

Football and I aren't talking; we've got relationship issues

It's official. Football and I? We're on the outs. We've had an argument, and it's time for me to end it once and for all.

Why are we breaking up, you might ask? Let's just say it's been a rocky few weeks for football and I, between the Seattle Bowl and the rest of the Pac-10 bowls and the NFL playoffs.



Peter Hockaday
Two minutes for crosschecking

And as a man I Toomer fell into the end-zone seconds ago to put the Giants on top of my 49ers, 28-14, right before halftime, well, let's call that the final nail in the relationship coffin. Even if the Niners come back to win this game, it will be far too little, way too late for football. Maybe.

So before all the rumors start circulating about why we broke up, before football can get its story out there and starting painting a nasty picture of me, I'm going to lay it out, in print, why we're axing this thing.

It's been a beautiful 21 years, to be sure.

There were the good times at the beginning. I still remember when football and I first met. I'm young, one year old, and naive as a baby.

But here comes football, with the great Joe Montana and Jerry Rice leading the way, winning the Super Bowl for the 49ers seven months after I'm born in a San Francisco hospital.

By the way, Jeff Garcia just hit Terrell Owens for a 26-yard touchdown late in the third quarter. 38-20 Giants. Hey, they got the two-point conversion. 38-22.

Nah. They can't come back. Anyway, those memories are hazy — so long ago — but warm.

Four years later, I'm semi-aware as Montana leads the Niners past Dan Marino and the Miami Dolphins, in Stanford Stadium, no less! I spend many more fall days in that stadium watching the Cardinal play — and lose. But it isn't about the winning or losing. It's an experience, preseason games and Big Games equal in my mind.

The Niners win back-to-back Super Bowls in 1989 and 1990, and by now I'm a full-fledged Niner wannabe, waiting in line for hours at a shopping mall to catch a glimpse of Rice. Buying football cards and immediately throwing out the non-Niners. Mourning as Candlestick Park is rattled by an earthquake, but delighted because now I actually get to see the Niners play at Stanford Stadium.

Hey, there's a nifty Garcia run into the endzone. They get the two points again, now it's 38-30. I'll admit, I'm getting a little excited. Damn, this football is a tough customer, isn't it? All this smooth talking, appealing directly to my swiftly-beating heart.

Nah. They can't come back. The Niners dip as Montana leaves, but Steve Young leads them back to glory and a Super Bowl in 1995. I notice as a fledgling Pac-10 team up north uses a fearsome Gang Green defense to get to the Rose Bowl, and I actually root for these Ducks on Pac-10 principle. Football and I are getting along just fine.

But then, the salary cap hits. The Niners drop off dramatically, losing year after year to the hated Packers in the playoffs. They struggle under talented quarterbacks but an often non-existent defense. Rice, my Jerry Rice, my hero, actually moves across the bay to Oakland to play for the evil silver and black.

There are still highlights. The 49ers win a thriller over the Packers in the 1999 playoffs, finally giving the gold and red a little redemption. Oregon, now my school, goes to the Holiday and Fiesta Bowls, and life is good.

Almost as good as right now, because Jeff Chandler just hit a 25-yard field goal to make it a five-point game! But wait, be still my beating heart, this isn't happening. This is a little trickery on football's part, that coniving little...

Anyway, life was good before this year. This year, football got mean. It gave us a miserable loss on the frozen frickin' tundra in Green Bay to start the year. Then blowout after blowout during the Ducks' season, before the Most Miserable Bowl in the Land, also known as the Seattle Bowl. Then losses by all the other Pac-10 teams in their bowls, before a semi-redeeming win by USC in the Orange Bowl.

And here's the final cruel twist from football. The Niners scored with a minute left to take their first lead, only one point, but the Giants are marching back down the field. The Niners just aren't playing defense! The Giants are going to have to really screw this up to lose.

They set up for a 41-yard field goal. The snap spirals back. It's botched! Niners win! Niners win! Niners win! Niners win! Niners win! Oh football, football, football. Football, football, football. Football. What was I thinking? I love you.

Contact the sports editor at peterhockaday@dailyemerald.com.

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Wrestling

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Chuck Kearney said. "We made fundamental mistakes in close matches that cost us. We're hoping we learn something from this."

Oregon's forfeit came at the 125 weight class, giving the Wolverines a 6-0 lead right off the top.

In the 133 class, redshirt junior Jason Harless and opponent Foley Dowd were tied at seven going into the third period. Harless had a quick escape to go up by one, but with 30 seconds left, Dowd scored a takedown and held on — winning the match 9-8.

Senior Casey Hunt went behind early, with Clark Forward taking an early 5-0 lead in the 141 match. Hunt came back with four points, cutting Forward's lead to one after the first period. In the second, Forward held Hunt to the mat for the full period. Hunt tied the score with a takedown in the third, but allowed Forward the escape. Hunt was unable to score again, and Forward won 9-7, earning a point for riding time.

Wolverine Rob Sulaver pinned redshirt freshman Chet McBee 2:04

into the 157 match. McBee started off with a takedown, but fell behind when Sulaver earned a takedown and three-point near fall before pinning McBee.

Redshirt sophomore Luke Larwin took the first lead of the 165 matchup, with a takedown near the end of the first period. Pat Owen tied the score with a reversal with three seconds left in the period. Both wrestlers had escapes to keep the score tied, and Owen earned a takedown with 30 seconds left to win the match 5-3.

The Wolverines' other pin came in the 197 matchup. Kyle Smith pinned redshirt junior Jason Leair at the 3:23 mark. Smith led 9-2 before the pin.

Michigan's two major decisions came at 184 and heavyweight. Willie Breyer earned a 12-2 win over freshman Tony Roland in the 184 class. Greg Wagner kept redshirt freshman Neil Phillips scoreless, winning the heavyweight matchup 9-0.

Oregon will compete against Pacific, Central Michigan and Wisconsin on Friday in the Oregon Classic.

Mindi Rice is a freelance writer for the Emerald.

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Winter Term 2003

League	Manager Meetings	Location	Time
Basketball	January 14	*SRC Multipurpose #4	4:00p.m.
Floor Hockey	January 21	*SRC Ulrich Room 63	4:00p.m.
Coed Volleyball	January 22	*SRC Ulrich Room63	4:00p.m.

League	Playoff Meetings	Location	Time
Basketball	February 13	*SRC Multipurpose #4	4:00p.m.
Coed Volleyball	February 13	*SRC Ulrich Room 63	5:00p.m.
Floor Hockey	February 18	*SRC Ulrich Room 63	4:00p.m.

Special Events	Deadline	Dates	Location
Basketball Scramble	January 14	January 15-16	Courts 4 & 5, SRC
Open Swim Meet	February 5	February 7, 5:00 p.m.	Leighton Pool
Slam Dunk <i>(new)</i>	February 11	February 12, 4:00 p.m.	Court 1, SRC
Hot Shot, 3-point Contest	February 12	February 12, 4:00 p.m.	Court 1, SRC

One Day Events	Deadline	Dates	Location
Pac-10 3-on-3 Basketball	January 29	February 1	Courts 1, 2, 3, SRC
Table Tennis	January 30	February 2, noon	220 Gerlinger Hall
Wrestling	February 12, 3:45-5:00p.m.	February 12, 7:30p.m.	Mac Court
Badminton	February 27	March 1, 3:30p.m	Court 3, SRC

Two Day Tournaments	Deadline	Dates	Location
Indoor Soccer	February 13	February 15-16	Courts 4 & 5, SRC
Stadium Flag Football	February 20	February 22-23	Autzen Stadium

*Student Recreation Center: An equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Accommodations for people with disabilities will be provided if requested in advance.

For more information, stop by 102 Esslinger Hall or call 346-4113. Visit our Web site: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~pars/>

Taurus:

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PULSE