

■ In my opinion



BRIAN SMITH
LEFTY SPECIALIST

Prospective Heisman Trophy picks picked apart

I don't need Joey Heisman, circa 2001, in order to get a healthy batch of Heisman Trophy fever.

I already have it.

The 2004 Heisman Trophy presentation is a little more than a month away, but the actual trophy will be tailgating somewhere in the Autzen Stadium parking lot this weekend.

Really.

Go to voteheisman.com if you don't believe me.

What's even better is that you can get your very own photo taken with the trophy and impress your buddies at the next poker night.

You'll be the envy of your crew or posse. Trust me.

If a photo with the Heisman Trophy isn't worth spending Friday night in the parking lot at Autzen, then I don't know what is.

So, in honor of the most prestigious award in college football making its way through the sea of lightning yellow this weekend, let's examine the Heisman hopefuls.

Why?

Just because.

Adrian Peterson, RB Oklahoma Sooners

The freshman running back is threatening a coup against the accepted tradition of giving the award to juniors and seniors.

The Palestine, Texas native was the nation's top prep recruit and has already shown why.

Peterson has rushed for 1,373 yards in nine games and has nine scores. He has twice gone over 200 yards, both against ranked opponents Texas and Oklahoma State. His lowest output of the season was the first game of his career, where he had 100 yards and a score.

Nine straight 100-yard games, nine scores. Besides being only a freshman, the one obstacle standing in his way is...

Jason White, QB Oklahoma Sooners

...his quarterback. The reigning Heisman winner is once again in contention after leading the Sooners to a 9-0 record and the nation's No. 2 ranking.

White has thrown for 2,130 yards and 25 touchdowns with only four interceptions. White isn't on pace to eclipse his 3,846 yards and 40 touchdowns from the previous year, but the fact that he is a senior gives him the edge over Peterson.

For now.

Alex Smith, QB Utah Utes

The dark horse in the Heisman race. Smith has led the Utes to their highest ranking in school history and put them in position to become the first-ever non-Bowl Championship Series conference team to earn a BCS bowl bid.

His numbers are comparable to, if not better than, White's this year. Smith has thrown for 2,196 yards, completed 66.4 percent of his passes, thrown 24 touchdowns compared to two picks and has rushed for 439 yards and eight touchdowns.

■ Club Sports

Oregon Club ruggers dominate on field

As the men handled Western Oregon 54-5, the women took care of Washington 48-10

BY BEAU EASTES
FREELANCE SPORTS REPORTER

The Oregon Club men's and women's rugby teams ran rampant over Division II Western Oregon and rival Washington Saturday, defeating the men from Monmouth 54-5 and the Husky women 48-10.

"We were able to dictate what we were going to do," men's head coach Justin Roome said.

The win marks the second victory in a row for Roome's squad.

"We played a loose game," rucker Pete Bayly said. "When we felt like opening up, we did."

Back Colin Daviau led the Duck unit with a hat trick against the undermanned Wolves.

"The whole back line played great," Daviau said when asked about his scores.

The Ducks jumped out to an early lead and never looked back. Western Oregon didn't score until the final play of the contest — well after the Duck's starters had been removed.

"We made some amateurish mistakes," Roome said about the lopsided win, but attributed that fact to the youth of the team.

The Duck squad, mostly freshman and sophomores, has high potential, according to Roome.

"We're pretty young, which is promising for the future," Roome said.

Roome also noted that he was pleased with the Ducks' fitness level, describing his athletes as being in "really good" shape.

"Everyone's optimistic," the second-year coach added.

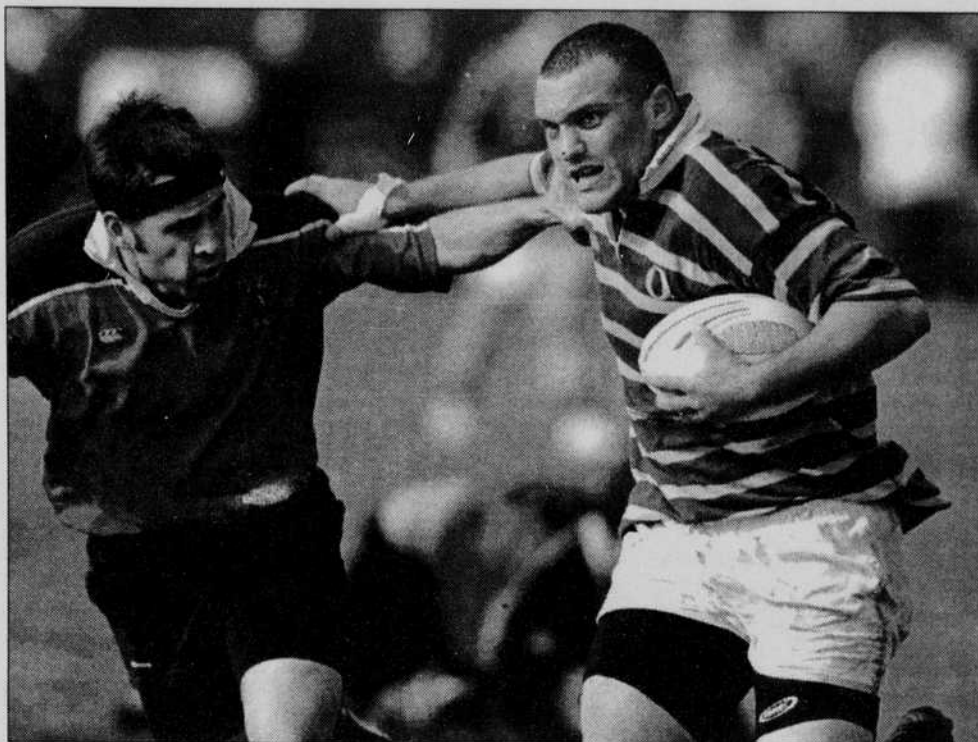
Daviau and Bayly, veterans on the squad, were pleased for the most part with the effort.

"We're small," Daviau said, "but we have heart and gave it our all. We played pretty good, but can play better."

"We dictated the pace of the game," Bayly added.

The men ruggers conclude their fall preseason schedule Nov. 20 in Corvallis against Oregon State in what Roome calls their "biggest battle" of the fall.

Following winter break, the men's squad starts league play Feb. 12 with a home match



LAUREN WIMER | SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Oregon Club rugby player Mike Estis delivers a stiff-arm to a Western Oregon defender in the Ducks 54-5 runaway victory Saturday. The Ducks will showdown with Oregon State in the Civil War Nov. 20.

against Washington. The Ducks compete in the Pacific Northwest Rugby Football Union (PNRFU) along with Oregon State, Washington, Washington State, Western Washington and Central Washington.

For the women, the win over the Huskies gave the team a 1-0 mark in league play.

"It's a great feeling," forward Trish Bronte said.

With only 18 players (rugby teams consist of 15 participants on the field), many of which are newcomers to the sport, the Ducks surprised themselves with their offensive efficiency.

"It was really surprising how well we did," Bronte said. "It's amazing how we came together as a team."

The Ducks started a front line of all new faces, which is especially challenging in rugby because team cohesion is such a crucial part of play.

Bronte, the club coordinator, was also happy with her team's defensive effort.

"Our tackling looked great," she said.

Four players for Oregon scored their first collegiate goals in the win over Washington, according to Bronte.

The Duck women also finish their fall season on Nov. 20 against the Beavers in Corvallis in a non-league game. Following the Civil War matchup, the women ruggers don't resume league play until Feb. 19 against Western Washington in Bellingham, Wash.

"It's nice to start off with a win," Bronte said, adding that the Duck women will be "marked men" due to their success in the past several years.

Beau Eastes is a freelance reporter for the Daily Emerald

General managers begin baseball talks

Deals, trade deadlines, instant replays, hugs, handshakes all listed as hot topics to be discussed in Florida at the annual GM meetings

BY BEN WALKER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KEY BISCAJNE, Fla. — Pedro Martinez, Sammy Sosa and Randy Johnson figured to attract plenty of attention once all 30 general managers got together Monday and set up shop for their annual meetings.

Many of the GMs had already arrived at the ritzy oceanfront hotel by the time some other prominent guests — members of the heavy metal band Metallica — checked out. Quickly, the baseball folks got down to business.

In the first trade of the offseason, San Diego sent outfielder Terrence Long and pitcher Dennis Tankersley to Kansas City for pitchers Darrell May and Ryan Bukvich.

Also, the Montreal Expos — still operating under that name, but expected to become the Washington Nationals soon — cut reliever Rocky Biddle. Count the San Francisco Giants among the teams that came to Florida looking for a closer.

Aside from deals, there are other things to talk about during these five days. There will be a discussion about moving the July 31 trade deadline, and instant replay was also listed on the agenda.

"I think people want to see that the umpires get it right," said Bob Watson, vice president of on-field operations. "I think the postseason proved they could do it without instant replay."

Plus, there might be a debate about post-series hugs and handshakes, such as what took place between the St. Louis Cardinals and Los Angeles Dodgers after their first-round NL matchup. Fact is, a lot of old school executives didn't like it too much.

Along with the GMs, there was at least one prime player in town. Scott Boras, who represents free agents Carlos Beltran, Adrian Beltre, Derek Lowe, Jason Varitek, Magglio Ordonez and J.D. Drew, breezed through the lobby.

"I'm late for another meeting," he said.

Traditionally, the GM gathering serves as a precursor for the winter meetings, to be held Dec. 10-13 in Anaheim, Calif.

"This is where you can lay the groundwork," Atlanta GM John Schuerholz said. "I don't think you'll see a lot of action here because there are too many dynamic free agents still out there."

Carlos Delgado, Nomar Garciaparra, Troy Glaus and Martinez are among the elite players eligible. Only their former teams can talk

money with free agents until Friday. Just to be sure, baseball sent out a two-page memo to clubs last week reminding them that no collusion is allowed on offers.

Stung by Boston in the AL championship series, the New York Yankees figure to make an impact sometime before opening day. That could mean trying to lure Martinez away from the World Series champion Red Sox and perhaps making a trade to get Johnson from Arizona.

Yankees GM Brian Cashman said he'd spoken to most teams before flying south with talks in the initial stages.

"The way these winters have gone, things don't move too swiftly," he said.

Before tinkering with the roster, the Yankees might solidify their coaching staff. Don Mattingly plans to return and it looks as if pitching guru Mel Stottlemyre might also be back. Former big league reliever Neil Allen could become their bullpen coach.

Speculation kept swirling about a blockbuster trade that would send Sosa from the Chicago Cubs to the Los Angeles Dodgers for Shawn Green in a swap of big hitters.

But Sosa's contract is complex, and his agent did not foresee the slugger going anywhere.

"I just think it's unlikely," Adam Katz said. "There are too many intricacies involved. And besides that, no one has called me. No one. I think I would've heard by now."