

Ducks:

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“Those last few games that I played, I was playing with a club the whole time so it kind of made it rough,” Verdell said. “I kind of played through it. ... I was definitely going through it, especially the Pac-12 championship. I couldn’t even go because I had to go to the doctor the same day so I was watching it from (Eugene).”

“It was definitely one of those feelings like, man, I wish I can be out there or at least have been out there on the field rooting the guys on. It was good to see them take home that championship. I called and FaceTimed the whole group after and we all talked and celebrated so it’s still good.”

Back to full strength, Verdell still tops Oregon’s running back corps this spring, even as Travis Dye emerged in a different and even more dynamic role last season. They don’t see each other as competition, but rather as a tandem that few others can match.

“I think before the season he was leaning on more of leaving,” said Dye, who ran for 443 yards and a touchdown and had 239 receiving yards and four scores on just nine receptions last season. “In the middle of the season we talked about it a little bit more and he said he



Sean Meagher/The Oregonian, File

Oregon running back C.J. Verdell (7) carries the ball against Stanford in the Pac-12 season opener in Eugene in November 2020.

wanted to come back and I was all for it. I told him this 1-2 punch can keep going and that we’re going to be an awesome duo still. Last year I know there’s a bad taste in his mouth. He’s ready to come out there year and go off, and I’m all for it.”

At their peak, Verdell and Dye make a compelling case for the best running back duo in the conference and one of the best in the country. The only Pac-12 teams with comparable running back pairings are Colorado and Washington State, which also saw their leading rushers from 2019 miss most or all of 2020 due to injury.

With Sean Dollars and Trey Benson both out this spring recovering from injuries, Verdell and Dye are the only two healthy scholarship running backs on Oregon’s roster and while there’s always something to refine and improve, staying

healthy is the priority for the next nine practices and the off-season.

They have high aspirations, individually and as a team, and in order to each them the Ducks need both to be available on Saturdays.

“The goal for us right now is we want to win a national championship really bad,” Dye said. “Becoming the best 1-2 punch in the Pac, that’s going to help us. Obviously I believe that we are the best 1-2 punch in the Pac, if not the nation. Of course we’re going to say that, but we’re going to show it this year for sure.”

Individually, Verdell is shooting for 2,000 yards. If he’s able to stay healthy enough to not only play each week, but not been limited due to a variety of minor injuries he’s played through over the years, there’s no reason to believe he can’t reach that mark.

ON THE SLATE

All times subject to change
TUESDAY, APRIL 20
Prep baseball
Hermiston at Southridge, 5 p.m.
Pendleton at Redmond, 4:30 p.m.
Riverside at Stanfield/Echo, 4 p.m.
Heppner/lone at Umatilla, 4 p.m.
Prep softball
Kennewick at Hermiston, 3 p.m.
Redmond at Pendleton, 4:40 p.m.
Union/Cove at Echo/Stamfield (2), 2 p.m.
Umatilla at Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii (2), 4 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at McLoughlin (2), 4 p.m.
Prep boys tennis
Hermiston at Chiawana, 4 p.m.
Stanfield/Echo at Weston-McEwen, 4 p.m.

Prep girls tennis
Hermiston at Chiawana, 4 p.m.
Stanfield/Echo at Weston-McEwen, 4 p.m.
College volleyball
Columbia Basin at Blue Mountain, 5 p.m.
Columbia Basin at Blue Mountain, 6:30 p.m.
Men’s college basketball
Blue Mountain at Columbia Basin, 7:30 p.m.
Women’s college basketball
Blue Mountain at Columbia Basin, 5:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21
Prep baseball
Irrigon at La Grande JV, 4 p.m.
Prep softball
Heppner/lone at Pendleton freshmen

(2), 3 p.m.
Prep track and field
Hermiston at Southridge, 3 p.m.
Prep boys tennis
The Dalles at Pendleton, 3 p.m.
Prep girls tennis
Pendleton at The Dalles, 3 p.m.
Prep boys soccer
Richland at Hermiston, 7 p.m.
Prep boys golf
Hermiston at Richland, Horn Rapids Golf Course, noon
Prep girls golf
Hermiston at Richland, Horn Rapids Golf Course, noon
Men’s college soccer
Spokane at Blue Mountain, 4 p.m.
Women’s college soccer
Spokane at Blue Mountain, 2 p.m.

LOCAL STANDINGS

Through games played April 19

MEN’S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Corban, Oregon Tech, Bushnell, Warner Pacific, Southern Oregon, Eastern Oregon, Multnomah, #Lewis-Clark State, #Northwest, #College of Idaho.

Note: Due to COVID-19 concerns, Evergreen and Walla Walla have elected to opt out of the 2020-21 season. #Teams that have opted out of Spring Conference schedule

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like North Idaho, Big Bend, Columbia Basin, Treasure Valley, Walla Walla, Wenatchee Valley, Blue Mountain, Spokane, Yakima Valley.

WOMEN’S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like z-Bushnell, Eastern Oregon, Warner Pacific, Corban, Oregon Tech, Multnomah, #Lewis-Clark State, #Northwest, #College of Idaho.

Note: Due to COVID-19 concerns, Evergreen, Southern Oregon and Walla Walla have elected to opt out of the 2020-21 season. z-spring season champions #Teams that have opted out of Spring Conference schedule

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Big Bend, Treasure Valley, Walla Walla, Wenatchee Valley, Blue Mountain, Columbia Basin, Spokane, Yakima Valley, North Idaho.

COLLEGE BASEBALL

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like z-Lewis-Clark State, Corban, Oregon Tech, College of Idaho, Eastern Oregon, z-clinched CCC regular-season championship, tournament host

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Spokane, Yakima Valley.

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Columbia Basin, Treasure Valley, Big Bend, Walla Walla, Blue Mountain, Wenatchee Valley.

COLLEGE SOFTBALL

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like x-Southern Oregon, x-College of Idaho, x-Oregon Tech, x-Corban, Warner Pacific, Carroll, Eastern Oregon, Bushnell, Northwest, Providence, x-clinched playoff berth

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Big Bend, North Idaho, Walla Walla, Wenatchee Valley, Columbia Basin, Treasure Valley, Yakima Valley, Spokane, Blue Mountain.

COLLEGE MEN’S SOCCER

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Blue Mountain, Spokane, Wenatchee Valley, Columbia Basin, North Idaho, Treasure Valley, Walla Walla.

COLLEGE WOMEN’S SOCCER

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Walla Walla, Spokane, Blue Mountain, Columbia Basin, North Idaho, Yakima Valley, Treasure Valley, Wenatchee Valley.

PREP BASEBALL

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Pendleton, Ridgeview, The Dalles, Crook County, Hood River Valley, Redmond.

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Walla Walla, Spokane, Blue Mountain, Columbia Basin, North Idaho, Yakima Valley, Wenatchee Valley.

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Pasco, 3A SPECIAL DISTRICT 5.

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Burns, Vale, Wallowa Valley, Riverside, Umatilla, Irrigon, Nyssa.

2A/1A SPECIAL DISTRICT 7

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Sherman/Arlington/Condon, Heppner/lone, Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii, Ukiah, Stanfield/Echo, Grant Union/Prairie City, Weston-McEwen, Union/Cove, Lyle/Wishram, Klickitat/Trout Lake, Adrian, Dufur/South Wasco Co., Glenwood.

PREP SOFTBALL

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Pendleton, Ridgeview, The Dalles/Dufur, Crook County, Hood River Valley, Redmond.

4A/3A MID-COLUMBIA

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Walla Walla, Kamiakin, Kennewick, Richland, Chiawana, Hanford, Hermiston, Southridge, Pasco.

3A SPECIAL DISTRICT 2

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Burns, Wallowa Valley, Riverside, Umatilla, Nyssa, Vale, Crane, Irrigon.

2A/1A-SD6 SPECIAL DISTRICT 6

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Union/Cove, Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii, Weston-McEwen, Adrian, Stanfield/Echo, Elgin, Grant Union/Prairie City, Heppner/lone.

PREP BOYS SOCCER

Table with columns: Team, League, Overall. Lists teams like Richland, Pasco, Kamiakin, Chiawana, Hermiston, Kennewick, Hanford, Southridge, Walla Walla.

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