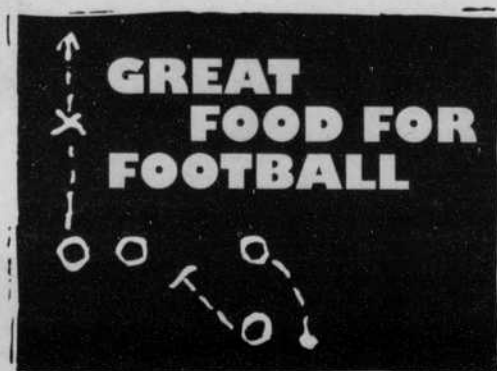




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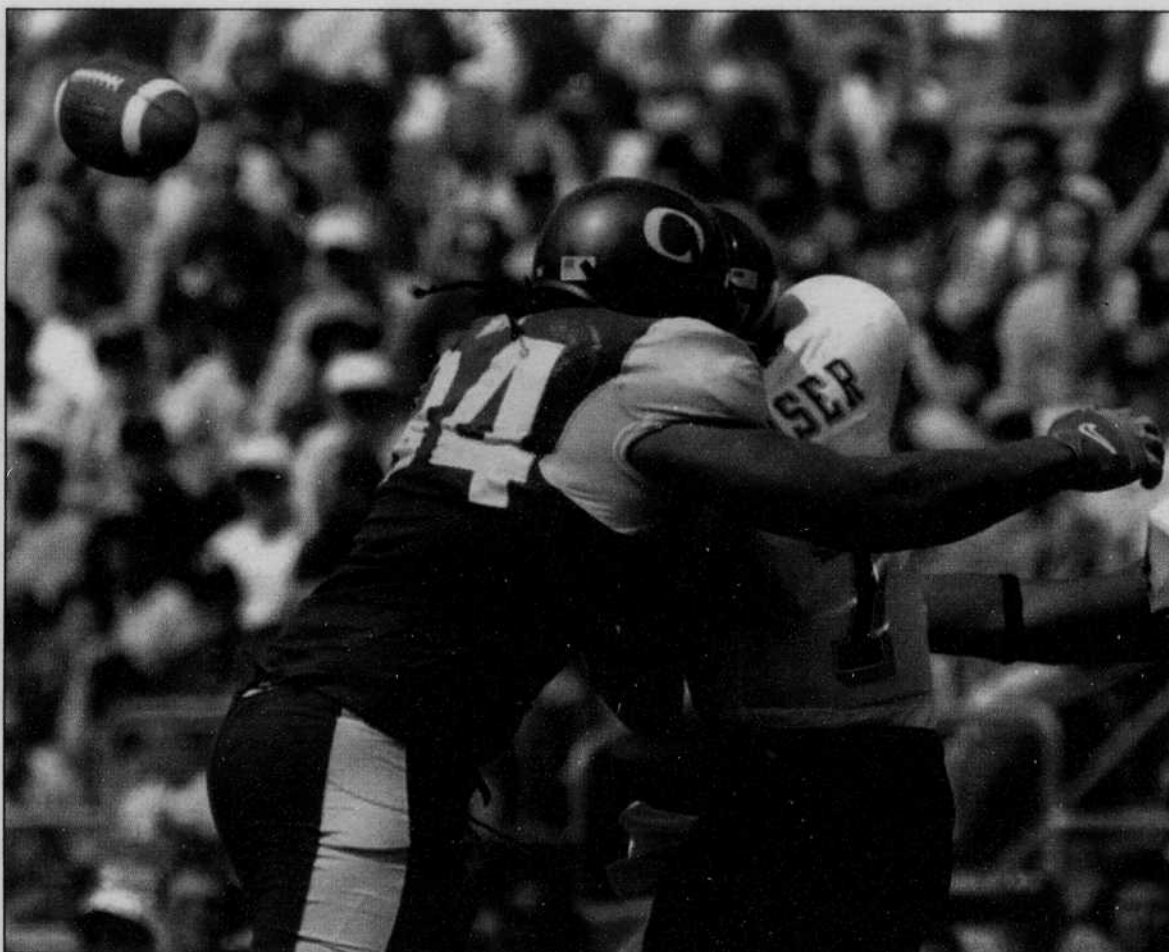
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Oregon Daily Emerald

GAME DAY

Friday, October 10, 2003

Sports Editor: Hank Hager



Adam Amato Photo Editor

Oregon defensive tackle Junior Siavii has one sack for an 11-yard loss, one fumble recovery and 19 total tackles in six games this season.

Sluggish offenses meet when Ducks, ASU do battle

Oregon and Arizona State enter the game needing a win to remain in the Pac-10's title race

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

The Ducks and the Sun Devils are the poster boys for the Pacific-10 Conference.

Both teams have enjoyed success in past seasons but are on a downward spiral entering Saturday's game at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe. The parity that has claimed the conference has struck both Oregon and Arizona State this season.

"This Pac-10 is chaotic, filled with talent and upsets every week," Oregon linebacker Jerry Matson said. "I can't tell you who the best or worst team is, the

bottom five or the top five. I still think ASU is one of the favorites in the Pac-10. They've got a lot of weapons.

"You can't take anyone lightly because there is so much talent. One week somebody beats the No. 3 team, and then we get beat. It's so up and down so I respect anyone."

The matchup is between two teams hungry for a win. Combined, the Ducks (4-2 overall, 1-1 Pac-10) and Sun Devils have lost five straight.

Arizona State (2-3, 0-2) has become sluggish offensively in losses to Iowa, Oregon State and USC. Oregon has been slowed in a blowout loss to Washington State and a let-down to Utah.

Both teams are dangerous. "We're going to be two rabid animals fighting in this game," Oregon quarterback Jason Fife said.

The rabid animals both have offenses that could take off at any moment.

Oregon is ranked first in the conference in passing yards with 290 per game. The Sun Devils have slipped to sixth at 252 yards per game.

Memories of last season's 45-42 Arizona State win sit in both team's minds. Sun Devils' quarterback Andrew Walter threw for 536 yards in that game, and Arizona State hung 35 points on the board in the second half for the win.

"That was a huge win for us," Arizona State head coach Dirk Koetter said. "They were undefeated and ranked sixth in the nation at the time. At that time, no one was able to go into Eugene and win."

"We went in there and had a great day; the kind of game you are in the

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Watch the Ducks, Sun Devils; they'll put on a show in Tempe

It's going to be quite the offensive battle on Saturday in Tempe.

Something extraordinary is going to come from either the Ducks or Sun Devils. And it's not going to come from either team's defense.

Don't believe me? Look at the 2000 and 2002 seasons, respectively.

Don't remember them? Well, you're sure missing out on some pretty interesting memories.

In 2000, the Ducks had their throats in the pits of their stomachs. They'd been on a five-game winning streak heading into the game at Sun Devil Stadium. Arizona State looked to be a minor match on Oregon's road to a prominent bowl.

Oregon was set to lose in an upset



Hank Hager

Behind the dish

against the Sun Devils that day, but with just 33 seconds left in the game, the football gods made running back Mike Williams drop the ball at Arizona State's 17-yard line.

The gods made Oregon recover that loose ball and on the next play, gave Justin Peelle hands of gold. The tight

end caught Joey Harrington's pass in the end zone and tied the game at 49.

After Josh Frankel missed a field goal — his eighth miss in 12 attempts at that point in the year — the Ducks responded when they got the ball back from the Sun Devils. This time, Allan Amundson raced to the far corner of the end zone and put the Ducks up, 56-49.

Arizona State outlasted the Oregon defense, but then, the gods finished their day at Sun Devil Stadium. They made Todd Heap miss a pass on a two-point conversion, and the Ducks, and their fans, could breathe a sigh of relief.

"I'm in complete and total shock right now," Harrington said after the game. "We played so hard out there."

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