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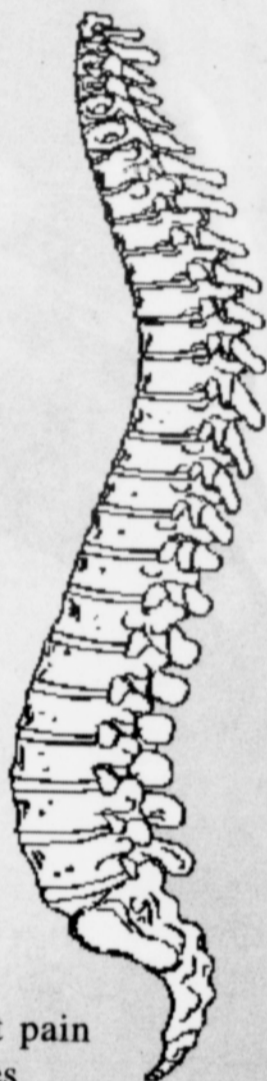
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Oregon players are greeted by the BCS championship game queen and her court at Sky Harbor International Airport on Sunday in Phoenix, Ariz. Oregon is scheduled to face Auburn in the championship game Jan. 10 in Glendale, Ariz. (AP photo)

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Title Game on the Line

continued ▲ from front

Auburn, though, is nearly as potent on offense and has Newton, the multitasking quarterback who overcame a pay-for-play plot by his father to run away with college football's most prestigious individual award.

It's also a bigger stage than the Ducks have ever been on before.

Oregon has been in the national spotlight before, just last season in the Rose Bowl against Ohio State. But the Ducks lost that game and this one has an even brighter glow, with media from around the country descending on the desert and an entire nation of football fans watching every their every move.

To avoid his players thinking about the weight of trying

to win the program's first national title and potential distractions in a winter vacation destination, Kelly and the coaching staff outlined a detailed schedule almost immediately after earning the title-game bid.

The preparations end on Monday, with everyone watching and everything on the line.

Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Minimum Wage Up 10 Cents with New Year

Oregon's lowest-paid workers got a small boost with the start of the New Year, when the state's minimum hourly wage rose by 10 cents to \$8.50.

The increase means that a full-time worker earning the minimum wage will earn \$208 more in 2011, according to Chuck Sheketoff, executive director of the Oregon Center for Public Policy.

"A strong minimum wage is good for low-wage workers and good for Oregon's economy," said Sheketoff.

Sheketoff noted that stud-

ies have found that minimum wage raises have no adverse impact on job creation and that households with minimum wage earners increase their spending when the minimum wage goes up.

The increase is the result of a voter-approved ballot measure. The 8-year-old law first increased the state's minimum wage to \$6.90 and allowed it to rise annually thereafter to keep up with inflation.

Minimum wage workers went without an increase in 2010 under the formula.

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