



**STEVE TANNEN**  
Feature Writer  
DUCKS ILLUSTRATED

# Mallard Musings

## Best Game I Never Saw

Thanks to UCLA Athletic Director Daniel G. Guerrero, I did not get to see the win this past Saturday. He decided not to alter any schedule and turned down the offer from Fox to kick off at seven and put the game on the tube. I'm sure those recruits they had visiting were bowled over by the excellence displayed by the Bruins. The primary question for my partner and I calling the Marist/Ontario high school football playoff game was: seek or avoid? Find out the score or sidestep the information and catch the late night replay. The

decision was removed from our hands early and often. It's amazing how many different people told us what was happening. Since it was always good news I have no complaint. The stat sheet sure told a different tale. 228 total yards and just four rushing first downs but the defense and special teams got on the board and the Ducks put lots of heat on Drew Olson dumping him six times. Is anyone else slightly stunned that the Civil War is for outright third place and a sweet bowl invite? The folks at Magic Mountain should name a roller coaster for this Oregon team. Who gives up 114 points in back to back conference games, then pitches a shutout? It's insane I tell ya! It makes Cybil seem focused, level headed and rational. I'd say Justin Phinisee is making huge strides. Led the team with 10 tackles and is fourth overall for the season. He also has a couple of picks and pair of sacks on his resume. Remember he's just a sophomore and could be a real force in this league

the remainder of 2003 through 2005. Justin has the size at just under 6 feet, right around 195 pounds to match-up with those prototype, big physical wide outs like USC's Mike Williams.

I can barely contain my enthusiasm for Duck hoops. I can say Ernie Kent is one of the most up-beat, glass half-full people walking on the planet. Yet even the coach has cranked it up a notch. I attended the press session where Ernie talked about his new recruits and this team is about to crank it up for real. The man is downright giddy over where his program is at and let me tell you, Kent is the king of sincerity. There's no reason not to be on board. Of the many reasons both he and Mike Bellotti have enjoyed big success is my gateway theory. A selling point to a big time player must be an opportunity to use the school as a springboard for the professional level. For many years Terrell Brandon was the only Duck in

the NBA. Blair Rasmussen retired after the 93 season so it was T.B until Freddy Jones was taken by Indy following the Elite 8 run in '02. Of course the Sonics plucked Luke Ridnour this past June and 7 months from now Luke Jackson gets his name called in the draft. Look how many Oregon players are getting their number called on NFL Sunday. Now coach Kent has the new Pit as a selling point. Add up these ingredients... **1.** An outstanding coach with a huge reputation for honesty, integrity and class; **2.** A very attractive style of play; **3.** Knockout facilities; **4.** Unparalleled on court success for the university; **5.** A growing NBA pipeline; & **6.** Great current talent. Bust out the shades people. The future, present and recent past are neon bright. **O**

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