

■ In my opinion



BRIAN SMITH
LEFTY SPECIALIST

Clichés always pull through in the clutch

For this column, I'm going to take it one word at a time. I'm going to give 110 percent. I'm going to take a page out of the old playbook and give some great individual effort.

I feel like a warrior, and my competitive juices are really flowing today...all over my keyboard, desk, shirt, etc.

My grammar and spelling know their place on the team, have to stick to their fundamentals, and cannot — I repeat — cannot be intimidated.

So watch out; this could be the turning point of the column.

Gut-check time.

Crunch time.

Yes, the dreaded sports cliché. One of the sportswriter's biggest nightmares.

So I thought I would take some time and produce some random thoughts about clichés.

If I had the heart of a champion, could I then have lightning-quick reflexes, a nose for the ball and a rifle for an arm?

Memo to fans: The best players that you've never heard of will stay that way until mentioned, and thus, their title will be removed.

I love the fact that the ball game you were watching can become a whole new ball game, even though it's still the same ball game.

I'm always proud of an official making a good call because they were right on top of it...from 15 yards away.

Damn that clock for being both an ally and an enemy.

Hold on, I'm really feeling it now. I'm running like a well-oiled machine, en route to blowing the game wide open.

Am I putting on a clinic yet?

How exactly does a team not play to win, but also not play to lose?

I think I know a reason why.

They must not have their heads in the game.

Yep, that must be it.

It certainly looks like the nail in the coffin, and I think I hear the bus warming up with some giant, fat lady on it.

But, seriously, sports need clichés — no matter how stupid they sound, or how much fun they are to play with.

One of the reasons is that no matter how much the games change over the years, structurally they remain the same. Repetitive plays and actions beget repetitive responses.

Would anyone disagree that Babe Ruth was on top of his game when he hit 60 home runs in 1927? So when Barry Bonds hit 73 in 2001, the fact that he was at the top of his game had been reduced to another tired cliché.

But how else would you describe it? How hard would it be to come up with a new phrase for the same action every time?

Let's see...

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■ Duck football



Marley Tucker was removed from the field with a dislocated right elbow during Oregon's 28-13 loss to Arizona State Saturday. He is expected to miss six weeks of the season.

DANIELLE HICKEY
PHOTO EDITOR

Incognito ousted, Tucker injured

Richie Incognito doesn't meet standards for Oregon while rover Marley Tucker will be out six weeks with a dislocated right elbow

BY JON ROETMAN & CLAYTON JONES
SENIOR SPORTS REPORTER AND SPORTS EDITOR

Richie Incognito was released from the Oregon football program for failing to meet conditions for admission on the team, head coach Mike Bellotti said at practice Monday.

Bellotti said the decision was made last Thursday to give the former Nebraska center a blanket release, which allows him to transfer to any school in the country. Bellotti wouldn't elaborate on what conditions were violated, but said Incognito will keep his scholarship for the rest of the term and can remain enrolled in classes at the University if he chooses.

Incognito had yet to practice with the team at the time of his release.

"He's not a member of the team, he never actually has been, and I wish him well," Bellotti said.

While his on-field talent was never questioned, Incognito's off-field baggage caused some to question Bellotti's decision to give the 6-foot-3, 300-pound junior a chance to join the program.

In February, Incognito was charged with three counts of assault stemming from a fight at a party. He was found guilty of one misdemeanor assault charge after a three-day trial in June and paid a \$500 fine.

Another charge was dismissed, and he was found innocent on the third.

He was suspended indefinitely from the Nebraska football team by head coach Bill Callahan for repeated violation of team rules.

However, Bellotti defended his decision by saying the former All-Big-12 tackle needed to pass several tests before becoming an active participant on the football team.

"I set things up to protect everyone involved," Bellotti said. "I felt very comfortable with it. That's why (the media) made such a big deal out of it, and I said I was not concerned. I would not do it any differently."

Injuries hamper Oregon

The pain of the loss to Arizona State continues past Saturday night as Oregon lost two starters to injury. Also, many other players will be missing practice time this week.

The most serious injury occurred during the third quarter, when rover Marley Tucker went down in the west end zone and dislocated his right elbow.

Tucker is expected to miss six weeks,

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■ Duck golf

Golf teams successful in tournaments

A second-place finish for the men in Corvallis and a third-place standing for the women after one round bode well for Ducks

BY SCOTT J. ADAMS
FREELANCE REPORTER

After tying for second in the Northwest Collegiate Classic last month, the Oregon men's golf team is preparing for the Alister Mackenzie Intercollegiate tournament next week in Fairfax, Calif.

As of late, the Ducks have received strong performances from redshirt sophomore Matt Ma and junior Justin St. Clair, who both fared well at the Northwest tournament. Ma, a native of Aiea, Hawaii, achieved a career-best second-place finish after carding a team-best, 8-under 208.

"I felt really good out there," Ma said. "I struggled in the second round but kept myself together and finished strong. It was a big confidence booster for me."

In the first round of the tournament, Ma shot the fifth 65 in school history. His 65 also tied for the third-lowest score ever achieved by an Oregon golfer.

St. Clair also tallied his best score as a Duck after shooting a final round 70 and finishing tied for fourth at 5-under 211. Junior Gregg LaVoie tied for 21st overall after finishing 1-

over 217.

Oregon head coach Steve Nosler said he was proud of his squad for its performance at the tournament.

"These guys deserve a pat on the back for their effort today," Nosler said. "I'm proud of the way our guys played."

Oregon State cruised to a team title at the tournament thanks to Jonathan Green, whose 13-under 203 finish made for a new tournament record.

The Ducks will finish the month of October with the Big Ten/Pac Ten Challenge in Bandon Dunes, Ore., Oct. 25 and 26.

Women to play in Washington

The Oregon women's golf team continues its season today at the Edean Ihlanfeldt Invitational in Sammamish, Wash. The tournament is scheduled to be three rounds and will be held at the Sahalee Golf and Country Club.

The 6,192-yard, par-72 tournament will feature 14 teams, including six ranked in the top 25 by Golfweek Magazine. No. 2 Washington heads the field, along with No. 8 Oklahoma State, No. 9 Pepperdine, No. 20 Stanford, No.

21 California and No. 22 BYU. Other participants include Long Beach State, Oregon State, San Francisco, UNLV, Washington State, Southern California and Stirling (Scotland).

The Ducks last played two weeks ago at the NCAA Fall Preview at Sunriver, where they finished 21st overall. This week's tournament will be an opportunity for the Ducks to avenge their 912 total score at Sunriver, which placed them just behind conference rivals Washington State and Oregon State. This week will also be another conference tune-up for the Pac-10 Conference Championships in April.

Recently, the Ducks have received clutch play from sophomore Kim McCready, who led the Ducks at Sunriver by shooting a 3-over 74 in the final round and finished the tournament tied for 48th. Junior Erin Andrews also played well at the tournament, finishing tied for 52nd. Earlier in the year, Andrews qualified for the women's U.S. Amateur Championship, held in Erie, Pa.

October will be a busy month for the Ducks, who will play in the Stanford-Pepsi Invitational at Stanford, Calif., Oct. 15-17, and the Hawaii Fall Classic at Oahu Oct. 26-27.

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