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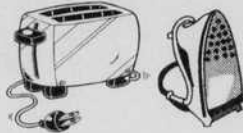
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■ In my opinion

Football team's holiday wish list is lengthy, but not impossible

'Tis the season for giving and receiving.

The Oregon football team placed a big red bow and some colorful wrapping paper on a bowl game and placed it under the tree for Oregon State.

Now with their holiday season free, the returning players are probably going to have a hefty list for Kris Kringle for next season's team. It will probably go something like this:

Dear St. Nick,

I know we didn't do as well as we were supposed to this year, and we fell to some teams we should have beat.

Yeah, the Indiana loss was a tough way to begin the year, especially since the team went 3-8. We know if we would've won that game and the rest of our record had stayed the same, we would be enjoying a bowl game this holiday season.

Not just any bowl game, but the



CLAYTON JONES
SEVENTH INNING STRETCH

Las Vegas Bowl. I know a person like you isn't too fond of Sin City, but it could've been a "fun night" for us.

Enough about the past, St. Nick. We would like to present you with our wish list for next season.

1) We are losing most of our offensive line to graduation and would like an upgrade from last season's performance.

I know we had Adam Snyder, a first-team Pacific-10 all-conference player, but we gave up the most sacks

in the conference and need to give our quarterback time to throw the ball instead of taking a beating every time he drops back to pass.

Also, we have a great running back in Terrence Whitehead, who was robbed of at least a second-team All-Pac-10 spot and needs some more holes to run through. He may not be the fastest running back in the conference, but he can find holes and break more tackles than anybody coming back next year.

2) We want Autzen Stadium to once again be a place that opposing teams fear.

Teams didn't seem to loath coming to Autzen this year, and that was evident after the embarrassing loss to Indiana at home to start the season. We went 3-3 at home — a far cry from the Autzen magic that used to run rampant through the stadium.

3) In our stocking, we would like a kicker.

We are losing possibly the best kicker this university has ever seen in Jared Siegel. He is the all-time leading player at Oregon in scoring and field goals.

Paul Martinez stands as his replacement, but he hasn't proved himself after losing the punting job to David Dittman.

4) We want more players like Jerry Matson and Ramone Reed.

Though not the fastest or the biggest player on the field, Matson had heart and played at full speed at all times.

The former walk-on was the team's most inspirational player, according to teammates, and was never "too good" to be on special teams.

Reed's consistent play while dealing with injuries all season paid off as he received the Bob Officer Award, given to a player who excels despite physical adversity. He fought through not only physical, but emotional adversity with the loss of his mother during his junior season. For Reed to step up after such a loss is a testament to his will and determination.

5) We would like to start another winning season streak next season.

Everyone knows we went 5-6 and broke our streak of 10 consecutive winning seasons. We know the fans around town expect a lot from us, so

JONES, page 5B

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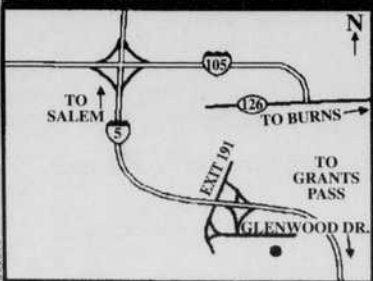
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