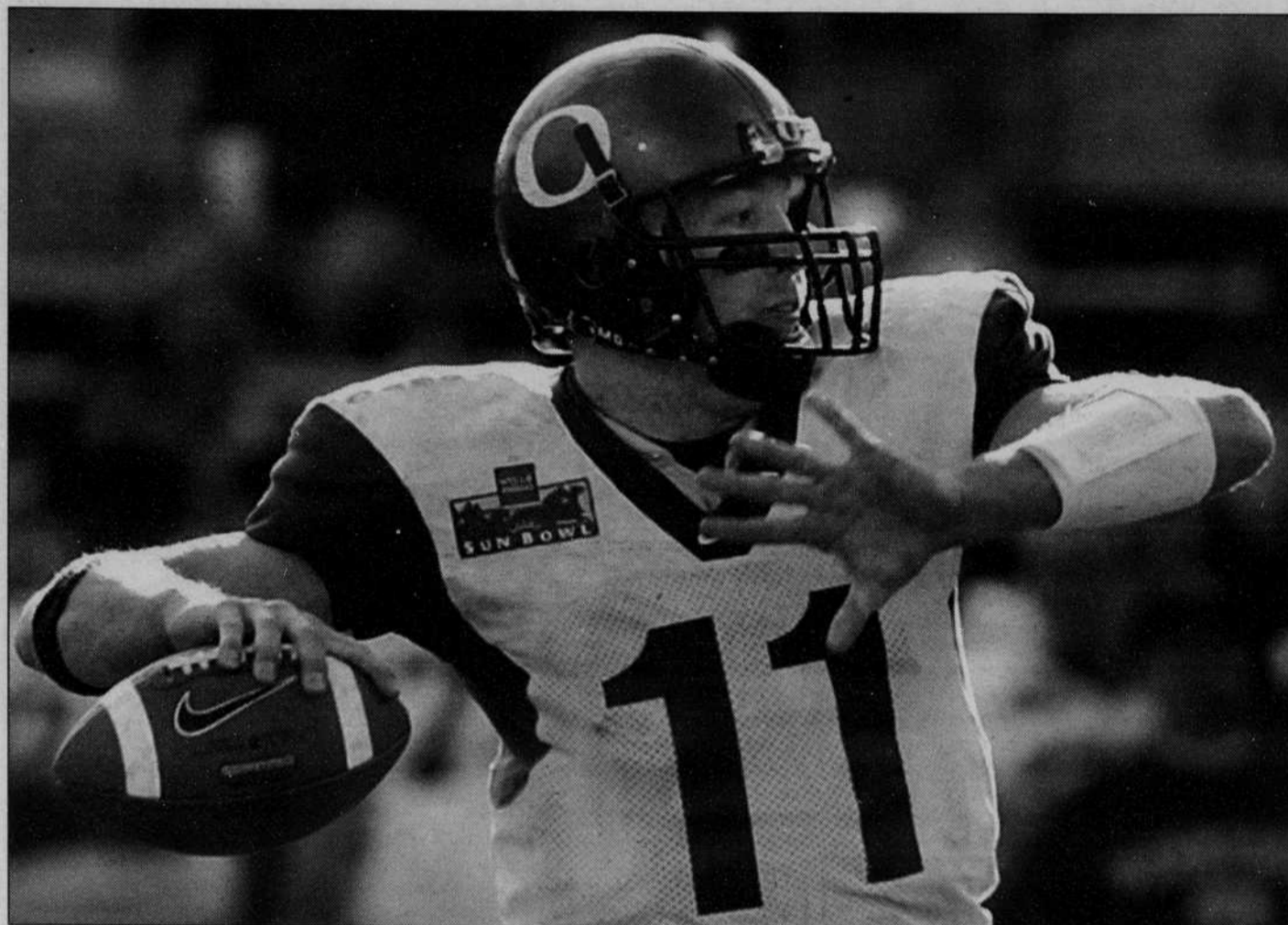


Wednesday, January 7, 2004



Adam Amato Photo Editor

Kellen Clemens passed for 2,400 yards and 18 touchdowns this season while leading Oregon to an 8-5 record and its seventh straight bowl game.

So close

In a season fraught with injury and setbacks, the Ducks ended the year just shy of nine wins

By Hank Hager
Sports Editor

Oregon's 31-30 loss to Minnesota in the 2003 Sun Bowl a week ago was, in a way, a

microcosm of the Ducks' season.

Plagued by setbacks all season, Oregon fought back to make it interesting, only to be shunned in the final seconds.

DUCK FOOTBALL

That's the kind of season the Ducks had to battle through. At one point, they were poster boys for Sports

Illustrated, the popular choice to be underdog national champions, at least in the minds of the fans.

Just weeks later, a bowl berth was in jeopardy and their win over then-No. 3 Michigan forgotten.

It was a tough but rewarding year, the Ducks say.

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Jesse Thomas
Go the distance

Ducks' losses easily forgotten

The Oregon men's basketball team doesn't have a 6-3 overall record like the statistic sheets show. And the Ducks aren't off to a 1-1 start in Pacific-10 Conference play either.

If you take a closer look, Oregon is 8-1 overall and off to a perfect 2-0 start in conference play.

Oregon's only loss this season has come against then-No. 5 ranked Kansas in Kansas City, Mo. That was a game that no one really expected Oregon to win anyway.

But a loss to Alabama by one point on national television at the Las Vegas Showdown — that didn't really happen did it?

And a loss to UCLA after Oregon had won the last five contests against the Bruins, including last year's Pac-10 Tournament semifinals and the overtime victory spurred by senior Luke Jackson's super-human-lacerated-finger-13-stitch 27-point performance.

Did Oregon really let UCLA go on a 22-2 run on Sunday and run up the score as the Ducks watched in confusion?

Well, yes, both happened. But, they

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Oregon starters shift around as focus moves to Pac-10 play

The Ducks' starting five includes two freshmen who are now starters through different circumstances

By Mindi Rice
Senior Sports Reporter

The Oregon women's basketball team has made changes since the beginning of the season.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Some changes, like starting freshman Eleanor Haring, have been a choice.

Others — like choosing who will start in place of senior Cathrine Kraayeveld — are a necessity.

"Certainly, in the long run, (the loss of Kraayeveld) is the situation that has been difficult for us," head coach Bev Smith said. "But I think we have the depth on this team absolutely to overcome that kind of loss."

Sophomore Carolyn Ganes started in place of Kraayeveld on Dec. 4 against Portland. She scored nine points and

grabbed two rebounds in 20 minutes on the court.

The game was a wash for Oregon, a 76-58 loss that was the Ducks' first of the season. The Ducks said later that they weren't fully ready for the game.

"We were a little bit on our heels," Smith said after the Portland game. "Each and every one of us tried to take the shot that was going to be worth 15 points rather than be patient."

Kraayeveld's injury occurred during Oregon's final practice in Eugene before they headed north to Portland. The Ducks had very little time to adjust to life without their starting senior leader.

"You could definitely feel that she wasn't on the court," Ganes said after the Portland loss. "Everybody needs to kind of take a little time and get used to that feeling and re-adjust our roles."

Now Jessica Shetters, a 6-foot-6 freshman from Portland, is starting in place of Kraayeveld, getting learn-as-you-go experience in the Pacific-10 Conference.

Haring is also a new starter for Oregon. The two freshmen showed Smith potential off the bench in order to earn their way into the starting five in their

first month.

What doesn't break you makes you stronger

This isn't the first year that the Ducks have gone through the trials and tribulations of an injury.

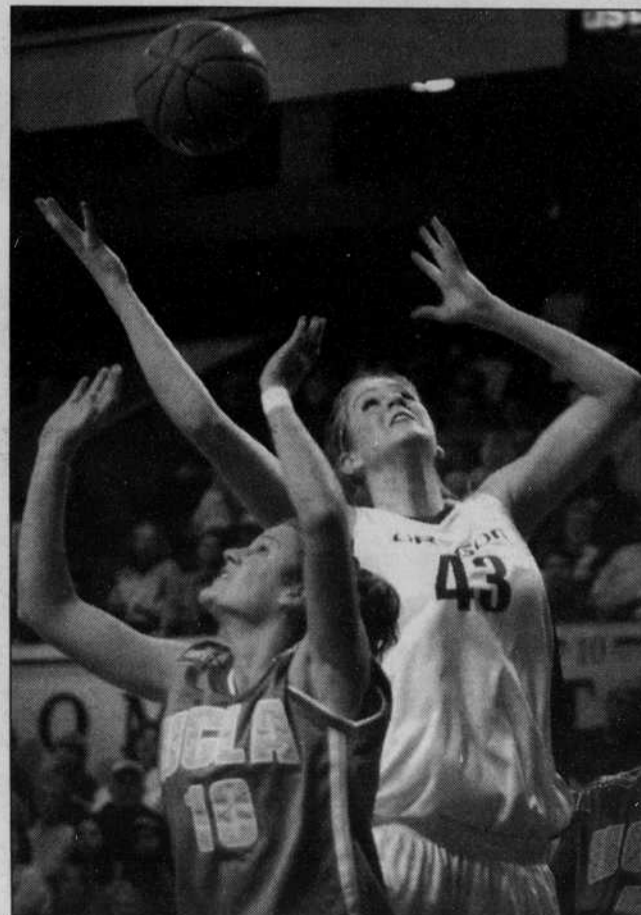
Last season, Kraayeveld missed 13 games due to a staph infection in her right knee. In December 2002, Smith suspended and later dismissed senior Shaquala Williams from the team.

Through it all, the team chugged along. After losing Kraayeveld again this season and suffering a five-game losing streak, Smith said they are still on the track.

"We went through a year of adversity last year and they broke through it and they were stronger and they worked together," Smith said. "Now this is just a moment where this is an opportunity and we see it as such. We're going to make the most of the opportunity."

"(The players) have absolutely not given in to the adversity this season. They're trying to do the right thing to put themselves in a position to win."

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Adam Amato Photo Editor

Jessica Shetters (43) is one of two freshmen starting for the Ducks.