

Tuesday, October 7, 2003



Hank Hager
Behind the dish

Knight, Oregon; together a perfect fit

The announcement by Oregon officials on Saturday regarding Howe Field as the site of the new arena came with a piece of vital information.

At one point, officials thanked Phil and Penny Knight for becoming principal donors of the project. This is no surprise and illustrates how vital Phil Knight's presence is to Oregon athletics.

Uniforms, you might say, show how vital Knight is to the Ducks. After all, the new duds the Ducks sport were created by Nike. Well, more than three years ago, the arena, the new uniforms and the Autzen Stadium expansion itself were all in danger.

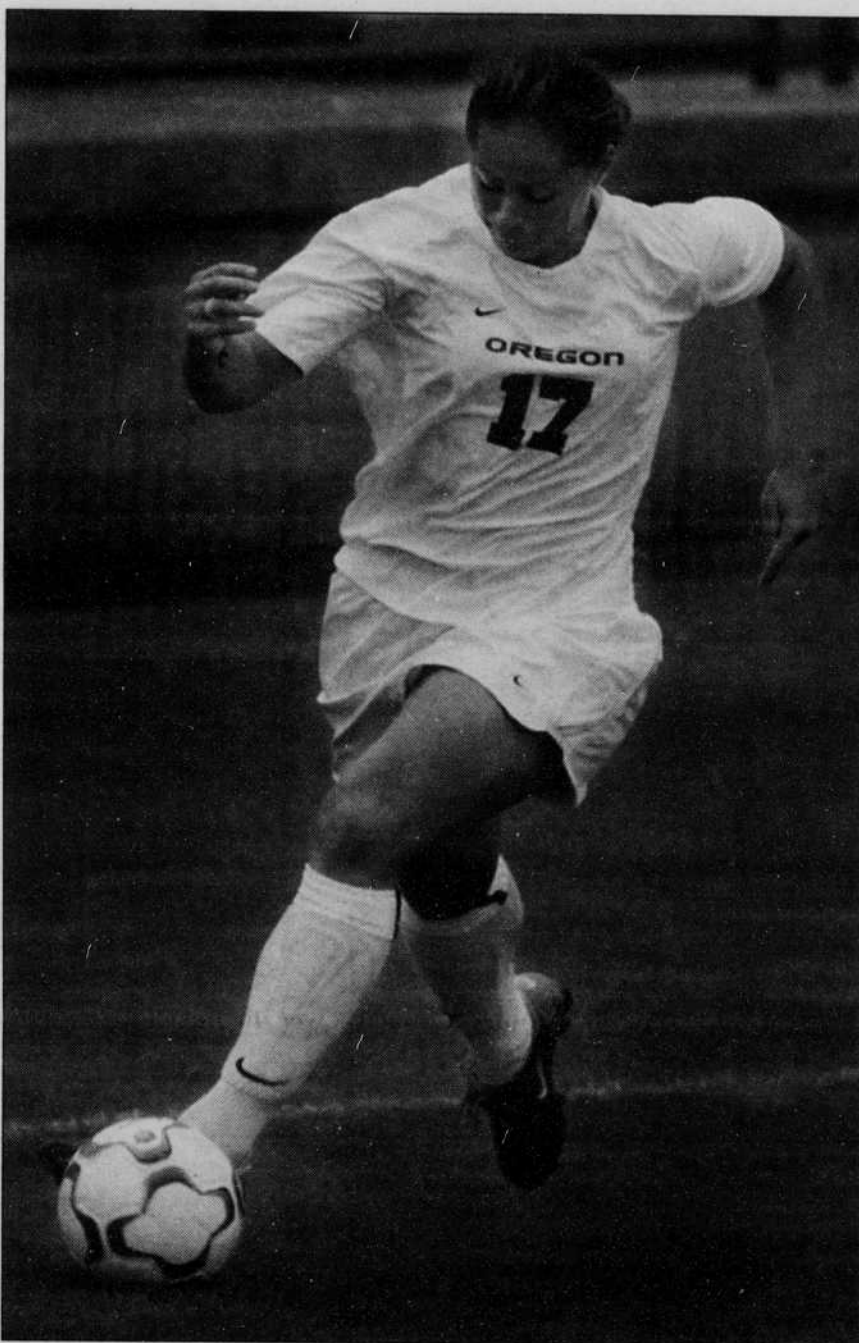
Those new uniforms weren't even on the table then, and the arena was just a figment of imagination. Sure, McArthur Court was more than 70 years old and its replacement was becoming necessary, but it wasn't realistic.

The Autzen remodeling was planned and ready to go. But Phil Knight, who was also a principal donor for that project, was at odds with the University when Oregon decided to join the Worker Rights Consortium in April 2000.

Less than two years later, the University jumped out of the group — it was even

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Pac-10 play awaits recharged Ducks



Mark McCambridge Senior Photographer

Redshirt sophomore Nicole Garbin is in her second active season as an offensive force.

Oregon begins a tough conference slate with Oregon State on Saturday in Corvallis

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

Now that the tune-up is over, Oregon and the rest of the Pacific-10 Conference must prepare for a full month of competitive battles when conference play begins this week.

The Pacific-10 Conference continues to be a national power. Six teams are ranked in the Soccer America Top 25 as of Sept. 29. No. 3 UCLA leads the way, behind North Carolina and Notre Dame, and Washington and USC hold down the No. 13 and No. 14 positions with Arizona State at 16th and Stanford at 18th. Cal sits in the 23rd spot.

"It's a tough conference to play," red-shirt freshman Andrea Valadez said. "I know that in the beginning we were seeded last. We have a lot of things to prove. We have to prove people wrong. I definitely think we can compete in the Pac-10 this year."

Oregon (6-5) was picked to finish last in the conference with only 13 votes in the preseason Pac-10 coaches poll.

"Obviously you want to go into the conference on a good note, and this is a good note," Oregon head coach Bill Steffen said. "The kids are excited about their chances and being able to start conference play."

Oregon's first conference test will be rival Oregon State (4-6-1) on Saturday at 3 p.m. in Corvallis. The Beavers split the weekend, losing 2-1 to Portland and defeating Weber State 4-0.

"It's a rivalry game; it's our first conference game; it's going to have a lot of excitement on top of things," Steffen said.

Garbin climbing the career ladder

Redshirt sophomore Nicole Garbin is making her way to the top of every offensive category in Oregon's career lists in just her second season.

Garbin ranks in the top five of all offensive categories — five overall. That includes goals — fifth with nine — and she is third with eight assists. She is tied for second with six game-winning goals and fourth in points at 26.

Rounding out the list, she has 84 shots in 29 career games, which ranks Garbin fifth.

"The coaches try and put it in my mind as a little motivation," Garbin said. "I just want to come out every game and contribute as much as I can. (I want) to play with the personality I have, and the coaches expect (that of) me as carrying this team, and I very much enjoy that."

On the up side

The Ducks have been more streaky this season than ever in the seven-year history of the program.

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Cougars direct conference traffic through Pullman

Washington State is winning over fans and dominating opposing teams this season in defense of its 2002 Pac-10 title

By Mindi Rice
Senior Sports Reporter

All roads — paved and dirt — lead to Pullman, Wash., in the race for the Pacific-10 Conference football crown.

At least that's the case the Cougars are making six weeks and two conference victories into their season.

"Oregon State and Washington State are both undefeated (in the conference)," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said on Sunday. "So I think until those schools meet ... I said before the beginning of the season, I think this is as wide open (in the Pac-10) as I've seen since I've been here."

Preseason favorite Southern California is down one game due to a Sept. 27 loss to California, leaving the Beavers and Cougars at the top of the Pac-10 with a 2-0 conference record. Both are 5-1 overall.

No. 12 Washington State is getting a lot more national attention than No. 24 Oregon State, helped by the Cougars' 55-16 drubbing of Oregon one week after the Ducks squeaked past Michigan.

However, Washington State managed to disappoint its fans on Saturday when it played host to Arizona.

Conference teams expect a blowout when the Wildcats come to town. Washington State, ahead 13-0 at halftime, gave up a touchdown — making it a six-point game — before adding 17 points for the 30-7 win.

The same way of thinking that may have thrown Oregon off against the Cougars gave Washington State a speedbump in its defeat of the Pac-10 cellar-dwelling Wildcats.

"You could say it as much as you want — 'Let's get over the (Oregon) game' — but that was a great win, and it's tough to just get over it."

Jason David
WSU cornerback

"You could say it as much as you want — 'Let's get over the (Oregon) game' — but that was a great win, and it's tough to just get over it," cornerback Jason David said on Saturday. "I don't think we played a great game, but we played a good game."

David was the star of the Cougars' homecoming victory, grabbing his 14th career interception and returning it 34 yards for a touchdown. He is the first Cougar in Washington State history to return three interceptions for touchdowns in a

career.

"I don't think the quarterback really saw me," David said. "I hid behind the tight end really well, and I knew he was going to throw because they didn't need that many yards. He threw it, and it kind of hit my facemask. I was going to start crying if I dropped it again."

The senior was pivotal in Washington State's win against Oregon, and his teammates are counting on him to help them along the Pac-10 road.

Hankwitz debuts

At Washington State, Arizona continued its losing streak, picking up its fifth loss of the season. It is now 0-1 with interim head coach Mike Hankwitz.

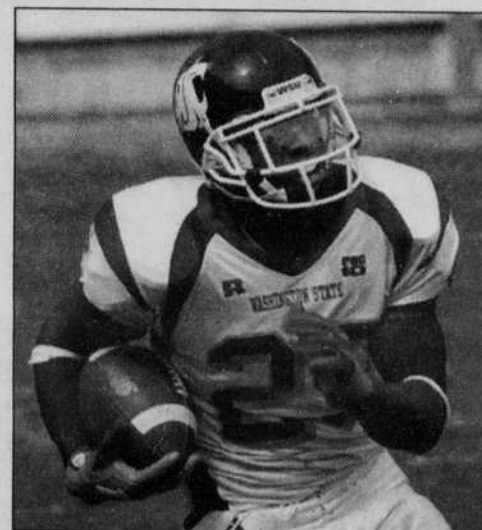
Multiple Cougars said the Wildcats came out and played tough for their new leader.

"It was a tough week because of all the changes," Hankwitz said on Saturday. "But I think our players responded and tried to do everything we asked of them. I am pleased overall that we came up here and fought into the fourth quarter."

UCLA scores ... finally

In five games, the Bruins have scored 110 points this season, but they scored 42 percent of those points in Saturday's game against Washington, their first conference game of the season.

"We were able to do some things in the second half of the Washington game that we knew as a staff we had the potential of doing," UCLA head



Courtesy Washington State Media Services

Cougar cornerback Jason David picked up his 14th career interception on Saturday.

coach Karl Dorrell said. "It was nice to finally get where everything started to click in all phases."

After a slow first half against the Huskies, UCLA found itself behind 16-7. The Bruins found their rhythm from then on and dominated Washington, 39-0, in the second half en route to the 46-16 win.

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