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**Jesse Thomas**  
Go the distance

## Mourning Vick's loss; greats left demeaned

So I leave town for a few days last week to go camping and look what happens: I missed all the good stuff.

I return to reality and see that nearly the entire East Coast had a blackout, the Eugene Emeralds brawled with the Salem/Keizer Volcanoes for almost 10 minutes, another nobody won the PGA Championship and Superman is hurt.

Yes, I said Superman. The man faster than a speeding bullet and with arms stronger than steel seems a proper analogy for someone like Michael Vick.

And I can only imagine what Saturday's preseason game must have felt like for Atlanta Falcons fans. But it was a sad day for everyone across the National Football League.

We all should mourn the loss of Vick.

And although he isn't dead, every Falcon fan watching Saturday's game died inside. During what appeared to be another playbook Vick run, the tackle heard across the nation left Vick on his back.

Now with the NFL's most spectacular quarterback sidelined for a minimum of six weeks with a broken fibula, you have to wonder where Atlanta goes from here.

The obvious turn is to a guy named Doug Johnson. The media have lavished the 25-year-old Johnson with more attention in three days than in his entire career up to Vick's injury.

But Atlanta seems confident it will survive without the guy who broke three quarterback rushing records last season. And although they are required to seem confident, this injury will be the ultimate test of their claim as one of the NFL's best teams.

If the Falcons can win four of their first six games without Vick, they will likely remain Super Bowl contenders. Because upon Vick's return, you can bet he'll be hungry for a chance to live up to all his preseason hype.

But in the meantime, we must all respect and cherish the glory of Vick and hope he has a fast recovery to give the Falcons the chance they deserve.

The only good thing about the Vick incident is that it finally diverts our attention away from the Kobe Bryant case.

Because, quite frankly, I'm tired of hearing about it. Whether or not he did it, Bryant is still a great basketball player and he will win more championships with the Los Angeles Lakers.

But here's the truly saddening development in today's sports world: Players from every sport are being remembered for their difficulties off the court rather than for what they did on the court.

Two prime examples: Pete Rose and Ted Williams. Rose is MLB's all-time hits leader with 4,256 and Williams is simply the greatest hitter of all time. But when it's all said and done, how many people remember that part?

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## Fine tuning

The Ducks end their first scrimmage successfully, but still need to pare down certain positions as players compete for starting spots, including quarterback

By **Jesse Thomas**  
Sports Editor

The Oregon football team donned full pads and red caps Saturday in front of family members at Autzen Stadium for the Ducks' first major football scrimmage of the season.

Although both offense and defense appeared to execute well, there were clearly edges to be smoothed and divots to be filled before the Aug. 30 matchup with Mississippi State.

"It was a good first step; I thought there was good hitting in terms of the crispness of the execution, and I thought the tempo on both sides of the ball was pretty good," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "Certainly there were too many mistakes. We had five major penalties against the offense and two turnovers, and you won't survive at any level with that type of performance."

The quarterback saga also continued at the scrimmage with all three quarterbacks playing their best, vying for the starting position. Senior Jason Fife, sophomore Kellen Clemens and freshman Johnny DuRocher all played at least a series on Autzen's turf.

Did it further advance the decision on who will start?

"No," Bellotti answered.

"It's always a continual process of evaluation. Their statistics were fairly similar in that regard so it didn't create a lot of separation. As soon as there is some separation then I will feel comfortable that we can name a starter and move on from there," Bellotti added.

In Fife's performance, he led the offense to one touchdown on his three non-situational drives. When facing a fourth-and-12 situation from the opponent's 32-yard line, the senior quarterback pulled down a high snap on a field goal attempt and was able to connect with sophomore tight end Nate LiaBraaten for 28 yards for a first down inside the 5-yard line.

After two plays edged the offense closer to the goal line, senior fullback Matt Floberg ran



Jessica Waters Emerald

The Oregon football team toed the line of scrimmage 84 times in Saturday's first scrimmage. With the younger players getting a chance to play, coaches plan to tighten the depth chart this week.

in for a touchdown from 1 yard out.

During the afternoon, Clemens made good on six of 11 passes for 57 yards. In his four drives he capped one with a 26-yard scoring drive that ended with a 21-yard field goal by Jared Siegel. It was Siegel's only field goal of the day after he missed an attempt of 52 yards.

"I thought I played OK, there were some plays that I missed," Clemens said. "I didn't really do anything spectacular but I didn't do anything that I was disappointed in, either."

DuRocher brought two of his four drives into the end zone, though it came against a

defense predominantly composed of first-year players and reserves. The majority of experienced players played in the beginning of the 84-play scripted scrimmage to give the younger players a chance.

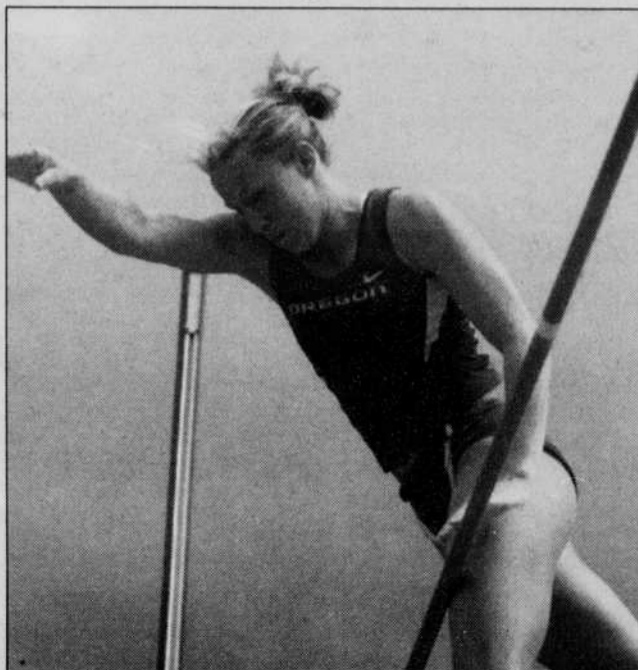
The freshman quarterback finished his afternoon seven of 11 for 89 yards.

On defense, Oregon met expectations as the team's starting line refused to give up a touchdown while in the game.

"The defense played well, we just had to come out and tackle a little bit more and we were running to the ball fast and making pretty

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## Holliday's season continues in Paris



Jessica Waters Emerald

Oregon's Becky Holliday broke her own school record several times in the spring and ended with an NCAA champion crown.

Oregon record holder Becky Holliday prepares herself for the biggest track and field meet of her life in the 2003 World Championships next week

By **Jesse Thomas**  
Sports Editor

Breaking the NCAA meet record, becoming an NCAA champion and besting her own school record this past season still weren't enough to leave Oregon's Becky Holliday with a comfortable feeling heading into the biggest track and field meet of her life.

Holliday, who finished her athletic career at Oregon with an astounding pole vault season on the track and field team by becoming the school's first individual women's NCAA champion in seven years, is heading to Paris, France, today to face off with the best.

World record holder Stacy Dragila, 2002 U.S. Indoor Champion Mary Sauer, 2003 USA Nationals runner-up Jillian Schwartz and Holliday will represent the United States in the 2003 IAAF World Championships in Athletics women's pole vault competition Aug. 22 through 31.

"I'm excited about Paris because it's Paris," Holliday said. "I really want to do well, it's going to be hard though. It's just been a long season because it had this two month extension on it."

Holliday's season has indeed been long. Her redshirt senior season with the Ducks began in early March and she has continued all the way through August, much longer than any of the other traveling vaulters whose seasons began in June.

Holliday took a break after the USA Championships in June, where she tied for third with Sauer, vaulting 14 feet 3 and 1/4 inches. Holliday suffered a back injury after the USA Championships, forcing her to pull out of the Pan American Games on Aug. 5, however.

The Sparks, Nev., native owns a personal best of 14-8, which she jumped last season to break her own school record. But with this season as long as it is, she is worried whether or not her peak is behind her.

"It's so hard to keep that peak that you go into as far as championship phase of NCAAs and regionals and that stand, and then try and keep it going two months

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