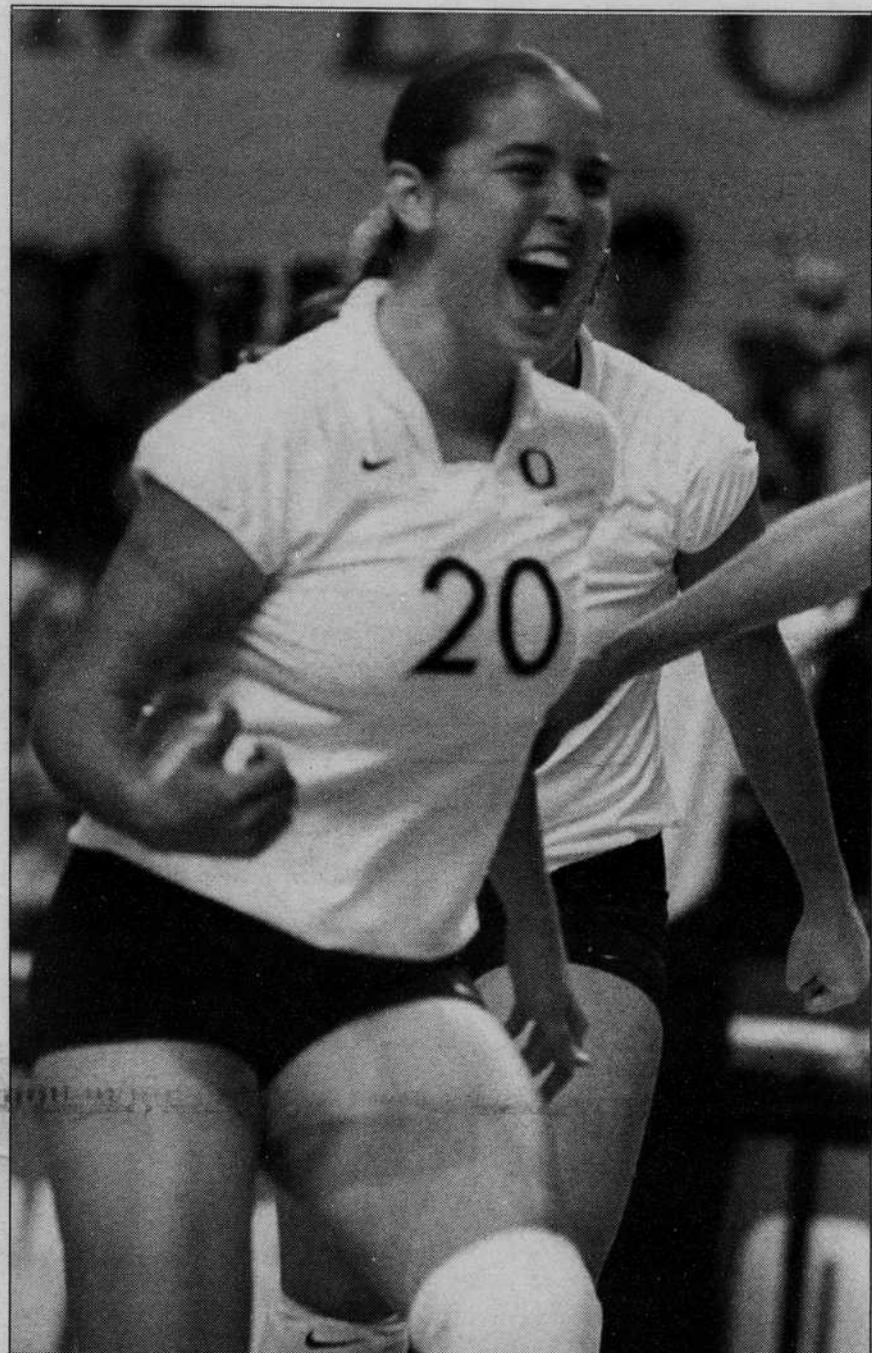


Wednesday, October 16, 2002



Emerald
Lauren Westendorf has helped spark the Ducks to 10 victories this season, although she is still looking for her first career Pac-10 win.

'West' coast girl

Lauren Westendorf has been a force for the struggling Oregon volleyball team

Hank Hager
Sports Reporter

You hope for the best for athletes like Lauren Westendorf.

You hope Oregon volleyball can overcome a 28-match Pacific-10 Conference losing streak. Because, you know, wins and losses, no matter how close or far apart, tend to play with the mind.

When an athlete like Westendorf chooses Oregon over schools like Duke, Wake Forest, Georgia Tech and Washington State, it means the program has potential. But that potential, still ripe for the picking, has not been realized lately.

Still, Westendorf, who visited Oregon to "humor" head coach Carl Ferreira, loved the school and the program so much she decided her senior year at Centennial High School in Bakersfield, Calif., that she wanted to spend four years in Eugene.

In two seasons of Pac-10 play, the sophomore has yet to win a conference match. But that hasn't made her regret her decision.

"I love Oregon," Westendorf said. "I knew when I came on my recruiting trip I was going to be so happy here. It extends past volleyball. I couldn't have picked a better university.

"Volleyball has had its rough times and we're struggling, but we're bouncing back and working hard."

As a senior at Centennial, Westendorf was recruited by a number

of schools on the East Coast as well as a wild card from the Northwest.

Washington State emerged as a potential suitor for the star from Southern California, a former all-area pick in 1999.

Her father, Phil Westendorf, was an All-American honorable mention selection in baseball as a designated hitter for the Cougars in 1975. Her mother, Mary, also attended school in Pullman.

So the onus to attend Washington State was clearly there. Because of their allegiance to the WSU, her parents had decorated their Bakersfield residence with Cougar memorabilia.

Yet, when Ferreira came calling, Westendorf listened.

"I've known Carl since I was 10 years old," Westendorf said. "He and my family are good friends. Carl is kind of the reason I came on my visit here. I had been recruited by Oregon and was interested, but had some other schools I was a little more interested in.

"Carl said, 'Just humor me and come on a visit. Just humor me and if you don't like it, that's fine, but just come and see me.' I did and I loved it, and I knew that Carl was an amazing coach and would take care of me."

Westendorf's first season as a Duck could be described as anything but successful. On an individual level, she had a typical freshman campaign: start on the bench, then as the season moves along, earn more and more playing time until a starting spot opens up.

The only problem is, she didn't play in a Pac-10 match that pro-

duced a win. So far this season, she has gone seven conference matches without a victory.

In two seasons with Oregon, the 6-foot outside hitter has experienced a 25-match losing streak in Pac-10 play. That's tough.

"I haven't won a Pac-10 match yet but neither has Katie (O'Neil) or Lindsay Closs, and we're really not focused on that," Westendorf said. "We're really just, day in and day out, working hard, and we know we are an amazing team with amazing potential. We're really optimistic and really keeping our eyes on a win and playing hard and playing Oregon volleyball."

As a freshman, Westendorf played in 56 games for the Ducks and averaged .70 kills per game. Overall, she ended the season with 39 kills in 136 attempts with 38 errors for a .007 hitting percentage.

Those aren't exactly All-American figures.

So, during the summer, after her job at a law firm, Westendorf strived to improve. She made the weight room her second home and undertook an extensive training program.

"She's probably the most improved returner we have," Ferreira said. "She also deserves credit for an amazing amount of sacrifice she put in from a work-ethic standpoint. She spent the whole last winter, five days a week, riding her bike to the Moshofsky Center, and — we've got a net set up in there — working on her game."

On the summer weekends, she
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Smith rushes toward trophy

The running back is playing up to the stature of his new 100-foot New York billboard

Oregon Notes

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

Onterio Smith is finally living the 100-foot New York life. Smith is playing like a 100-foot running back, too.

Smith's massive billboard with the phrase "O Man" went up in New York's Times Square this week, replacing Keenan Howry's "We're Back" poster.

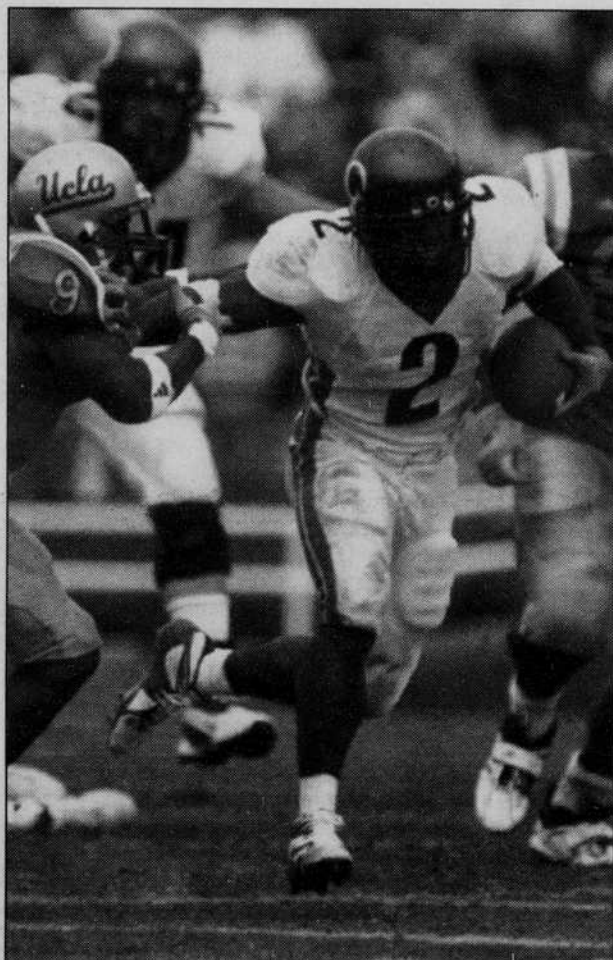
The star junior rushed for 152 yards against UCLA in the Rose Bowl on Saturday, a feat that extended his 100-yard game streak to an Oregon-record six contests. Smith has averaged 127.3 yards per game this season and has nine touchdowns.

"I was hampered early by the hamstring, and that's no longer a problem, so my movements are going to improve each week," Smith said.

Smith, who suffered minor injuries, including a hamstring pull at the beginning of the season, could plot his 2002 campaign on a standard bell curve. He started with 124-yard performances against Mississippi State and Fresno State, ran for 104 and 115 yards against Idaho and Portland State and opened Pacific-10 Conference play with performances of 145 and 152 yards against Arizona and UCLA.

Smith's Pac-10 numbers could, eventually, be Heisman Trophy numbers.

Smith is currently ranked across the map in various national Heisman polls. He is second in ESPN Magazine writer Gene
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Mark McCambridge Emerald

Onterio Smith (2) has improved his rushing totals in the past four games against Idaho, Portland State, Arizona and UCLA.

Brand's agenda may harm former school

Anyone remember Myles Brand, the former president here at Oregon?

No? Well, get used to the name. Bobby Knight knows it by heart.

As Indiana University's top administrative executive, Brand fired the legendary head coach of the Hoosier program. Brand was threatened, and his wife — a professor in Bloomington — even had to have police presence in her classroom. To top it all off, Knight has gone on to Texas Tech and has since won over the student body at that campus.

Last week, Brand was named as the fourth executive director in the history of the NCAA, effective Jan. 1, 2003.

The man in the spotlight in 2000, as the Knight issue came to a boil, has been thrust into the limelight once again. Not only does he favor academics over athletics, he doesn't exactly have an extensive background in collegiate sports.

Still, Brand has already helped reject some proposals for college sports that were more absurd than sensible. He rejected proposals of keeping freshmen from playing sports and banning some of the more high-profile sports.

Most importantly, he rejected a proposal to detach athletics from the University so that athletes could be paid. Whoever came up with that one needs to have his or her head examined.

Still, Brand has a long way to go before he wins over
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Hank Hager
Behind the dish