

Hook, line and sinker

Linebacker Jerry Matson picked football up with relative ease in high school after a move from Alaska

By Mindi Rice
Senior Sports Reporter

If it's true that opportunity only knocks once, it must have been about eight years ago that it came knocking at Jerry Matson's door.

During eighth grade, Matson's parents split up, and the former wrestler and basketball player moved to Edmonds, Wash., a suburb of Seattle, to live with his father.

An opportunity arose when the Alaska-raised linebacker signed up for football. He had never played the sport when he joined Kamiak High's team, but it stuck with him.

"When I moved down from Alaska to Seattle, there was a talent gap there," Matson said. "The sports I was good at before, like basketball, I wasn't as good at down in the lower 48. I was a good wrestler, but I hadn't wrestled in a while, so I started wrestling and football — sports I thought I would succeed at, since I wasn't 6-5 or anything."

The Knights made the 4A state playoffs for the first time in school history during 1999, Matson's senior season. That same year, he led

his team, and the state, with 135 tackles and was named an all-state linebacker by The Seattle Times.

"My high school program was blessed because they had a surplus of kids that had tremendous work ethic," Matson said. "I'm hard-pressed to find any people that concentrated. We won a league that hadn't been won by any other team in 20 years in my senior year."

Kamiak lost in the quarterfinals that year to second-place finisher Kentwood. The following year, Matson's

first at Oregon, Kamiak lost in the semifinals to a Johnny DuRocher-led squad from Bethel.

DuRocher is soon to be the fifth person from the team added to a football-filled house. Matson and three teammates — Jared Siegel, Jonathan Levine and Nick Steitz — live there already, with each adding their own talents and personality quirks to the mix.

"Off the field, he's a pretty laid-back guy who knows how to have a good time," Siegel said of Matson. "He's just a guy's guy, just real fun to be around and not very good with the dishes."

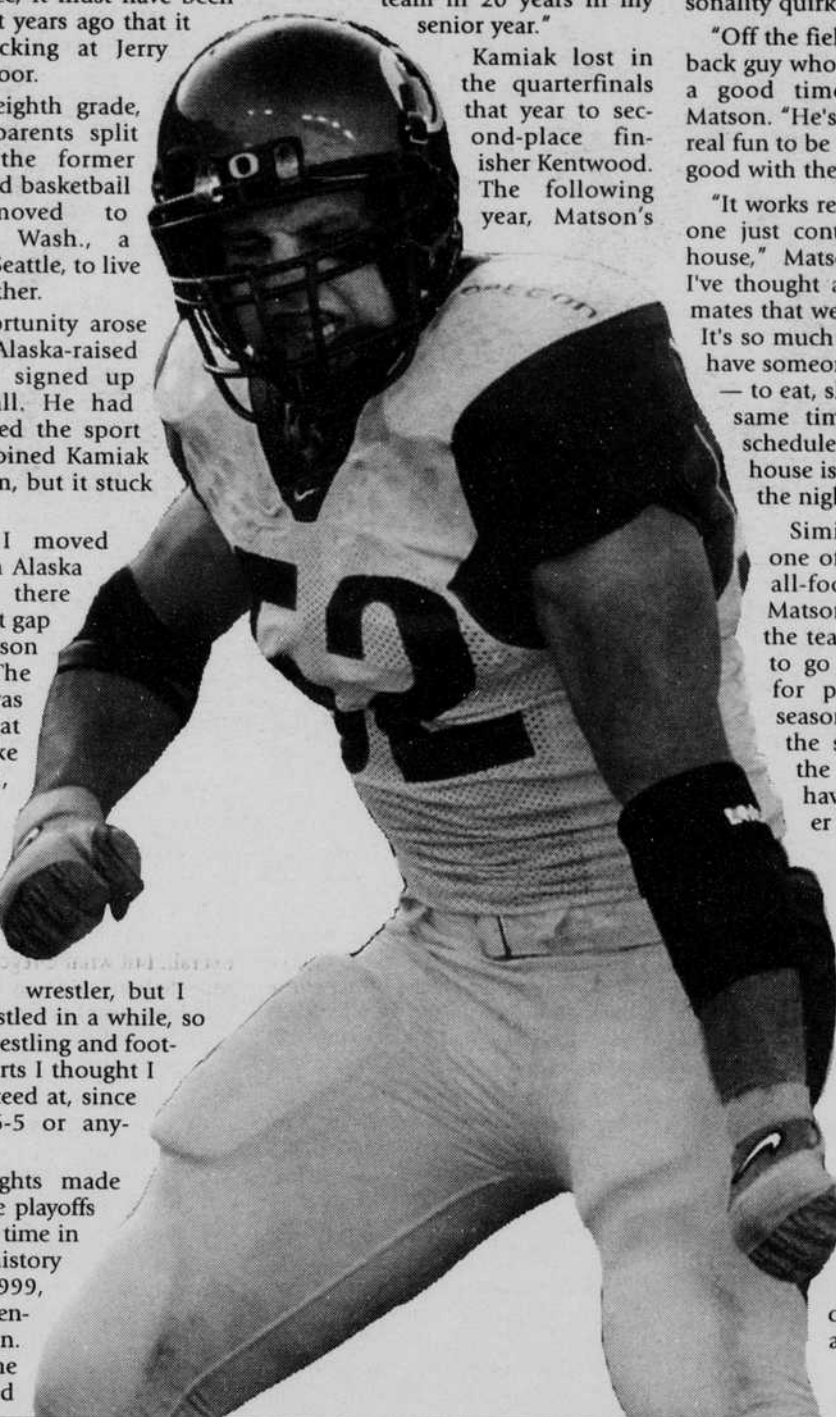
"It works really great and everyone just contributes around the house," Matson said. "Certainly I've thought about having roommates that weren't (on the team). It's so much more convenient to have someone on the same page — to eat, sleep and work at the same time, so it's just the schedules coordinate so the house isn't up at all times of the night."

Similar schedules are one of the benefits of the all-football house that Matson enjoys. It allows the teammates to be ready to go on game days and for practice during the season, and living under the same roof increases the bond they already have from time together on the field.

"Just being on the team and being in the same class, he became someone that I could trust," Siegel said. "He's just a great guy."

Matson's pretty laid-back, too. During the season, when free time is scarce, he enjoys music and just hanging out. The friendships that build between teammates are one of the things he enjoys about football.

Turn to **SINKER**, page 5B



Sun Bowl offers select seniors chance to recall old memories

For the Oregon seniors, they finish their careers in the Sun Bowl, where their careers began in 1999

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

For a few of the Oregon seniors, it's déjà vu.

At the end of their careers with the Oregon football team, they are back right where it all began.

Go back four years to 1999 when Oregon played in the Sun Bowl in El Paso, Texas. The Ducks had a come-from-behind victory in the closing minutes to win, 24-20, over Minnesota.

Flash forward to the present and Oregon returns to El Paso after being invited to the Sun Bowl on Dec. 2. And wouldn't you know it, the Ducks again play Minnesota.

"It is kind of weird because we might end up playing Minnesota," senior quarterback Jason Fife said Wednesday. "It's pretty rare for you to be able to say you started at one bowl and ended at the same bowl."

Fife was on the sidelines four years ago, and although he didn't play because it was his redshirt year, he still remembers the experience.

"It was great; I'd never been to a bowl game before," he said. "These last couple of days I keep thinking about what we did. There's a lot of fun stuff that we did as a team. It was good camaraderie-building experience."

Senior linebacker Kevin Mitchell was also there. Because the 1999 season was his redshirt year, he didn't take the field, either.

"It's nice for me," he said. "It doesn't really matter for me what game we play in. Another game is another game. Especially for the seniors, it's the last game we get. If it does end up being Minnesota again, then I guess it comes full circle."

"We're going to El Paso and they treated us nice there in the past. We're looking for a good time and a good game."

Mitchell is one of just five seniors who were on the 1999 team including Fife, wide receiver Sammie Parker, offensive guard Joey Forster and defensive end Quinn Dorsey.

Mitchell said he was excited about returning to the Sun Bowl, but more importantly, he just wants to continue the Oregon tradition of winning bowl games.

"In reality though, it's just time for us guys to reward ourselves with the season we've had and time to go have fun and play another game," Mitchell said.

Oregon finished the regular season with an 8-4 record and tied for third in the Pacific-10 Conference with a 5-3 record. And that was a place that many wouldn't have expected Oregon to end up halfway through the season.

"To be a third place team after the season we've had, it's going to be a great experience," Parker said. "We're going to go out there and have a good time and hopefully we come out with a win."

Parker is hoping that with the travel distance and change of climates, he and his teammates can stay focused on the task at hand.

"We are going to be out there in a warm environment," he said. "Hopefully we can keep everybody's heads on

Turn to **SENIORS**, page 9B

Keep your date or LOSE YOUR LICENSE.



Under Oregon's new MIP law, drivers under 21 who fail to appear in court on an alcohol-related offense will automatically lose their drivers license. It's just one more reason why driving sober is the way to go.

Drive Sober. The Way to Go.
Transportation Safety — ODOT

COUPONS? YOU DON'T NEED NO STINKING COUPONS!



You've got the Domino's Student Value Menu® Order by number!

- #1 12" Pizza with your favorite topping.....\$5.99
- #2 12" One-topping pizza & two cans of coke.....\$7.99
- #3 14" One-topping pizza & Cheesy Bread.....\$7.99
- #4 14" One-topping pizza & Cinna Stix.....\$7.99
- #5 14" One-topping pizza & 2-liter Coke.....\$7.99
- #6 Two 12" one-topping pizzas.....\$9.99
- #7 12" One-topping pizza & 10 Buffalo Wings.....\$9.99
- #8 14" One-topping pizza, Cheesy Bread & 2-liter Coke.....\$9.99
- #9 12" Nine-topping Extravaganza.....\$9.99

- Add a second 12" for only \$4
- Add a second 14" for only \$6
- Extra toppings \$1 per pizza

343-3030
2568 Willamette • Eugene

DELIVERY HOURS:

Willamette and Springfield
Monday - Thursday: 4pm - 1 am
Friday and Saturday: 11am - 2am
Sunday: 11am - 1am

746-3030
1135 Mohawk • Springfield

343-0842
1355 River Road • Eugene

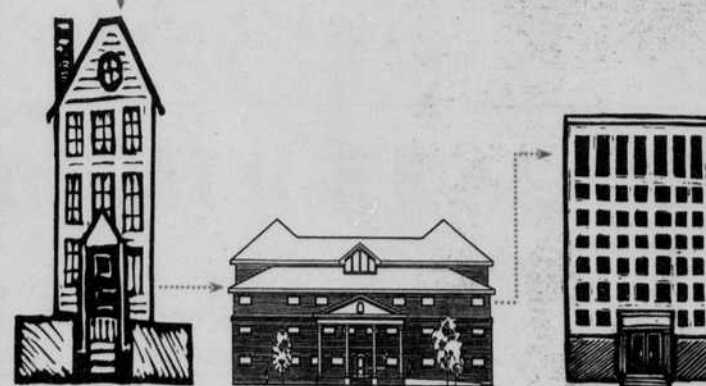
River Road
Monday - Thursday: 4pm - Midnight
Friday, Saturday & Sunday: 11am - Midnight

Limited delivery areas. \$1 delivery charge.
Expires 12/31/03. Valid student ID required.

Von Klein Property Management, LLC

Campus Rentals

Find the home that fits you.



Largest Selection • Personal Service
Come Visit Us Today! 485-7776 • 1301 Ferry