

Smith shows why he deserves first round selection

Onterio Smith was clocked at 4.4 seconds in the 40-yard dash at the Moshofsky Center yesterday in preparation for the NFL Draft.

That's really no surprise. When at Oregon, Smith was a major catalyst for the offense for the past two years. His speed is no surprise, nor is his strength.

He reportedly gained 15 pounds since the end of the college season, which is only going to make him tougher. In fact, it should ensure that he will be able to bowl over at least one defensive back next



Hank Hager
Behind the dish

season, probably in the same fashion that enabled him to cross the goal line two years ago in Pullman, Wash.

But let's hope concerns over his injury last season don't drop him to the second round. National speculation, at least in USA Today's Sports Weekly, has him being picked behind Virginia Tech's Lee Suggs and Penn State's Larry Johnson.

He is first-round material and could be an intriguing late-round pick.

Speaking of the draft: It looks like USC's Carson Palmer could be the top choice, and, if not, the first quarterback chosen. Don't count out Kyle Boller from California, though.

Boller did more with less than Palmer last season. You could attribute that to new head coach Jeff Tedford, but Boller is pretty physically gifted too.

Don't be surprised if Boller is the

steal of the draft, even if he is taken in the top-10.

Speaking of Tedford: He's NFL material all the way. Even the next Steve Mariucci.

Then there's the NBA Draft: Still no word on what Luke Ridnour plans to do. But if he chooses to go pro, NBAdraft.net thinks he's got a future in the Bay Area.

The online mock draft has Ridnour going to Golden State with the 12th overall pick.

Ironically (or not), the same site has Luke Jackson going to the Warriors with the 43rd overall pick the next year.

Bring on Luke-2-Luke, part two.

In the spirit of Adam Jude, an idea for the Pit Crew: You all loved Steve Lavin so much last year. But sorry, he's not coming back.

Hey, do the next best thing. Shine

up those new Nikes you all earned (ummm...), head on over to the store, and buy as much hair gel as you can. Then, wrap it up as a big present and give it to new UCLA head coach Ben Howland.

Guaranteed smile.

Qyntel, Qyntel, Qyntel (Woods): You're now officially a member of the Portland Jail Blazers, er, Trail Blazers. Guess he didn't really learn much from Rasheed Wallace and Damon Stoudamire.

From the hardwood to the diamond: Hate to say it, but I don't see Portland getting a major league team. The Expos are probably destined for Washington D.C. or some part of Virginia.

Of course, that's going to make Peter Angelos mad. What a surprise.

Then, of course, there's opening day: The Royals won, Randy John-

son got shelled, and Tampa Bay actually showed some life.

What in the name of David Wells is going on here?

Wells, part two: I'd put my money down that he's related to Pete Rose.

I mean, who else lies, then back tracks, then makes it seem as though there's really no problem with what he did? All Wells did was lie about drinking the night before a perfect game. Rose lied about betting on baseball.

Somebody get a blood test done.

Just a thought: Marquette takes down Kansas, then gets blasted by Syracuse in the NCAA Championship.

But I wouldn't put money on it. After all, my bracket finished last.

Contact the sports reporter at hankhager@dailyemerald.com.

Wrestling

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moments of brilliance but never found a groove to carry them through the season.

Eric Webb, ranked in the top 10 nationally at heavyweight, had to end his collegiate wrestling career one weekend into his final season when the redshirt senior suffered his fourth concussion in less than two years. In early January, Webb decided he would not return to the mats after the late-November concussion.

Two weeks after Webb's announced departure, Oregon hit the road and faced Oklahoma and Oklahoma State — ranked No. 6 and No. 1, respectively, at the time. The Ducks won only three of the 10 weight classes, and were within two points with two matches left after freshman Tony Rolen pinned his opponent at 184. The Ducks couldn't pull out the win, but lost the other seven weight classes by an average of two points per match.

Oregon ended the dual meet season with its first shutout in 21 years. The Ducks blanked Portland State 49-0, including a pin by freshman Bob Pool in the second matchup. It was Pool's first collegiate dual meet. Oregon's win included three major decisions and two wins by forfeit.

The Ducks stumbled at the Pacific-10 Conference Tournament two weeks later, finishing fifth as a team.

Sophomore Shane Webster led Oregon with a second-place finish, improving on his third-place finish as a freshman.

Casey Hunt finished third at 141, joining Webster at the NCAA Championships as both wrestlers earned an automatic berth.

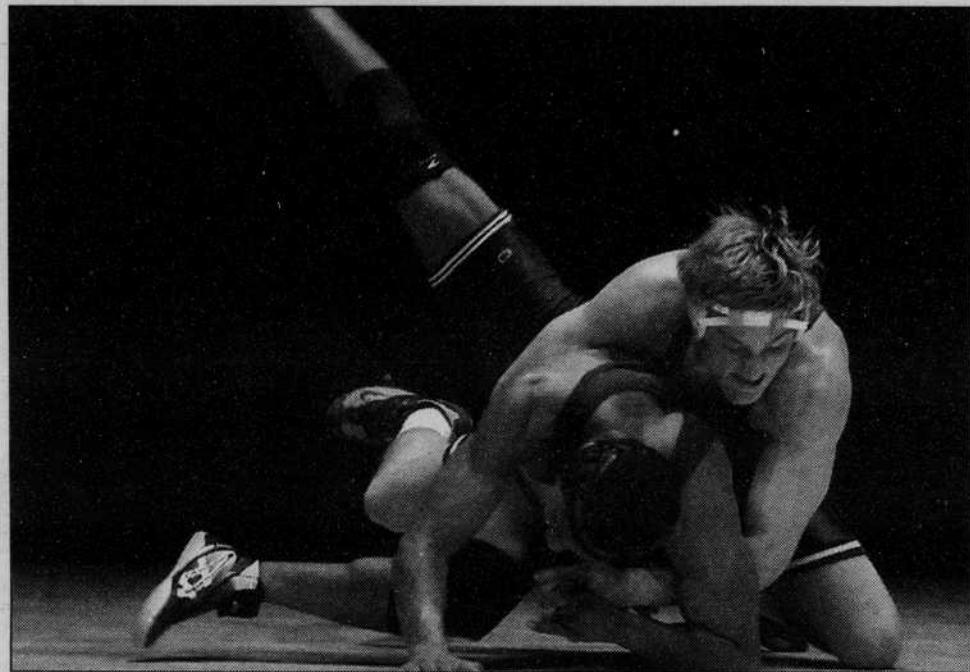
Redshirt sophomore Luke Larwin finished fourth, but lost his berth by losing a "true fourth-place" challenge match.

Jason Harless finished fifth at 133, just missing an automatic spot at the national tournament. The redshirt junior was named one of the two wild-card wrestlers — for the second time in two years — by conference coaches, earning a trip to nationals.

Two other Ducks — junior Branson Phillips and sophomore Martin Mitchell — finished fifth in their weight classes, missing a spot at the NCAA tournament.

Senior Tony Overstake made an early exit from the conference tournament. After winning the conference championship at 157 as a junior, Overstake spent the season at 149 but lost his first two matches in the tournament, ending his season. He finished his collegiate career with a 85-46 record, going 18-10 during his senior season.

Webster led the Ducks with a 31-8 season record at 174, earning All-American honors with a sixth-place finish at the NCAA Championships.



Tony Rolen (top), a freshman this year, is one of several returning Ducks who could make an impact next season. Adam Amato Emerald

"Shane Webster had a good tournament," head coach Chuck Kearney said. "It was neat to see him achieve one of his goals — to become an All-American. We're pleased with how he competed."

Hunt made his second appearance in the national tournament as many seasons. In his final NCAA tournament, the senior lost two straight matches and was knocked out of the brackets.

"His first match, he wrestled the

No. 6 guy in the country and lost to him on riding time," Kearney said.

Harless battled back from a late-season knee injury to earn his NCAA berth. The redshirt junior lost his second match to a two-time All-American after being shut out in his first match.

"(Hunt and Harless) both had very good years," Kearney said. "I'm extremely proud of the work (the team) put in. As a program we are on the threshold of becoming the

program we have to be."

For the 2003-04 season, the Ducks will lose only Overstake and Hunt to graduation with two recruits already committed to Oregon.

During the offseason, Kearney said the team will focus on "lifting and getting stronger." And maybe staying off the rollercoasters, as well.

Contact the sports reporter at mindirice@dailyemerald.com.

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Horoscope by Linda C. Black

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 3). You're quick yet deliberative this year, innovative yet practical. This can be a very successful combination, especially since you're also lucky. And, of course, the better prepared you are, the luckier you'll get.
To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.
ARIES (March 21-April 19) _ Today is an 8 _ You should be a wealthy person _ you'd do so much good with the money. Allow abundance into your life by being extra generous.
TAURUS (April 20-May 20) _ Today is a 6 _ You're becoming more decisive, though you still have considerations. You hate rushing into things, and that's good. You're becoming more certain. Keep asking questions.
GEMINI (May 21-June 21) _ Today is a 7 _ Resist the urge to be impetuous. Take time to contemplate recent developments. Watch what people do, rather than just listening to what they say.
CANCER (June 22-July 22) _ Today is a 6 _ Just when you thought you couldn't bear the pressure, it starts to ease. Friends are coming to your rescue. You're not alone.
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) _ Today is an 8 _ New contacts you've made and data you've received can help advance your career. Don't brag, but do let the news get out to someone who'll be impressed.
VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) _ Today is a 7 _ You've been through a few tough days. Line up a celebration. Tonight and tomorrow look good for love, and Saturday ain't bad either.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) _ Today is a 7 _ Don't let your partner spend all the money without your input. Stay involved, or you'll end up paying for something you don't even like.
SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) _ Today is a 6 _ A gentle, quiet person can teach you some valuable skills. Follow orders from a brassy type, but settle down later with one who's good at not talking.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) _ Today is an 8 _ You've had time to do some serious bonding. Now, get back to work. Show that your love is true by building something solid together.
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) _ Today is a 6 _ You may feel as if you've been trying to convince people who already had their minds made up. Relax tonight with someone who understands you without a word being said.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) _ Today is a 7 _ Try out a new idea in the privacy of your own home. Something that you've been thinking about could greatly improve your level of comfort. Get the best.
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) _ Today is a 7 _ Although you might be able to get by on your good looks, it really isn't necessary. You're smart, too. Prove it by taking on a challenging assignment.

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