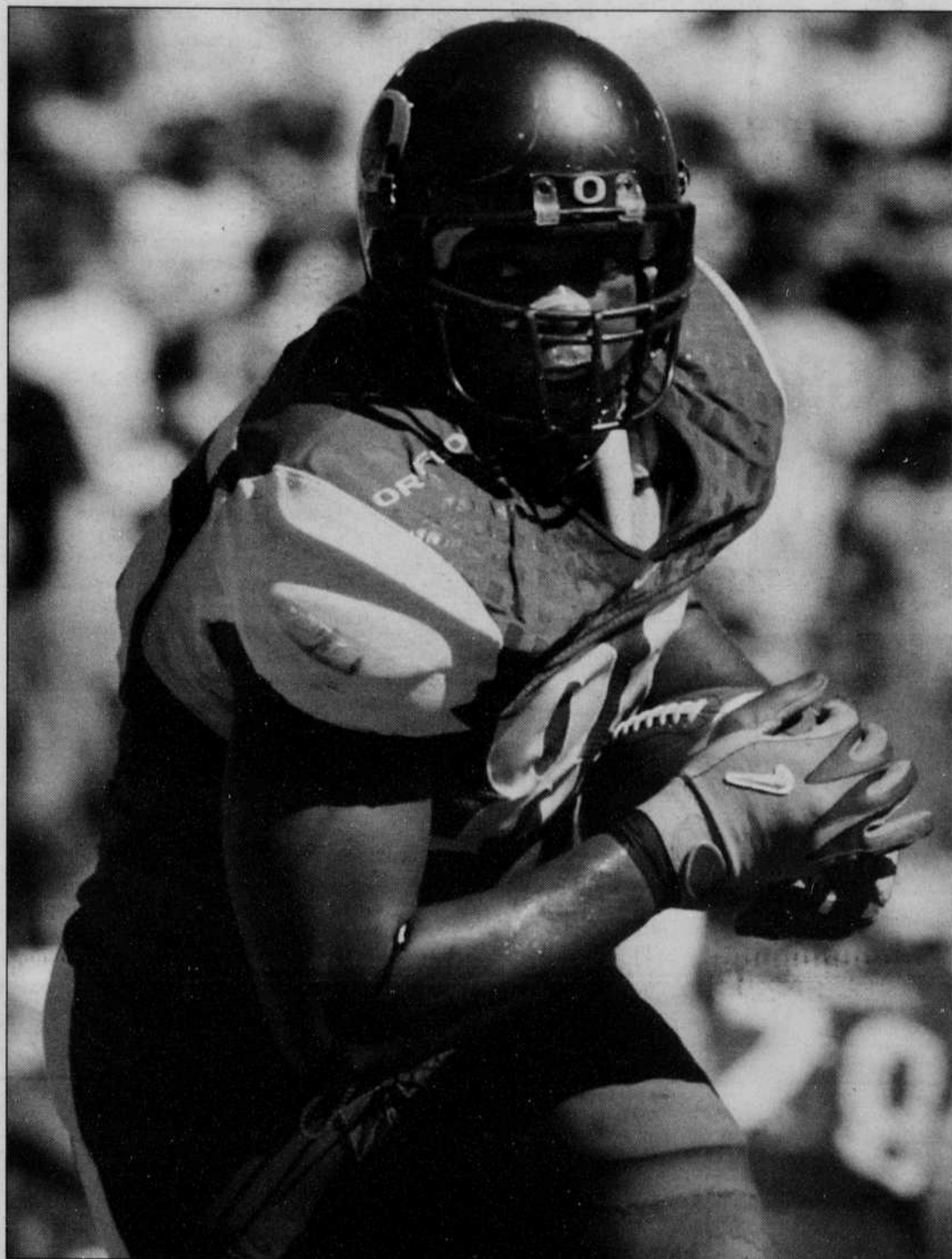


Wednesday, October 22, 2003



Adam Amato Photo Editor

Tim Day is one of 16 Oregon players who have started their first game this season. Day is the Ducks' fourth-leading receiver.

Ducks add energy with new starters

Sixteen Oregon players have started their first game as Ducks in the 2003 season

By Mindi Rice
Senior Sports Reporter

Youth brings energy, humor and a playfulness of sorts to the practice field.

Those qualities have added to the Ducks' attitudes this season, evidenced by the fact that 16 players have started their first game in an Oregon uniform.

DUCK FOOTBALL

Four additional players had one previous start prior to this season.

"I think it definitely makes more guys compete," punter Paul Martinez said. "It's good because in later years, we'll have more experienced players so that when we're older the veterans will be more experienced."

Martinez has inherited the starting punter duties in his first year fresh from high school, beating out two walk-ons. Out of 40 punts this season, 12 have been stopped inside the 20-yard line. Out of his last 17 punts, only two have been stopped inside the 20-yard line.

One of Oregon's top receivers, sophomore Tim Day, caught eight passes for 112 yards in the first six games of the season, starting five of them.

Defensively, six players are new to their starting roles. Part of the reason is the constant shifting of personnel due to defensive tackle Haloti Ngata's injury in the first game.

"When you're able to bring in guys that haven't really started and haven't really played, they're excited," senior Kevin Mitchell said. "It brings a new energy level to the team and especially the defensive side of the ball. It brings the energy level and the excitement and feeling young again to us old guys."

That vigor has helped the younger Ducks gain starting roles from some more

experienced players, but it also gets the upperclassmen to step up.

"I would hope (the older players push harder)," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "Because if they're not, they're going to be beat out."

Tackle Junior Siavii and linebackers Reggie Kerney and Anthony Trucks are among the new defensive starters. The three join corners Rodney Woods and Justin Phinisee, as well as end Devan Long, as the defenders who bring new attitude to the defense.

"The biggest thing is just coming in and making sure you don't fall off too much," Phinisee said. "Coming off of a winning season, or if you have a winning season and the next time you want to reload, regardless of how many starters you have coming in and replacing people, you want to make sure you maintain that."

Offensively, tight ends Day and Dan Kause, tailbacks Chris Vincent and Ryan Shaw and wide receivers Demetrius Williams and Kellen Taylor have started only their first or second game in their careers during this season.

Fullback Luke Rowley and guard Ian Reynoso have also started their first games this season. Quarterback Kellen Clemens is the final new starter for the Ducks.

Of the 16 first-time starters, four are freshmen.

"You just want to strive for success, regardless," Phinisee said.

Tigers, elephants and giraffes: Oh my!

Seventy-five miles south of Eugene, the Wildlife Safari in Winston had an influx of Ducks on Saturday.

About 20 football players and a half dozen softball players made the bus trip that stopped in Sutherlin to pick up fans who had won a raffle at the Sutherlin McDonald's.

"That was awesome, getting out there with the kids," Phinisee said about the trip. "The parents and the kids were out there (at

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Jesse Thomas
Go the distance

Emotion will help Oregon

Oregon hasn't taken care of business lately. It sounds basic, but it is the bottom line and the biggest reason why the football team has struggled.

The horrific memories of the past three weeks haven't left. Oregon has been outscored by a total of 88 points in its last three games. Most recently, Oregon's secondary has received all the criticism, and for good reason.

ABC had way too good of a time showing off Andrew Walter's statistics. Now no one will ever forget that Walter has

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Crosswhite makes 'changes,' improves

Head coach Ernie Kent has praised the forward for his improved play

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

Sophomore forward Ian Crosswhite averaged 9.3 points per game last season and 8 in Pacific-10 Conference play.

He scored a career high 22 against UCLA on Jan. 30 at Pauley Pavilion. He didn't lead the Ducks in scoring that night — Luke Jackson had 27 — but he did in Oregon's 90-81 win over Minnesota on Dec. 22, 2002 with 18 points.

Crosswhite was a key player during Oregon's Pac-10 Tournament run last season and remains significant this season. He knew, however, that he needed to work on a few things during the offseason.

"Working on a right hand

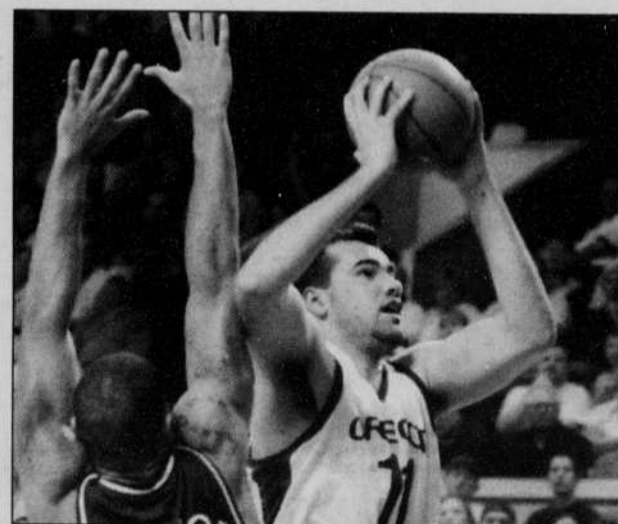
(shot)," Crosswhite said at the team's media day last week. "Toward the end of conference play and post-conference, a lot of people were just sitting on my left hand."

Crosswhite added that he also worked on his ability to shoot more accurately off of one dribble.

Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said that Crosswhite has improved greatly over the summer. So much, in fact, that he may be one of the most improved players on the team.

"I call him new and improved, because, as a coaching staff, in our opinion, he probably operated at about 50-60 percent of his capacity or productivity last year," Kent said. "I think with some changes he has made in his game, his work ethic, his focus, his determination, that right now at individual workouts we feel like he's at 75-80 percent of his productivity. That's really encouraging to us because we see that he is getting a lot of things done right now."

Crosswhite is expected to anchor a cast of forwards and centers that



Ian Crosswhite averaged 9.3 points per game last season.
Adam Amato
Photo Editor

is young, but has size and strength. Sophomore Matt Short and senior Jay Anderson are both returning, while redshirt freshman Adam Zahn and true freshmen Mitch Platt and Ray Schafer are battling for playing time.

Crosswhite, Short and Anderson as a group averaged 14.4 points per game last season.

Date change ... get your tickets

The Ducks originally scheduled a game with Portland State on Dec. 1 at McArthur Court. That, however, was changed to the next day,

Dec. 2. The game will start at 7 p.m. and will be shown on the Oregon Sports Network.

Oregon sold 5,709 season tickets this year, a 12 percent increase from the 5,119 sold last season.

Individual game tickets go on sale Friday, though there are limited numbers for all but one game according to Oregon officials.

Let the rebuilding begin

It's not often that UCLA has to go through a rebuilding process. But that is just the task first-year head coach Ben Howland will have

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