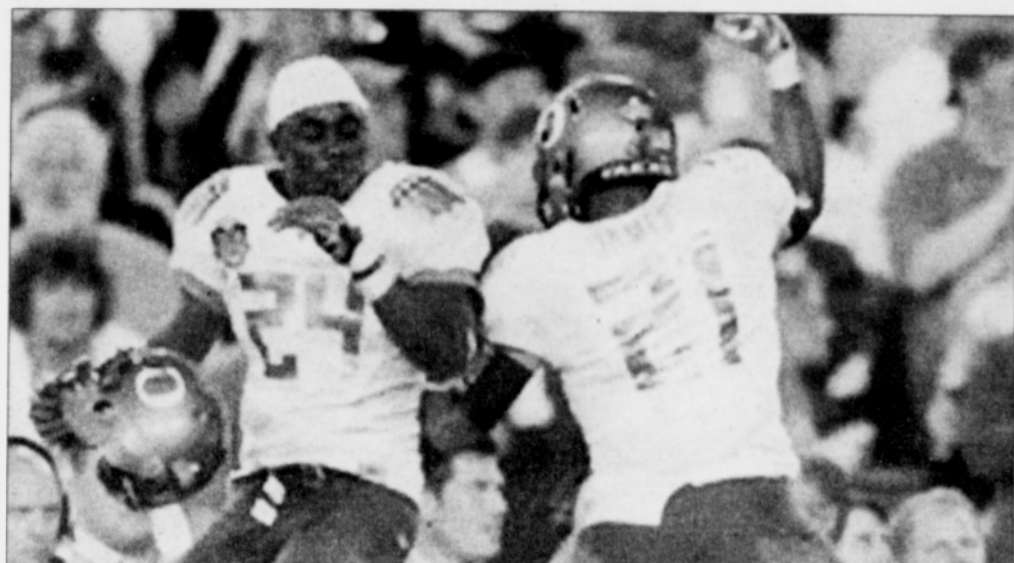


# SPORTS



Oregon's Kenjon Barner (left) and LaMichael James celebrate a two-point conversion during the first half of the BCS National Championship NCAA college football game against Auburn, Monday, in Glendale, Ariz. (AP photo)

## Kelly's 'Win the Day' Focus Took Oregon Far Mantra drove team to the end

(AP) Coach Chip Kelly kept Oregon focused this season with a deceptively simple philosophy: Win the Day.

While it sounds like a modern twist on Al Davis' "Just Win, Baby" catch phrase, the Ducks totally bought into Kelly's day-at-a-time mantra, and it took them all the way to the BCS championship game.

The Ducks finished 12-1 and ranked No. 3 after losing to top-ranked Auburn 22-19. TCU went 13-0 to earn the No. 2 spot.

The Ducks started the season ranked No. 11 with uncertainty about their quarterback situation after Jeremiah Masoli was dismissed from the team in the offseason.

But a sophomore duo, quarterback Darron Thomas and running back LaMichael James, would become the stars of a spread-option offense known for its speed.

Oregon would outscore its opponents 592-221 in the regular season, scoring an average of 49.3 points and winning by an average margin of 30.9 points to repeat as Pac-10 champions. The Ducks' closest game was a 15-13 victory over California.

James, a Heisman Trophy finalist

who moonlights on Oregon's track team, was ranked atop the nation with 153 yards rushing per game until Auburn held him to 49 yards in the title game. He set a new single-season record for the Ducks with 1,731 yards.

Thomas performed admirably as a first-year starter, throwing for 2,881 yards and 30 touchdowns. He ran for five more scores.

They were the faces of Oregon's so-called "blur offense," which former Stanford coach Jim Harbaugh described simply as "fast-fast."

Oregon would basically outrun opposing defenses, wearing them out. They outscored foes 115-24 in the fourth quarter before the championship game.

At the end of the championship, as Auburn celebrated its title, Kelly waited for each of his players to leave the field at University of Phoenix Stadium before he left himself.

"It has been an unbelievable journey," he said.

James was already looking ahead.

"We have next year. We are going to play plenty more football games. We are going to win plenty more," James said. "I think this is a lesson for us."

## Auburn Wins BCS Title

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passed to LaMichael James for a touchdown. Thomas hit Jeff Maehl for the tying 2-point conversion with 2:33 left.

And one last possession that will be remembered for one incredible play.

Dyer, who chose jersey No. 5 because that's how old his brother was when their father died in a car accident nearly two decades ago,

took the handoff from Newton and ran off right tackle for what looked like a 6- or 7-yard gain. Nothing routine about this one, though. He wasn't sure his knee hit the ground, so, urged by his coaches and teammates on the sideline, he popped up and kept going.

Tide fans, of course, will remind you that it still has five more AP titles than the Tigers.

At Auburn, the words "War Eagle" would almost surely suffice.

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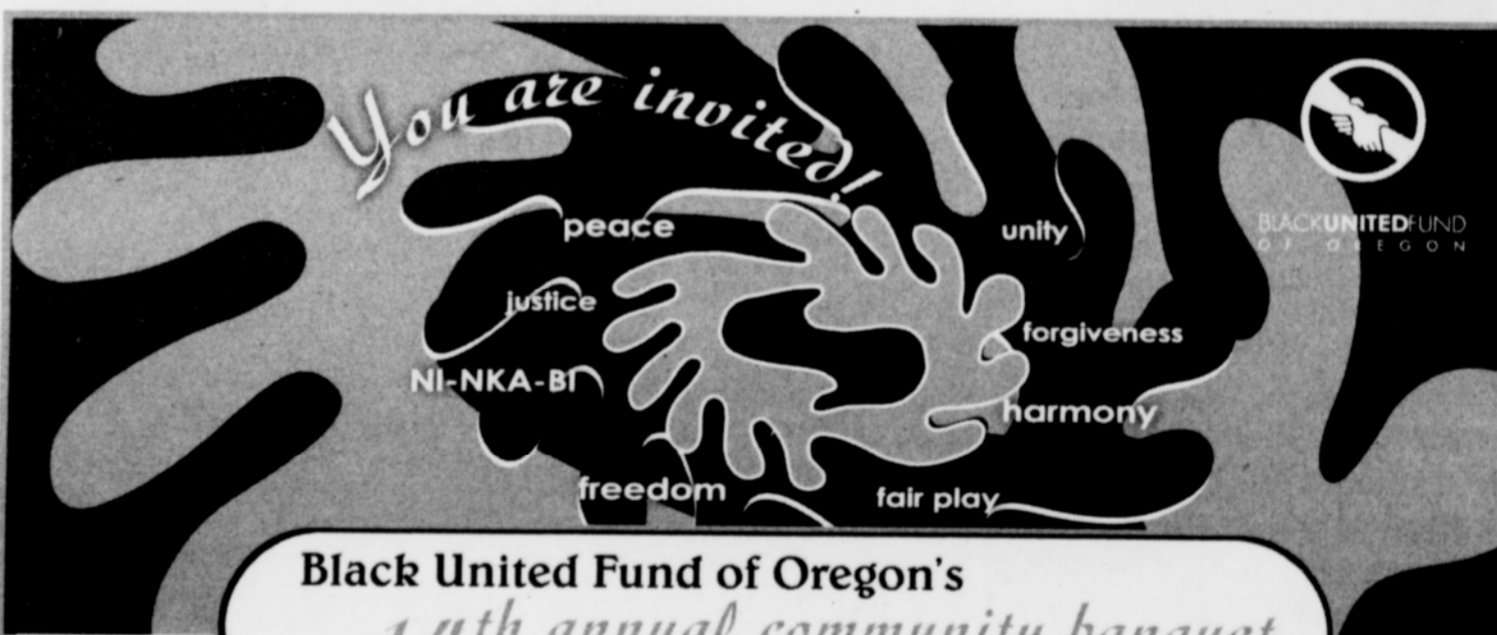
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