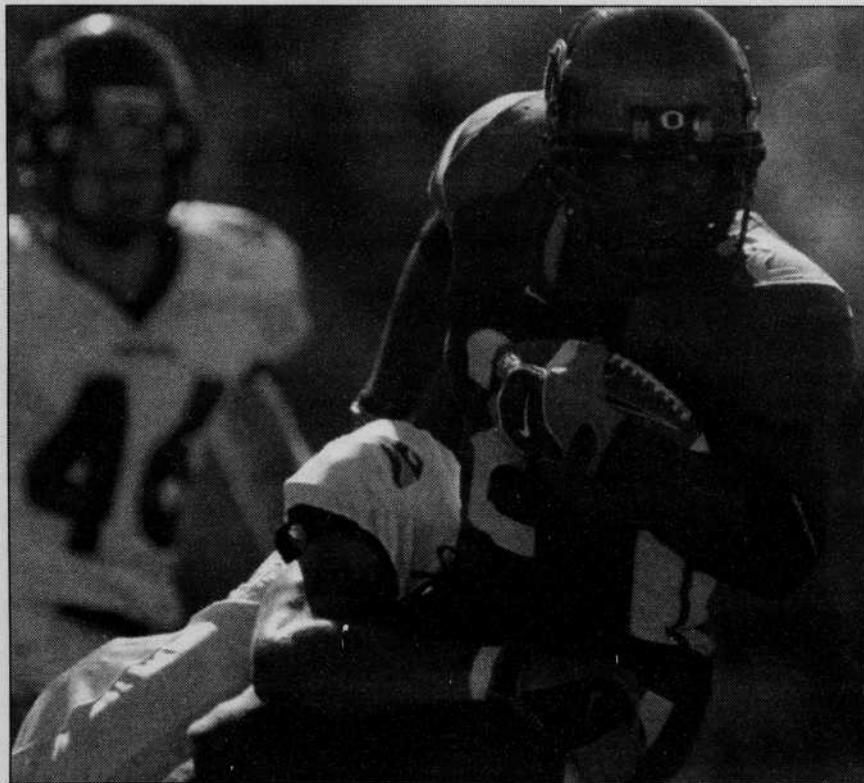
As for Oregon, Bellotti said there's still much room for improvement. He said he is looking for consistency from his offense, particularly in the passing game.

While tailback Onterio Smith put up Heisman-level numbers in the preseason (467 yards, seven touchdowns), first-year starting quarterback Jason Fife has been shaky at times.

Fife's numbers are impressive: 880 yards passing, and eight touchdowns to one interception in four games. But Bellotti said Oregon has become a "quick-strike team" with few sustained drives.

Bellotti said he expects Fife to

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Adam Amato Emerald

Onterio Smith and the Ducks look towards the Pac-10 season, hoping it provides answers.