

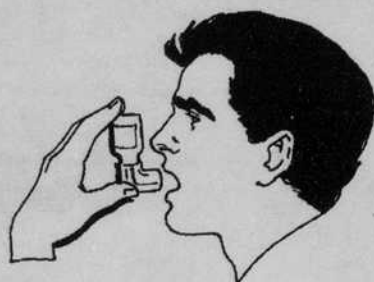
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Senior class says goodbye to Autzen in final contest

The senior class is 17 players strong, and each one wants to keep the streak of winning 'senior bowls' alive Saturday

Peter Hockaday
Sports Editor

The seniors' last home game is a time to honor the graduating class of football players, review their accomplishments and send them out into the world with the applause of Autzen Stadium raining down upon them.

For the Ducks, it's also a time to win. Oregon has won eight-straight "senior bowls" — the last regular-season home game. The last time the Ducks lost this contest was in 1993, a 15-12 loss to rival Oregon State.

But since then, the senior bowl has provided thrills in the form of Civil War wins of two, three and nine points, and chills in the form of blowouts against Arizona State and California.

Now, the Ducks say they want to continue their winning trend, for the sake of the seniors.

"Obviously we want to continue that (streak)," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said.

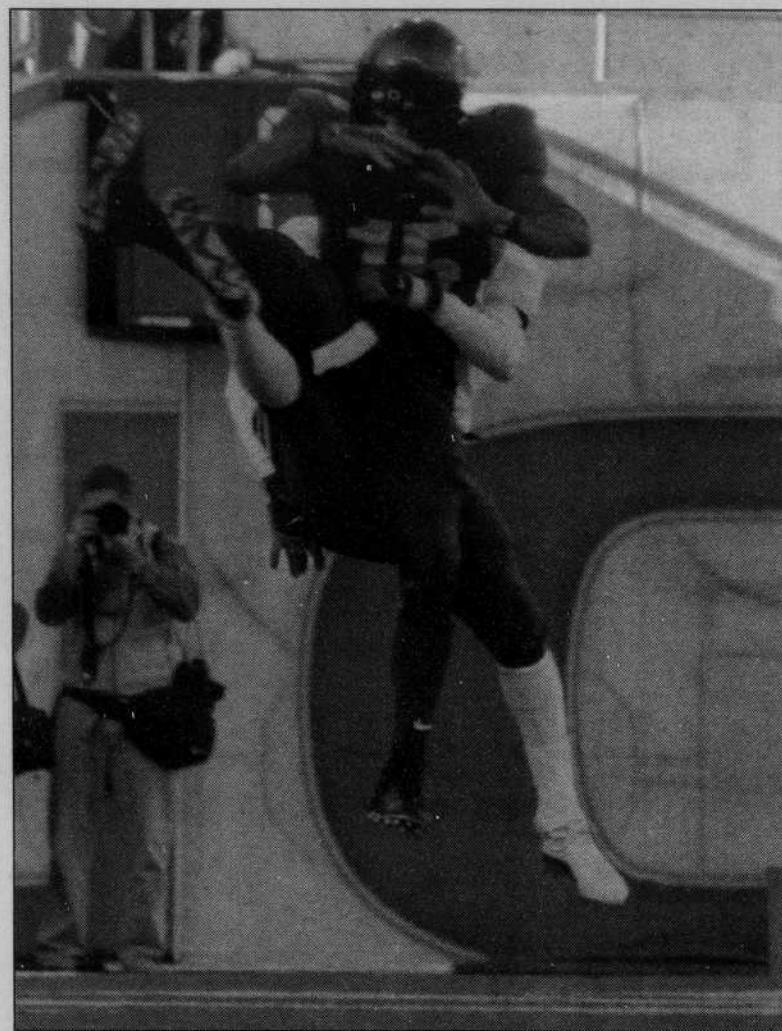
This year's senior class includes 17 members, from Allan Amundson to Darrell Wright and 15 others on the alphabetical scale. They range in impact from Keenan Howry — Oregon's all-time leader in receptions — to Eric Johnson, a backup defensive tackle. The senior class includes a range of experience.

"It's an interesting accumulation of seniors," Bellotti said. "There's three-year players, four-year players and five-year players in that group. And it's probably a bigger difference in that group because they didn't come in and play their full five years together."

"But they certainly have contributed to where we are right now and where we've been in the past."

The senior class includes linebacker David Moretti, punter Jose Arroyo, wide receiver Jason Willis, defensive back Rasuli Webster and defensive tackle Kai Smalley.

On Saturday, the players will be introduced one by one and their accomplishments read to the crowd. The Ducks said they hope to follow that with a win.



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Oregon's all-time leader in receptions, senior Keenan Howry, will play his last game at Autzen Stadium on Saturday with the rest of Oregon's 17-member senior class.

"A loss would be especially worse, because it's against the Huskies and it's the last home game of the season and my last game ever," Amundson said.

"Every year I have the luxury of saying I'm proud of the seniors," Bellotti said. "Certainly, for them to go out as winners is important to us as well as the team."

While this year's class may not rival the 2001 class in size and talent — six graduating Ducks were drafted into the NFL last season, including the No. 3 overall pick, Joey Harrington — their absence will impact the team next year. Especially at the wide receiver position, where Howry is the star and Willis is the underrated force, and at punter,

where Arroyo's backup is, technically, placekicker Jared Siegel.

And while Saturday's contest is not the last for the senior class, which is likely headed to a bowl game after next Saturday's Civil War, the seniors and the rest of the Oregon squad understand the grave nature of the senior bowl.

"Our last home game here this year, it's going to be an emotional one for the seniors, but I know we're going to go out on a good note," quarterback Jason Fife said.

If history is a senior guide, then Fife is likely right.

Contact the sports editor at peterhockaday@dailymerald.com.

The **Pizza Pipeline**

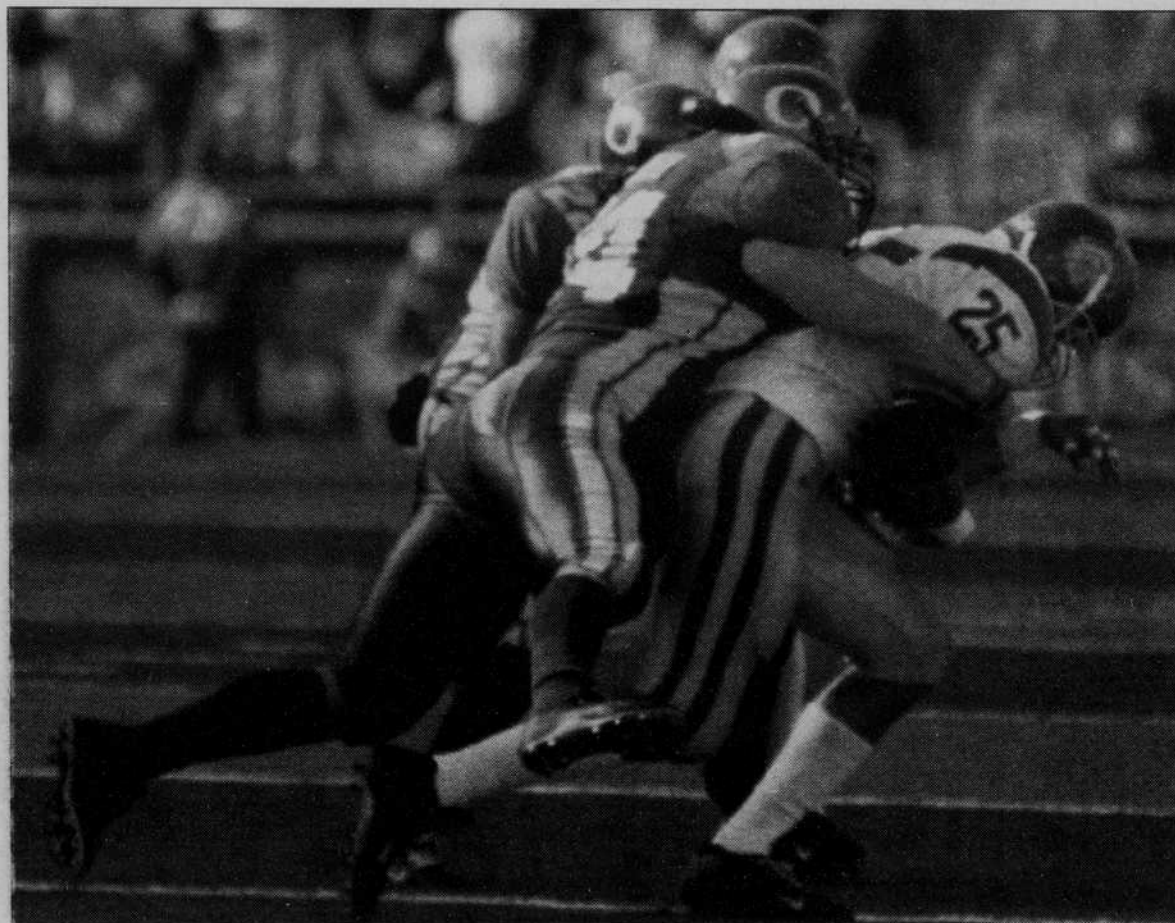
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The Ducks hope to send linebacker David Moretti and the rest of the 17 seniors out on a positive note at Autzen Stadium.