

"I would rather die in an abandoned building, by myself and my family not know anything, than play for him."

Former NFL tight end Shannon Sharpe on New York Giants head coach Tom Coughlin



BRIAN SMITH
LEFTY SPECIALIST

An accurate prediction salvages lack of creativity

I am worried.

This is the third week in a row that I don't know what to write about.

And furthermore, I'm having problems opening a column.

So as soon as I decide on a topic, I have one hell of a time starting to write about it.

I sit in class and think about it. I lay awake thinking about it.

I have meditated.

I have deliberated.

I have spent the last three hours mentally pontificating (really) the merits and overall worthiness of the past weekend's sports stories for the necessity of filling 18 inches in today's paper.

I am close to admitting I have a problem choosing a topic for a column, and I am currently looking for a sponsor.

This process should be simple. So many sports, so many topics. But in turn, that is the problem.

I need inspiration.

I have consulted the Great Foam Football of the Sports Desk for advice and wisdom many times already this year and it has been gracious enough not to notice my blatant abuse of its power.

I have used the plastic yellow novelty golf club (which came out of a Subway kid's meal) that also floats around our department to help weed out the ideas that float around my brain.

I read ESPN.com.

I skim blogs. Fan sites.

The newspaper.

Magazines.

Pick fellow writers' brains.

All this, and most of the time I still don't have an idea.

I should be writing about Oregon sports, but what else can be said?

I should write a column that is full of complete thoughts and deep ideas, but that would require, on my part for one, complete thoughts and deep ideas.

And now part of my time consists of searching various other columns by sportswriters, just to make sure I am writing a truly original one.

The process goes a little something like this.

Me: Maybe I should write a column on the Bowl Championship Series and the ongoing computer flaws.

Google search says: Half the sportswriters in America have written the same column.

Okay.

Me: How bout the Chicago Cubs choking away the National League wildcard?

Google search says: Jay Mariotti of the Chicago Sun-Times already beat you to the punch, idiot.

Fine.

Me: What about the Red Sox? They're hot. They're news.

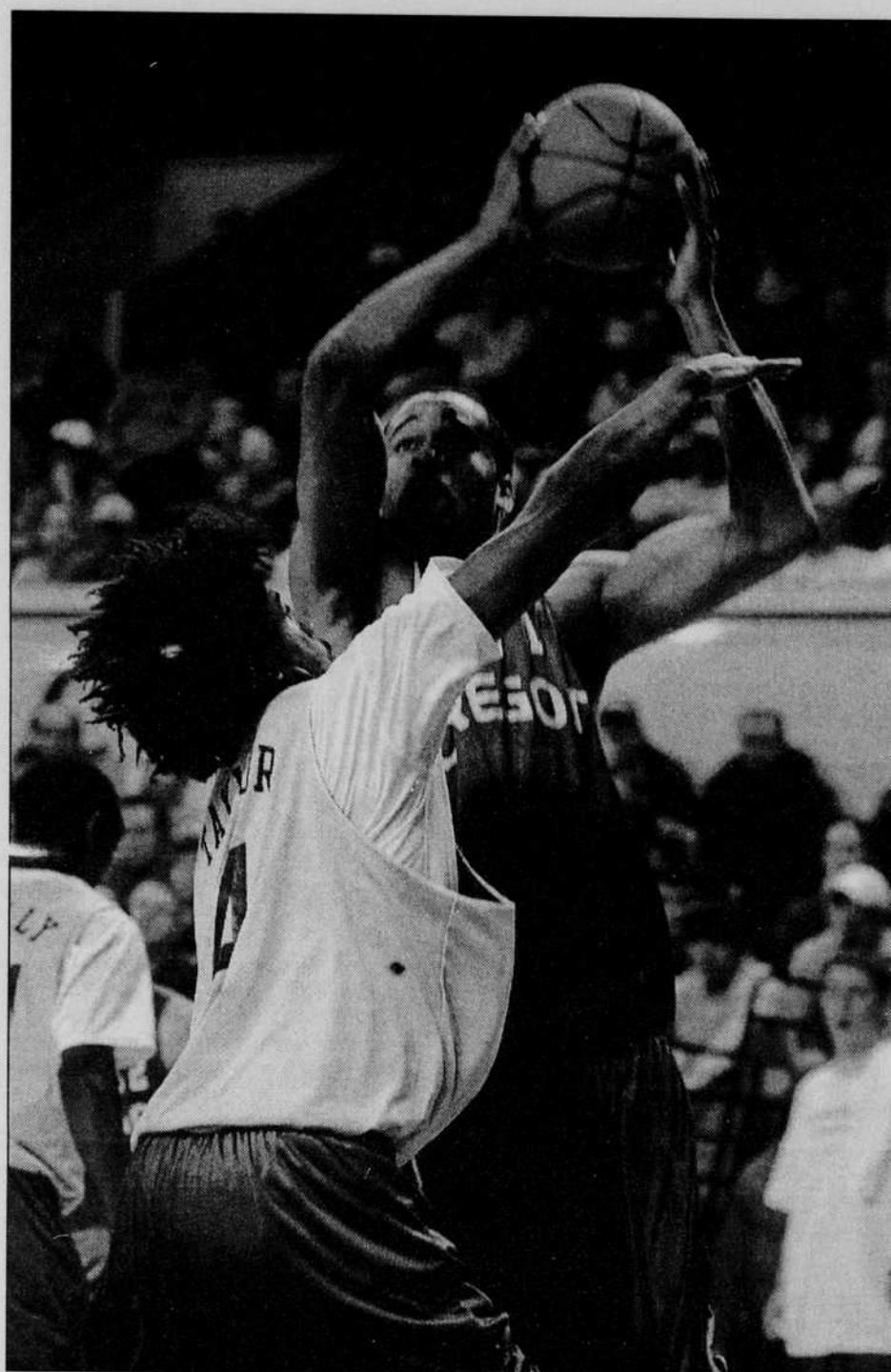
Google search says: You (two straight columns) and every other sportswriter in America (countless columns) as well as the entire population of the state of Massachusetts.

Damn it.

This process is tiresome at best and something akin to debating whether squirrel fishing is a sport, at its worst. By the way, it isn't and never, ever will it be a sport.

And worse, I still don't have an idea.

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DANIELLE HICKEY | PHOTO EDITOR

Bryce Taylor (4) defends fellow freshman Malik Hairston during Oregon's scrimmage at McArthur Court Monday. The Ducks play their first exhibition game Nov. 7 against Trinity Western, also at McArthur Court.

Men's basketball

Ducks put on show in intrasquad scrimmage

Oregon newcomers provided fans with a glimpse of the future, including a pre-game dunk show

BY JON ROETMAN
SENIOR SPORTS REPORTER

If Monday's intrasquad scrimmage was a sign of things to come, the Oregon men's basketball team has a bright future ahead.

The Ducks showed off their size and athletic ability for the 2,635 fans in attendance at McArthur Court and even put on a dunk show during warm-ups.

The Ducks were split into two seven-man squads, one wearing green and one wearing yellow. Certain athletes switched teams during two 20-minute periods and what equated to an 11-minute third period.

Both teams played an up-tempo style of basketball and made relatively few mistakes for having only one week of practice under their belts.

"I thought for seven days of practice ... I was extremely pleased with what we were able to accomplish," head coach Ernie Kent said. "We're going to be big and we're going to be fast. This is the most athletic team that's ever been here. We shoot the ball extremely well. It's just going to be us having an opportunity to fine-tune some things and obviously, we have plenty of time to do that."

Freshman guard Bryce Taylor led all scorers with 26 points on 9 of 14 shooting. The Encino, Calif., native brought the crowd to its feet in the second period with a two-handed jam over red-shirt freshman center Ray Schafer.

BASKETBALL, page 10

Club Sports

Ducks sweep Stanford, still undefeated

Oregon improves to 4-0 with two wins against the Cardinal during its series this weekend

BY BEAU EASTES
FREELANCE REPORTER

Oregon's Club hockey team dominated the ice this weekend at the Lane County Ice Arena during its opening Pacific-8 Conference game. The Ducks, who finished 8-14 last season, improved to 4-0 on the year and 2-0 in the conference by manhandling Stanford 15-0 Friday and 10-1 Saturday.

"Our goal is to win the Pac-8," first-year Oregon head coach Scott McCallum said.

Stanford brought only eight players for the trip, making an accurate assessment of the Ducks progress almost impossible.

"It was tough to gauge," McCallum said, but noted that next week's games against Washington should be "a way better matchup."

Oregon outshot the Cardinal 106-25 over the two games, wearing down a Cardinal team that only had two reserve players.

Mike Tornabene, a fifth-year senior center for the Ducks, led Oregon offensively throughout the weekend, registering three assists in the first game and posting a hat trick in the second.

"We've got such a good team," Tornabene said. "The speed of the team is unbelievable."

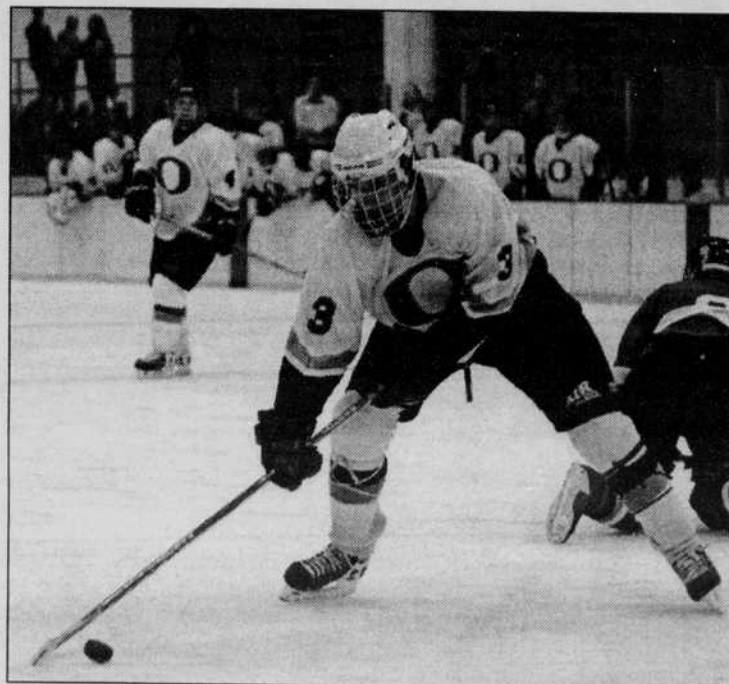
Tornabene, playing his fifth season for the club, noted the importance of the reorganization of the hockey team.

After last season, the club hired McCallum and assistant coach Darren Dunbar to head the team and the Ducks became more focused on commitment and structure.

"The desire of everyone to get better" plays a huge part in the turnaround, Tornabene said.

The Ducks had 40 people try out and had the luxury of keeping the best 25 players.

"Everyone's dedicated," said Joe Fagliano, a fifth-year goalie for the Ducks. Fagliano, a geography



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Club hockey defenseman Mike Boggs (3) attempts a shot in the Ducks' 15-0 victory against Stanford Friday. Boggs also scored two goals in Saturday's win.

major from Hillsboro, had a 14-save shutout against the Cardinal Friday. "This year we've got a good shot at winning the I-5 Cup,"

said Fagliano.

The Cup, an award given to the winner of Oregon's four-game HOCKEY, page 10