

## SPORTS

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**Best bet**  
NCAA Basketball:  
Xavier at Stanford  
7:30 p.m., ESPN2

Wednesday, November 20, 2002

## OSU looks to defense, UO looks to bowl

**BEAVERS:** The Pac-10's top-ranked defense will try to keep Oregon's sputtering offense in check

## 106th Civil War

**Peter Hockaday**  
Sports Editor

In a conference hardly known for its tenacious "D," Oregon State is Jack Black and orange.

The Beavers have the toughest defense in the conference and one of the toughest in the nation. Oregon State is 10th in the nation in total defense. Eighteenth in scoring defense. Eighth in pass-efficiency defense.

Not the kind of statistics that exactly warm the hearts of a struggling Oregon offense.

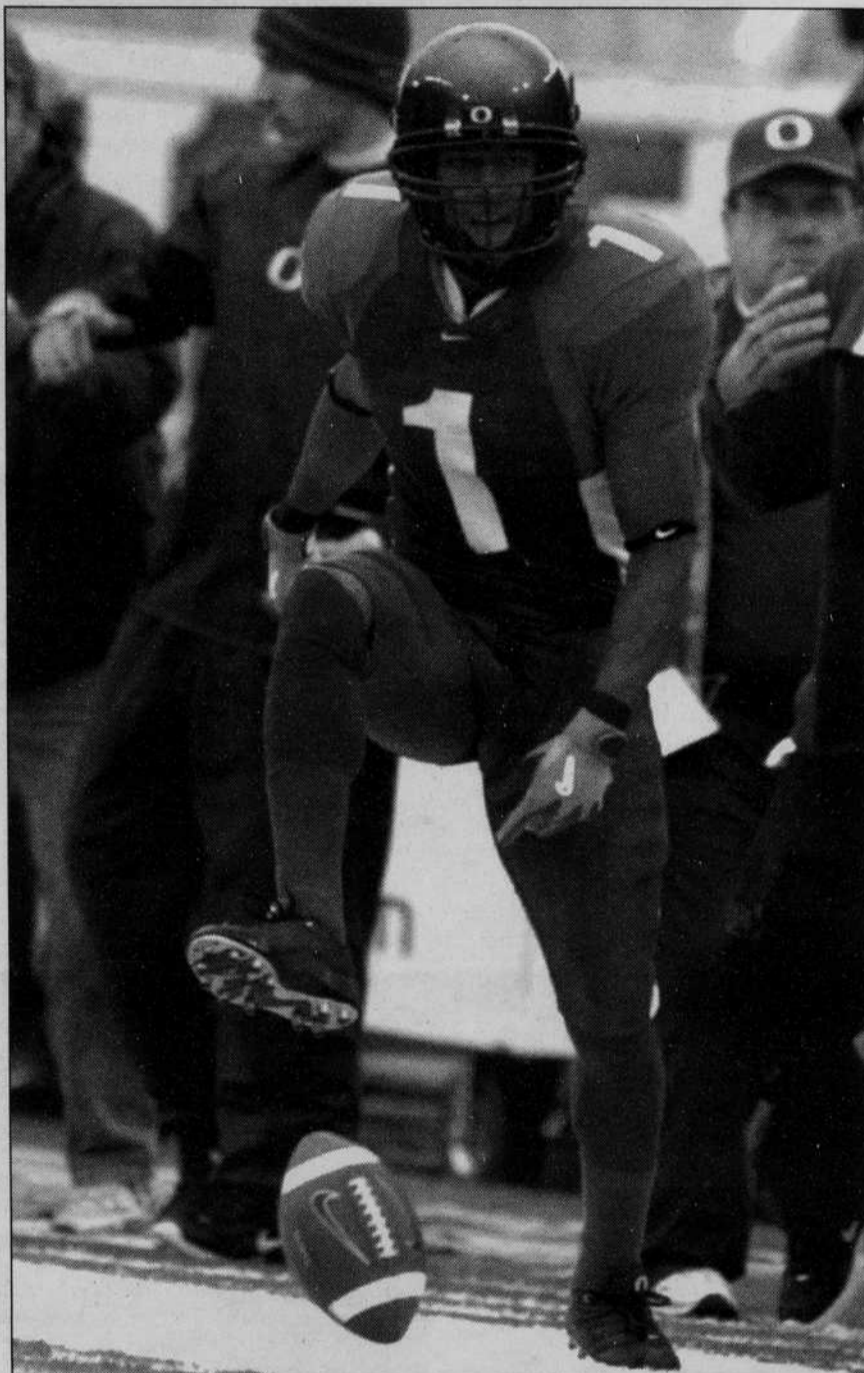
"For us, it's a tremendous challenge offensively because we have been inconsistent of late," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "I told our kids, what a great opportunity to go out there and beat the best defense in the conference."

Despite the Beavers' 3-4 conference record, Oregon State has kept most of its games close this season. Other than 43-point and 41-point aberrations to UCLA and Washington, respectively, the Beavers have allowed only 13.4 points per game. In its recent semi-winning streak — Oregon State has won four of the past five — the Beavers have given up 12.5 points per game in their four wins.

**"For us, it's a tremendous challenge offensively, because we have been inconsistent of late."**

**Mike Bellotti**  
Oregon head football coach

The Beavers' defensive intensity has been spearheaded by a fearsome four-some worthy of their Halloween-colored uniforms. Senior linebacker Nick Barnett leads the defense and the conference in tackles, averaging five solo tackles and almost 10 total tackles per game. Senior cornerback Dennis Weathersby is fifth in the conference in pass deflections, and sophomore defensive lineman Bill Swancutt ranks just ahead of Barnett — and fourth in the Pac-10 — in tackles for loss.



Adam Amato Emerald

Samie Parker and the Ducks could be headed to a postseason game in Las Vegas or Seattle.

Rounding out the foursome is junior linebacker Richard Seigler, who averages 8.1 tackles per game and one for loss each contest.

Oregon State head coach Dennis Erickson said Barnett and Seigler are his anchors when the other team has the ball.

"They have great speed, and that's

kind of what our defense is built on," Erickson said. "They light a fire under themselves and everybody else. Their personality is kind of how we play defense, basically."

Oregon State sophomore free-safety star Mitch Meeuwesen returned to

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**BOWLING:** The Ducks could end up anywhere from Seattle to El Paso for their postseason bowl game

## Oregon notes

**Adam Jude**  
Senior Sports Reporter

The subject: Oregon's postseason destination.

The scenarios: endless.

But let's look at the possibilities anyway.

If the Ducks (7-4 overall, 3-4 Pacific-10 Conference) defeat Oregon State in the Civil War — slated for 12:30 p.m. Saturday at Reser Stadium — they're guaranteed no worse than fifth place in Pac-10, which would send them to the Las Vegas Bowl on Dec. 25.

The best-case scenario would send Oregon to El Paso, Texas, for the Sun Bowl, which the Ducks participated in at the end of the 1999 season. The worst case would have Oregon playing in the Seattle Bowl.

Oregon currently stands in a four-way tie for fifth place with the Beavers (7-4, 3-4), California (6-5, 3-4) and Washington (6-5, 3-4), though Cal has been banned from the postseason for NCAA violations.

Ultimately, the Ducks' bowl fate could come down to how the conference's top teams finish.

No. 3 Washington State (9-1, 6-0), one win away from securing a trip to the Rose Bowl, could end up playing for the national championship at the Fiesta Bowl if it defeats Washington and UCLA and either No. 1 Miami or No. 2 Ohio State lose. That would push everyone else up in the Pac-10 bowl standings, with USC (No. 8 in the Bowl Championship Series) headed for Pasadena.

Adding more confusion, the Ducks must wait on the UCLA-WSU game on Dec. 7 to finalize postseason plans. UCLA (7-3, 4-2) still has to play USC this week, and could end up 4-4 in the conference, with Oregon (which defeated the Bruins in Pasadena) holding the tie-breaker.

If the Ducks lose to the Beavers, the possibilities are equally complex.

If the Ducks lose, and Washington loses to Washington State in the Apple Cup, Oregon would likely be headed to the Silicon Valley Classic in San Jose, Calif., on Dec. 31. An Oregon loss and a Husky win, however, would likely send the Ducks to the Seattle Bowl at Seahawks Stadium on Dec. 30. The Pac-10 is working on a contract with the Seattle Bowl, which originally slated for the Atlantic Coast Conference and the Mountain West.

Despite all the December scenarios, head coach Mike Bellotti said the Ducks are focusing on Oregon State this week.

"We're just going to go out and do what we can," Bellotti said. "We're in a bowl. I know that, I've been told that — it's just where."

## Onterio recovering from surgery

After having surgery Monday afternoon to repair torn cartilage in his left knee, Oregon tailback Onterio Smith "is doing fine," said running backs coach Gary Campbell, who spoke with Smith after the 45-minute procedure.

"He said he doesn't feel like he's had surgery; he said he feels pretty good, so I told him to get his ass to practice," Campbell said jokingly. "The surgery went well. He did have a tear in the cartilage, and they repaired it. It was a pretty simple procedure."

Campbell said Smith was scheduled to start rehab already on Tuesday and expects him to return to practice in two to

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## UO volleyball team praised by top conference coach

The Ducks are 'on the verge of being able to beat everyone,' according to one coach

## Volleyball notes

**Hank Hager**  
Sports Reporter

In the ultra-competitive world of Pacific-10 Conference volleyball, deciphering a team's success usually comes via wins and losses.

For Oregon volleyball, a 1-15 conference record is nothing to smile about. Still, the Ducks — who have gone 11-19 overall this season — have improved by leaps and bounds from a team that finished without a Pac-10 victory last season.

At least that's what one prominent Pac-10 head coach sees in the Ducks.

"All of a sudden, they're on the verge of being

able to beat everyone in the conference," Stanford head coach John Dunning said. "They're very motivated."

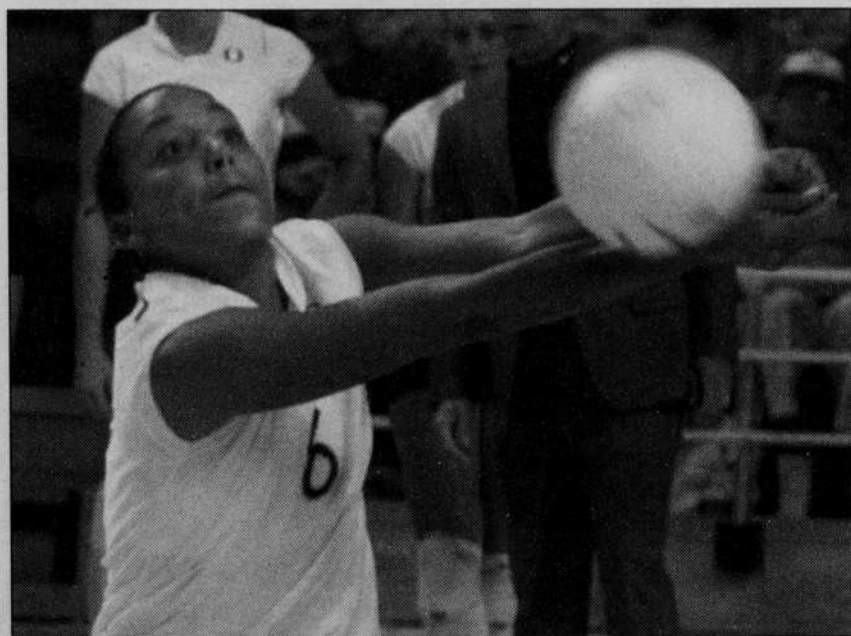
The Pac-10 certainly hasn't helped Oregon's case for advancement. With six teams regularly ranked in the top 25 in the nation, the Ducks are seemingly playing a ranked opponent every match.

The former head coach at Pacific, Dunning came to Stanford prior to last season and led the Cardinal to a national championship. This season, Stanford is below its level from last season, but is still a contender.

If anyone would have the ability to compare the Pac-10 to the rest of the nation, Dunning would be it.

"The difference in the Pac-10 is that every team, especially on the road, can beat any other team," he said. "They are much better teams than a lot of teams in the country."

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Adam Amato Emerald

Dariam Acevedo and Oregon are 'on the verge,' according to Stanford coach John Dunning.