

SPORTS

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Best bet
MLB World Series:
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5 p.m., FOX

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Drunk Ducks ruin contests for sober fans

As we passed groups of people walking down Kinross Avenue to the football game Saturday, my roommate and I noticed a group of guys walking down the street with open beers in hand.

"What are they thinking? 10 a.m. is way too early to be drinking," my roommate said, astonished that anyone would actually have started drinking this early in the day.

I laughed at her bewilderment and reminded her how much of the student section is drunk by halftime. We laughed at memories of drunk students doing funny things last season as she dropped me off and went to work.



Mindi Rice
The girl and the game

During the football game Saturday afternoon, my friend Karen and I sat in one of the front rows of the student section. Toward the end of the second quarter, four female students sat down behind us.

The worst part was that we could smell them before we saw them. It didn't help matters that they left an empty bottle of whatever alcohol they had taken shots of before they found seats on the ground below our bench.

They were overly friendly to the extent of being annoying and by halftime the only things I could smell was their alcohol and the marijuana some guy across the aisle was smoking.

The group of four left shortly after halftime started, and the pot-smoker disappeared about the same time. For a while, we could breathe easy.

At the beginning of the fourth quarter, two of the four females and two male friends returned to the seats behind Karen and I.

It appeared they had found some more alcohol while they were gone, because they came back smelling stronger than before. They were also quite a bit more belligerent than they had been during the first half.

In the eight football games I have attended during my two previous football seasons as an Oregon student, I was never once bothered by the drunk people. They keep to themselves and their drunk friends — I watch the game.

This line was crossed during the fourth quarter Saturday when, after one particularly pitiful down by the Ducks, I swore a bit and hung my head. I was tired of watching the downfall that was so obviously in the very near future.

One of the drunk females put her hand on my shoulder and told me not to be sad, the Ducks would be okay, and then turned back to her male friends who were talking loudly and quite disgustingly about the multiple females in their view.

I didn't turn around and ask why she felt the need to tell me it would be okay. I just kind of half-smiled and exchanged looks with Karen.

Football games shouldn't be remembered for the drunk, falling-over student section. Football games, from a fan viewpoint, are about cheering your team on with friends. Football games are where you can show your Duck spirit and Eugene pride, and scream as loudly as your heart desires.

The student section, or any part of the football stadium's seating, is not the place to bring leftover jungle-juice or that fifth of vodka no one finished Friday night.

There are many students who have children and bring them to the games. They sit in the student section and the little ones learn how to differentiate the smell of beer from vodka by their 10th birthday. It is quite an example to set for them.

If drinks are necessary for watching the game, then why watch the game? There are students who would take a ticket if they could get one and watch the game — sober — instead of taking up a seat and polluting the fresh air the other fans need to breathe.

Mindi Rice is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

Man of Troy

Oregon native Troy Polamalu is the star of a surging USC defense

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

He is a traditional player in a traditional program. A hard-nosed guy on a team that practically invented the phrase.

For the men of Troy, he is Troy, the man. Southern California safety Troy Polamalu, the only player from Oregon on the 90-something strong USC roster, epitomizes the Trojans' rugged defense this season. After missing games against Washington State and California, Polamalu returned with a passion against Washington on Saturday, recording five tackles, one pass deflection and an interception against the Huskies.

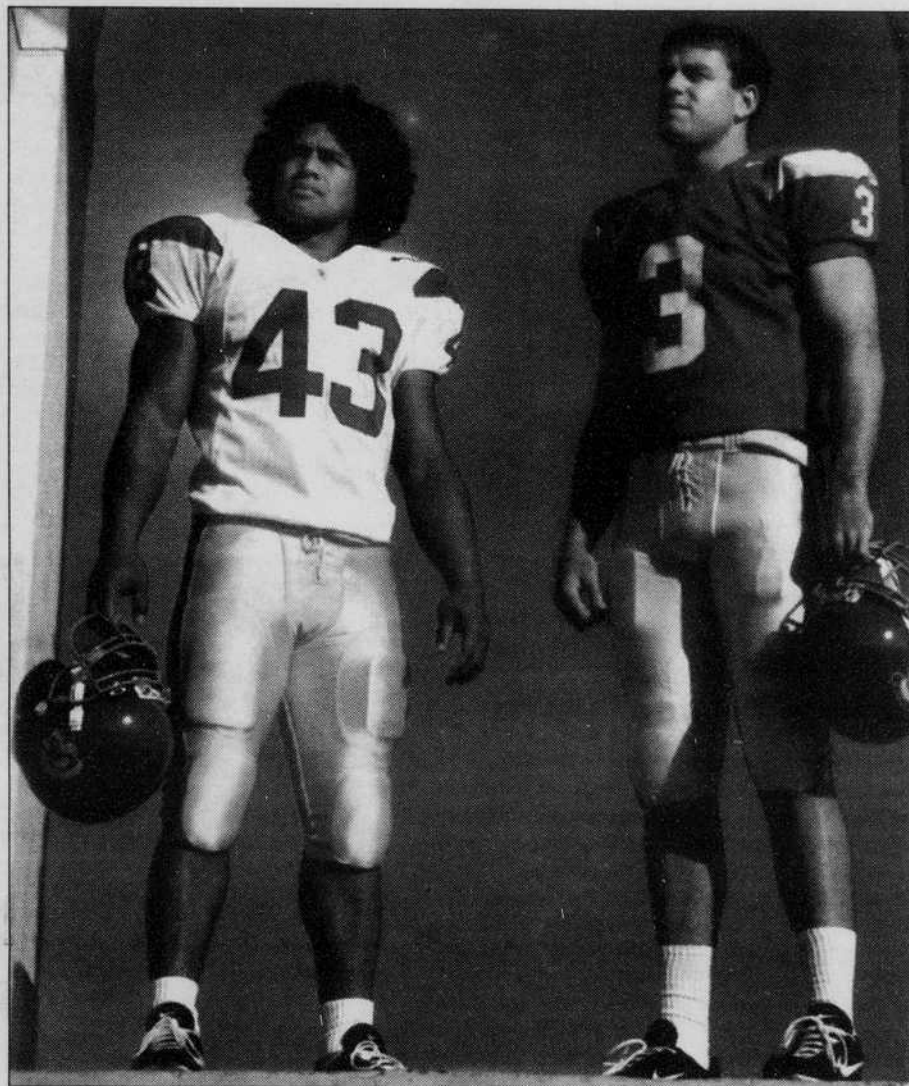
And on Saturday, Polamalu will come back home. The senior from Winston, Ore., is perhaps the best Oregon product in the Pacific-10 conference. He's surely the most fearsome.

"He is a tremendous football player and it shows in every phase of the game," USC head coach Pete Carroll said.

Versatility is Polamalu's biggest strength. In 2001 he blocked three punts, ran back two interceptions for touchdowns and led the team with 118 tackles. He finished second in the Pac-10 in tackles per game, but also ran back two punt returns for more than 27 yards each.

He is fast, strong, and all over the field. "All I can say is wow," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said about Polamalu and his cohorts in the USC secondary. "They have amazing make-up speed and they'll hit you and it is so impressive. USC is playing with a different attitude and that has made them a better team."

Polamalu's attitude has always been that of a true football player, the same kind of attitude that many Oregon-resident Ducks adopt. Plus, a little bit of Samoan blood never hurts.



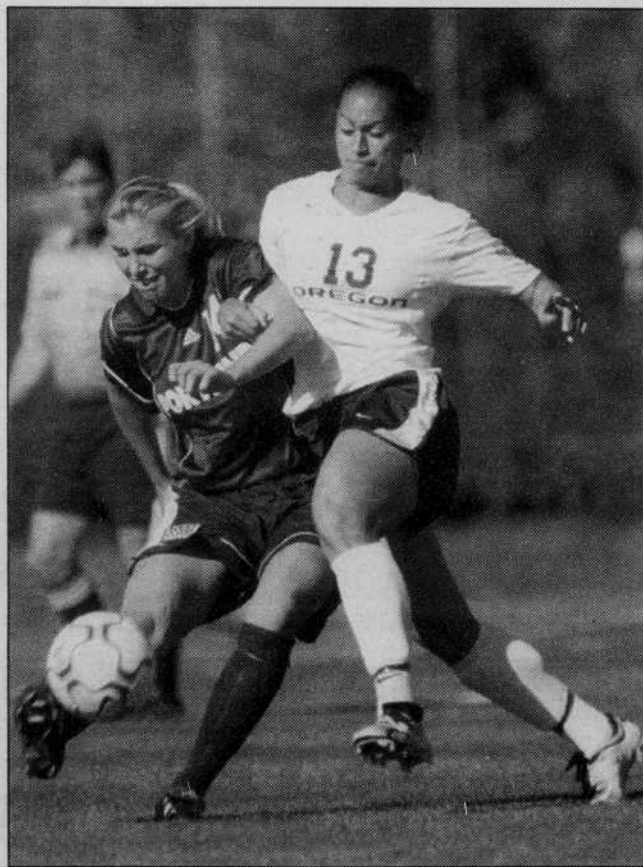
Courtesy USC Media Services

Troy Polamalu (43) is a true Trojan, and has led USC to the top of the Pac-10 defensive standings.

"I've developed the Samoan mentality," Polamalu said. "You have to be a gentleman everywhere but on the field. On the field, play like it's a game of life. Give it everything you have."

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Garbin's injury still hurts for Ducks



Adam Amato Emerald

Forward Nicole Garbin was Oregon's top returning scorer from 2001, but an ACL injury has forced her to sit out until next season.

Sophomore Nicole Garbin finds herself in a new role, watching from the sidelines

Soccer notes

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

Sophomore forward Nicole Garbin knows the meaning of patience all too well.

Webster's New World Dictionary describes it as "the capacity or habit of enduring adversity or pain with fortitude."

Enduring the pain of an anterior cruciate ligament injury and the adversity of standing on the sideline are what Garbin has had to deal with since the night of Aug. 22.

It all happened that afternoon, during a normal day of practice when she turned wrong, and, in her words "it just snapped."

Garbin's injury has forced her to redshirt this season, and losing the team's top returning scorer from 2001 hasn't made things easy on the Ducks.

"It's been difficult at times," Garbin said. "I was just looking so forward to this season and playing with this freshman class."

With 13 freshmen, the Ducks

could use Garbin's offensive presence and experience; especially now, as Oregon is off to a 1-10-2 start without a win in Pacific-10 Conference play.

Last year, Garbin helped the Ducks to a 5-1-1 start and set a school record with four game-winning goals. The Wailuku, Hawaii native paced the team in assists with five and ranked second in goals with five.

"I'm learning that if I was in there then I feel like this whole season would be different," Garbin said. "I feel like we wouldn't be losing as many games. We wouldn't be struggling emotionally as much as well as physically."

Garbin has gone from being in the thick of the season to being an outsider looking in, and for her, it has been an eye-opening experience.

"I just keep learning each day of just how appreciative I have to be of being able to play, and that once I start playing again that I just have to give everything into it and not let down," Garbin said.

Unfortunately for Garbin, she won't be able to play competitively until next season for Oregon, as her injury will keep her on the sideline for the rest of this season.

As of now, the sophomore, who

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