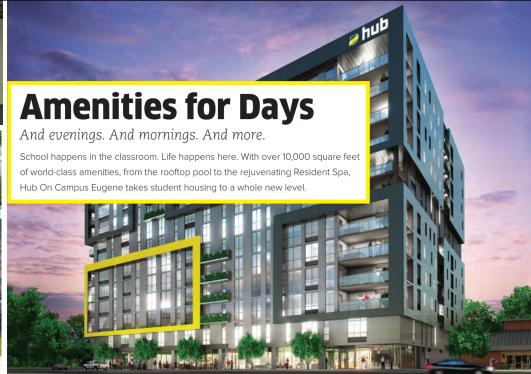




# THE D-BOYZ







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# OREGON'S EXPECTED TO DECIMATE

The No. 2 ranked Oregon team has just two games and a potential Pac-12 title matchup remaining before it can seal the bid to the inaugural College Football Playoff. The Ducks will begin this two-game stretch against Colorado (2-8, 0-7 Pac-12) this weekend, the only team in the Pac-12 that has yet to notch a conference win.

In their last meeting, the Ducks defeated the Buffaloes 57-16. And while the Buffaloes don't pose any threats like Paul Richardson, who now plays for the Seattle Seahawks, they do boast a No. 17 ranking in passing yards per game, averaging just under 300 yards a game.

Having said that, the Ducks are heavily favored heading into the game.

Here are your match-ups and players to watch in Oregon's matchup with Colorado at Autzen Stadium this Saturday:

# SEFO LIUFAU VS THE OREGON SECONDARY

With 14 interceptions on the season, it's hard to advocate for sophomore quarterback Sefo Liufau. While he has been at the helm of a capable passing attack, the touchdowns-to-interceptions ratio has not been too pretty. For this reason, the Oregon secondary will be looking to further expose Liufau in this game.

For the Ducks, this could be a field day. Erick Dargan, with a team-high of five interceptions,

is a part of a defense that has recorded 10 interceptions and there is no telling what they will come up with against the Buffaloes' offense. Coming off of a bye week, star cornerback Ifo Ekpre-Olomu is expected to play after reinjuring his toe - bad news for the Buffaloes.

# DEREK MCCARTNEY VS THE OREGON OFFENSIVE LINE

Colorado defensive end Derek McCartney enters this matchup with a team-high of four sacks. While Oregon offensive lineman Andre Yruretagoyena is expected to make his return this weekend, the Ducks have had stretches where they struggled to protect Marcus Mariota. Against the FBS sack-leading Utah Utes, the Ducks gave up two sacks in the first six minutes of the game, something that simply can't happen regardless of who they are facing.

On that note, the Oregon offensive line will have to hold its own once more against the Buffaloes. The absence of center Hroniss Grasu, who suffered an undisclosed leg injury against the Utes, will be something to be on the lookout for

# Players to watch

# Oregon:

Evan Baylis and Johnny Mundt
Pharaoh Brown was recently ruled out for the
season after suffering a gruesome leg injury
against the Utes. Having said that, tight end
reserves Evan Baylis and Johnny Mundt will
now have to fill in. The two have played in just
three combined games and haven't recorded
a single touchdown. Oregon may not need
anything notable from either tight end this
game, but moving forward they will have to step
up when called upon.

## Colorado:

# Nelson Spruce

One look at the stat sheet and it's obvious who Colorado's biggest offensive threat is. Nelson Spruce, who has already eclipsed the 1,000-yard mark as the Buffaloes leading receiver, leads the team with 11 touchdowns. Spruce will face an experienced Oregon secondary, but it would be surprising if he doesn't hold his own. In a matchup that isn't expected to be close, Spruce may just have all of the Buffaloes highlights at the conclusion of the game.

BY HAYDEN KIM, @HAYDAYKIM



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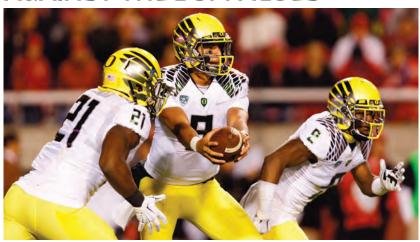
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# GAMEDAY

# DUCKS HOPE TO HAVE THEIR **BEST DEFENSIVE PERFORMANCE** AGAINST THE BUFFALOES



Oregon have an advantage in its next game against Colorado, and are heavily predicted to win.

It's not often that the opposing team's mascot summarizes how a game is likely to go. But, this might be the opportunity as the Ducks should stampede like a herd of Buffalo over Colorado. In addition, Oregon fans will say their final goodbye to Marcus Mariota in what is likely his final game at Autzen Stadium.

Here is how Oregon and Colorado stackup:

## Offense: COLORADO

Colorado quarterback Sefo Liufau is a work in progress, just like the rest of the team. Liufau has thrown for 2,842 yards and 26 touchdowns this season, which are formidable numbers. However, the limp in his charge is shown by his 14 interceptions for a QBR of under 65. Michael Adkins II has the majority of Colorado's carries this season (81) and has gained 398 yards a 4.9 average. Like the Oregon running backs, Adkins shares time with two other running backs: Phillip Lindsay and Tony Jones. But unlike Oregon, sharing the workload hasn't been successful. None of Colorado's running backs average 40 yards or more per game. As a team, Colorado averages 29.8 points and 461.1 yards per game, ranked 10th and seventh best in the conference respectively.

## **OREGON**

Oregon, on the other hand, has an established offense that shows every sign of scoring quickly and often on Saturday. Mariota has thrown for 2,780 yards and 29 touchdowns, while being picked off just twice this season. He also ran for 524 yards and 8 touchdowns, averaging 52.4 rushing yards per game a greater number than any of Colorado's running backs. But

the stampede led by Mariota is never without support. Freshman running back Royce Freeman has become a beast of its own. Just look at the guy. He has rushed for 945 yards and 14 touchdowns, averaging 94.5 yards per game this season. Without center Hroniss Grasu, the Ducks should still have no problem pounding the ball down the field.

## **Advantage: Oregon**

## Defense: COLORADO

With Oregon's offense, a task so great to deal with alone, Colorado's performances this season don't put a lot of confidence in their ability to slow down the Ducks. Colorado is second-to-last in points allowed in the Pac-12, giving up 38.6 points a game on average. Perhaps a bigger problem is that it has the worst rush defense in the conference, allowing over 200 yards per game. However, Colorado ranks fifth in the conference in pass defense, allowing 243.1 yards per game.

Oregon's defense hasn't been up-to-par of its No. 2 national ranking. But it could look like the No. 1 team defensively in the country come Saturday. The Ducks' weakness defensively has come through the air this season, but this week they'll be matched against the most inefficient passing team in the conference. The ground game is, perhaps, where Oregon could show weakness. Oregon allows, on average, 162.7 rush yards per game, which is just a fraction of a yard more than what Colorado averages in its ground attack.

Advantage: Oregon

BY ANDREW BANTLY, @ANDREWBANTLY

# THE HEISMAN IS IN MARIOTA'S SIGHT

Wisconsin running back Melvin Gordon did something no ballcarrier has ever done in the history of the Football Bowl Subdivision last week. The 6-foot-1, 207-pound back sprinted his way to 408 yards rushing while leading the Badgers to an emphatic beat down of Nebraska, 51-17

Averaging 16.3 yards per carry and scoring four touchdowns, Gordon would outpace a Cornhuskers defense that came into Saturday's contest ranked 20th against the run. As pointed out by Matt Hinton of Grantland, Gordon and the Badgers would move that ranking 65 slots down the list after the game.

Most telling about the performance

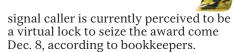
Most telling about the performance however, was the fact that Gordon had done all of this – breaking Ladanian Tomlinson's previous single game rushing record (404 yards) included – in just three quarters of play.

Almost 1,000 miles south, Mississippi State's quarterback Dak Prescott was trying to surmount every possible dagger the No. 1 ranked team in the nation was being hit with in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Facing a stiff Crimson Tide defense, Prescott was intercepted three times en route to a 25-20 win for Alabama.

Just less than 2,500 miles west, knowledge of what Marcus Mariota did on Saturday remains unknown. With Oregon enjoying a bye week, the only bell that rang clear is that Mariota was indeed not on a football field while the action unfolded around the rest of the country.

Yet, his name alongside Gordon's and Prescott's continued to be the topic for discussion as the Heisman Trophy Ceremony gradually nears. The three have flown on a similar track to this point in the season and currently, according to odds makers and experts, rank right beside each other.

Mariota is the favorite. Sitting as a one-in-three favorite on Bovada, the



However, last week's performance from Gordon catapulted the halfback into the front line of the conversation – and deservedly so. Ranking first in the nation in rushing yards (1,909) and rushing touchdowns (23), the possibility of Gordon breaking Barry Sanders' single-season rushing record (2,628) became apparent.

For Oregon's do-everything quarterback, the road is shaping in a similar fashion.

As a preseason frontrunner for the award, Mariota became the top candidate after leading Oregon to a comeback win over Michigan State and has since been the driving force behind the Ducks' six-game winning streak. With a conference championship all but locked up on Mariota's schedule, he still has three more games before the winner is announced.

As both Mariota and Gordon pad their resumes with blemishes few and far between, it's creating even more of a separation between them and Prescott. At one point, the Mississippi State quarterback was the favorite and his three wins over teams in the top-10 had much to do with it.

But his suspect performance in Tuscaloosa was enough for Mariota and Gordon to become what portrays to be a one-on-one battle.

With a quick look at the stats, there isn't much that can disprove that. One game could certainly change things though – just look at the forecasts from August to now and Gordon's sudden surge to the top of the ballot to understand.

BY JUSTIN WISE. @JUSTINFWISE



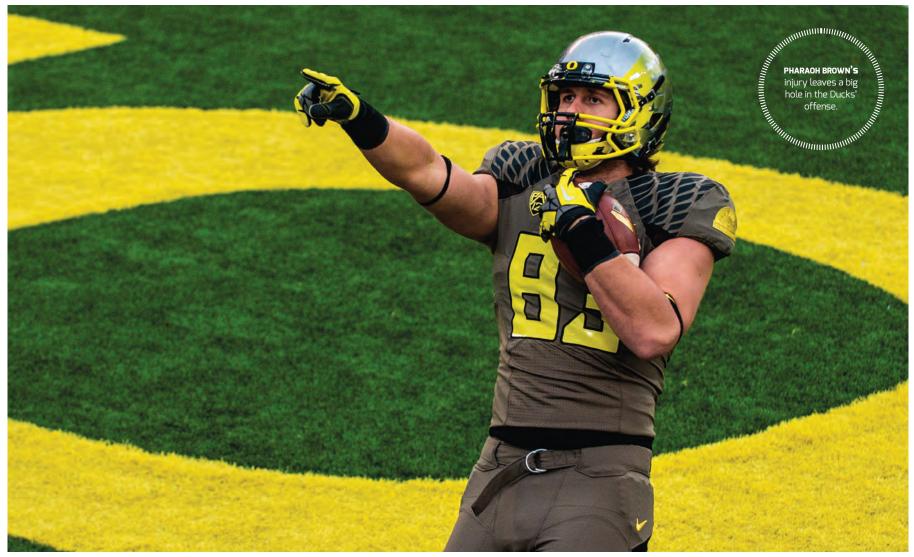


# WINNING GAME DAY BREAKFAST!





# BAYLIS, MUNDT AND KA'AISTEPIN WHILE BROWN IS OUT



There's no easy way to say it, but Pharaoh Brown's season is over.

Brown was Oregon's breakout star this year, amassing 25 catches for 420 yards and six touchdowns, before suffering an injury two weeks ago against Utah. While all the prayers go out to Brown's successful recovery, the Ducks are faced with finding a suitable replacement for Brown and all his productivity at the tight end position.

"Pharaoh has been having a really good year so far, but now it's up to us to take over," redshirt sophomore tight end Evan Baylis said. "I'm feeling pretty good now, but I still have some things to work on, we all do, if we are going to produce like Pharaoh did."

Because of Brown's prowess as a blocker and as a receiver, he emerged from fall camp as the starting tight end and did not disappoint. His absence could translate to a dramatic drop in the production from that position.

"We've been working hard to pick up for Pharaoh, now that he's hurt," redshirt junior tight end Koa Ka'ai said. "We are just working on our technique and finding any way to get better and be able to block and catch at a high level."

Oregon's offense is predicated on rhythm, so whoever replaces Brown, whether it be Baylis, Johnny Mundt or Ka'ai, has got to be on the same page with the rest of the unit.

"All of those guys (Baylis, Mundt and Ka'ai) have all payed for us before, so I feel great about it," tight end coach Tom Osborne said. "Evan has played really well the past six or seven weeks – we got a game to play and get those guys ready to play."

Here is a glimpse of what each player could provide at the position:

**Evan Baylis:** Baylis replaced Brown in the starting lineup last year when Brown missed the Alamo Bowl, due to a team suspension. Baylis is the biggest of the trio, standing at 6-foot-6 and weighing 250 pounds. He is mostly known for his prowess at the line of scrimmage. He's a big, physical blocker who does a good job opening holes at the line of scrimmage for the running backs, but he struggles when he goes out for a pass, often being unable to get separation between him and the defenders.

**2014 season statistics:** 8 games played, one catch for 10 yards

**Johnny Mundt**: Mundt is the most well known from the group because of his breakout game last year against Tennessee when he caught five passes for 121 yards and two touchdowns. Mundt is the opposite of Baylis, succeeding more in the passing game, but struggling in the trenches.

**2014 season statistics**: 8 games played, two catches for 29 yards

**Koa Ka'ai:** Ka'ai is the long shot of the group to get the playing time vacated by Brown. He is 6-foot-4, 245 pounds and could become a matchup in the passing game. While being a redshirt junior, he has the most experience of any other tight end on the roster.

**2014 season statistics:** 2 games played, has not caught a ball this year

BY RYAN KOSTECKA, @RYAN\_KOSTECKA



# A New Car Tip from George

When you're driving on I-5 this summer, don't let the gas gauge drop to empty before filling up. Most fuel pumps are located in the gas tank and they rely on fuel for cooling and lubrication. Stop for gas when you're down to one-eighth of a tank.

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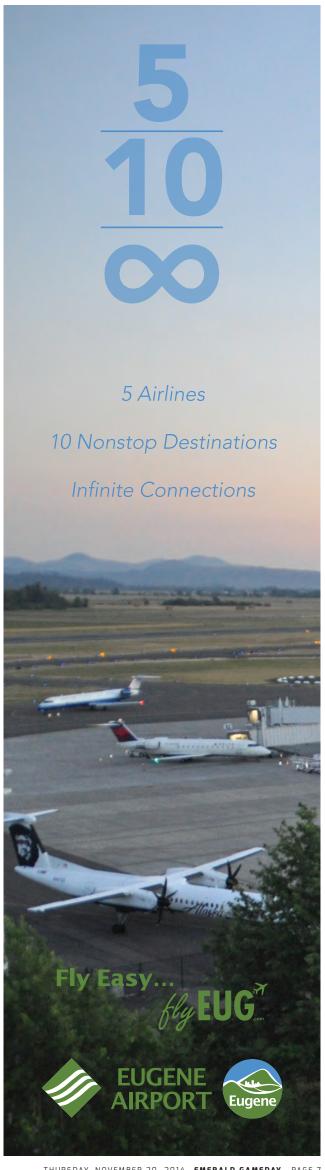


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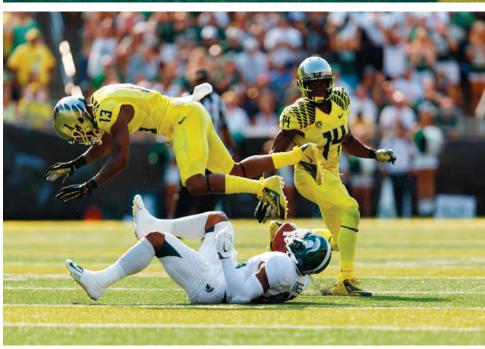












NFL defensive backs Jairus Byrd, TJ Ward and Patrick Chung passed through the D-Boyz regime in Oregon, while others continue with the legacy at Oregon.

# THE GODFATHER OF THE OREGON DEFENSIVE BACKS

fter Oregon's 31-24 loss to Arizona earlier this year, Oregon defensive backs coach John Neal leaned back comfortably in a chair on the third floor of the Hatfield-Dowlin Complex and calmly answered questions.

His collared shirt was popped, his hair was slicked back and his raspy, to-the-point voice answered, in detail, every question sent his way.

His honest and upfront demeanor is why his secondary unit, a group commonly referred to as the "D-Boyz," hold Neal in such high regard. In some ways, Neal personifies the look and attitude of a college football "Godfather."

"Coach Neal is the Godfather of the D-Boyz," Oregon defensive back Troy Hill said. "He does a good job of coaching us and trying to keep us together."

In 2006, former Oregon defensive back Matthew Harper coined the name D-Boyz for the defensive backs group and it has stuck ever since. Through generations, the D-Boyz mentality has been passed down. It has allowed for uninterrupted continuity between the constant shuffling of a collegiate secondary.

"We've been able to keep that and it's

been a nice bit of momentum," Neal said. "As a program you try and hold standards and then you do it as a group and you hope your group unit can be the best they can be and you hope every coach in each unit is getting that out of their guys. That's how you make the big picture work. There are a lot of people working in the little pictures to be something special. I hope that we

can maintain that. I worry about losing momentum all the time because you can't get it back. Sometimes when you can't get it back you hire someone else to see if they can"

Hill, one of three seniors starting in the Ducks defensive backfield this year, has seen what it means to be a D-Boy unfold and develop over his five years at Oregon.

"Honestly, it's great to be a D-Boy," Hill said. "I feel like we all got our own little personalities and it kinda helps us mesh a lot better. We kind of have our own little swag. Being a DB you kind of have to have that. I feel like it's good and all the past D-Boyz like Cliff (Harris) and all them and kind of showed the way you know, I feel like we have a great chemistry: Past and present."

The one commonality over the eightyear span of the D-Boyz has been Neal. He's in his 12th year coaching at Oregon. Players have said that being a D-Boy offers a family type atmosphere for a player. That's the way Neal says he directs his recruiting.

"We recruit to that and hope we can find guys that fit our systems," Neal said. "I hope that I recruit guys that want to be a part of this, will understand it and want to be a part of it and excel in it"

Hill was sitting at the lunch tables at St. Bonaventure High School in Ventura, California when he saw coach Neal and current offensive coordinator Scott Frost walk in the building. He walked the two Oregon coaches to his high school coach's office. Hill talked with Neal the entire walk and immediately something stuck out about the Oregon secondary coach more so than any other recruiter.

"It just feels like he's going to keep it real with you," Hill said. "He's not trying to lie to you. See recruiters with me, I always felt like they were trying to be my friend. I don't need a friend, I need somebody that's going to help me get where I need to be. I just felt like coach Neal presented that."

With Neal, the players find it impossible

not to listen to what he says and how he coaches. He helped develop guys like Jairus Byrd, TJ Ward and Patrick Chung as they've all passed through the D-Boyz regime and on to the NFL.

"This dude, the Godfather, coached them," Hill said. "I just feel like if I listen – and that's a big process right there, just trying to listen and learn how to trust in what he's saying – I feel like that's what really helped me. Obviously they didn't come in here the player that they left as. Obviously he did something to get them where they are."

Redshirt freshman defensive back Chris Seisay added," It just reminds you what coach Neal is teaching, like, it works. You can't argue with it because anything he says, it works. So you listen to coach Neal, you'll be successful. You see how far it takes you."

Listening to Neal isn't the only way his players learn from him. They gain a lot from watching their coach, too.

"He's passionate for the game," redshirt freshman safety Tyree Robinson said. "If coach Neal could suit up and play with us, he would. Even when we're working out and lifting weights, he's right there lifting with us. He just shows it. If he can do it, there's no way you guys shouldn't be doing it. He gets the best out of all his players. When it's time to pick you up, he's going to pick you up and get you going in the right direction."

As for actually putting on the pads with the D-Boyz, Neal laughed and said he'd probably elect to decline.

"At an old age, I guess that's a compliment," Neal said. "They might think I have heart or something."

BY JOSEPH HOYT, @JOEJHOYT



OREGON  1 CHANCE ALLEN 1 ARRION SPRINGS 2 TYREE ROBINSON 3 TY GRIFFIN 3 DIOR MATHIS 4 ERICK DARGAN 5 DEVON ALLEN 5 ISSAC DIXON 6 DOMINIQUE HARRISON 6 CHARLES NELSON 7 KEANON LOWE 8 REGGIE DANIELS 8 MARCUS MARIOTA 9 ARIK ARMSTEAD 9 BYRON MARSHALL 10 JOHNATHAN LOYD 11 BRALON ADDISON 11 JUSTIN HOLLINS 12 TAYLOR ALIE	WR 6-2 200 RSO. DB 5-11 203 FR. DB 6-4 200 RFR. QB 6-0 191 RFR. DB 5-9 179 RSR. WR 6-0 185 RFR. DB 5-11 197 RJR. DB 5-11 197 RJR. WR 5-9 170 FR. WR 5-9 170 FR. WR 5-9 186 RSR. DB 6-1 205 RSO. QB 6-4 219 RJR. DL 6-8 290 JR. RB 5-10 205 JR. WR 5-8 165 RSR. WR 5-9 190 JR. RB 5-10 190 JR. LB 6-6 220 FR. DB 6-1 205 RSO.	27 JEFF BIEBER 27 JOHNNY RAGIN III 29 STEPHEN AMOAKO 30 AYELE FORDE 31 KENNY BASSETT 32 EDDIE HEARD 33 TYSON COLEMAN 34 LANE ROSEBERRY 35 JOE WALKER 36 KANI BENOIT 36 DEVIN MELENDEZ 37 J.J. JONES 37 MICHAEL MANNS 38 MIKE GARRITY 38 IAN WHEELER 40 JESSE KELLY 40 TAYLOR STINSON 41 JARRET LACOSTE 41 AIDAN SCHNEIDER 42 CODY CARRIGER 43 BRONSON YIM	WR 6-2 LB 6-3 DB 5-11 RB 5-7 RB 5-9 LB 6-3 LB 6-1 LB 6-1 LB 6-2 RB 6-2 RB 5-9 DB 5-11 LB 6-1 P 6-0 PK 6-5 RB 5-11 PK 6-4 LB 6-4 LB 6-6	178 FR. 225 SO. 185 RSC. 181 RSF. 185 RSR. 245 SO. 235 RJR. 233 RSO. 240 JR. 205 FR. 170 RSO. 170 RSO. 172 RSO. 235 RSF. 200 RFR. 168 FR. 225 FR. 199 JR. 240 RSO. 185 RJR.	61 BRIGHAM STOEHR 62 MATT PIERSON 63 DAVIS MIYASHIRO 64 TYLER JOHNSTONE 65 STETZON BAIR 67 TANNER DAVIES 68 JAMAL PRATER 70 MATT MCFADDEN 71 BRADEN EGGERT 72 ANDRE YRURETAGOYENA 73 TYRELL CROSBY 74 ELIJAH GEORGE 75 JAKE FISHER 76 JAKE PISARCIK 77 HANITELI LOUSI 78 CAMERON HUNT 79 EVAN VOELLER 80 KOA KA'AI 81 EVAN BAYLIS 82 ZAC SCHULLER 83 JOHNNY MUNDT	OL 6-0 OL 6-6 OL 6-9 OL 6-9 OL 6-4 OL 6-6 OL 6-5 OL 6-5 OL 6-5 OL 6-5 OL 6-5 TE 6-4 TE 6-4 TE 6-4	285 RJR. 300 FR. 289 RJR. 290 RJR. 294 FR. 296 RSO. 320 FR. 290 RJR. 310 FR. 275 RFR. 300 SR. 295 RFR. 308 JR. 295 RFR. 295 RFR. 308 JR. 295 SO.
12 CHRIS SEISAY 13 TROY HILL 14 IFO EKPRE-OLOMU 15 JALEN BROWN 16 MORGAN MAHALAK 17 JEFF LOCKIE 17 JUWAAN WILLIAMS 18 JIMMIE SWAIN 19 AUSTIN DAICH 20 TONY JAMES 21 ROYCE FREEMAN 21 MATTRELL MCGRAW 22 DERRICK MALONE JR. 23 B.J. KELLEY 24 THOMAS TYNER 25 GLEN IHENACHO 26 CASEY EUGENIO 26 KHALIL OLIVER	DB 5-11 175 RFR.  DB 5-11 175 RSR.  DB 5-10 195 SR.  WR 6-1 188 FR.  QB 6-2 200 RSO.  DB 6-0 190 RFR.  LB 6-3 225 FR.  WR 6-3 200 RSO.  RB 5-9 180 FR.  RB 6-0 229 FR.  DB 5-10 180 FR.  LB 6-2 220 RSR.  WR 6-2 185 RJR.  RB 5-10 180 FR.  RB 5-10 180 FR.  RB 5-10 180 FR.  BB 5-10 180 FR.  BB 5-10 180 FR.  BB 6-2 185 RJR.  BB 6-2 185 RJR.  BB 5-11 185 FR.  BB 5-8 176 FR.  DB 5-11 185 FR.  DB 5-11 185 FR.  DB 5-11 197 FR.	44 DEFOREST BUCKNER 45 T.J. DANIEL 46 DANNY MATTINGLY 48 RODNEY HARDRICK 48 ERIC SOLIS 49 MATT WOGAN 50 AUSTIN MALOATA 51 ISAAC AVA 52 IVAN FAULHABER 53 CONNOR JOHNSON 54 HAMANI STEVENS 55 HRONISS GRASU 55 TUI TALIA 56 ALEX BALDUCCI 57 DOUG BRENNER 57 RYAN MCCANDLESS 58 TANNER CAREW 59 GRANT THOMPSON 60 JIM WEBER	DL 6-7 DL 6-6 LB 6-5 LB 6-1 PK 5-10 PK 6-2 DL 6-1 LB 5-2 LS 6-3 OL 6-3 DL 6-5 DL 6-4 OL 6-2 LB 6-2 LB 6-2 LB 6-2	290 JR. 270 RSO. 235 RFR. 247 RJR. 192 RSR. 210 SO. 313 FR. 265 RSR. 224 RFR. 222 RFR. 307 RSR. 297 RSR. 297 RSR. 295 JR. 310 JR. 310 JR. 305 RFR. 225 RJR. 225 RJR. 220 FR.	85 PHARAOH BROWN 86 TORRODNEY PREVOT 87 DARREN CARRINGTON 88 DWAYNE STANFORD 89 CHRIS TEWHILL 90 JAKE MCCREATH 91 TONY WASHINGTON 92 HENRY MONDEAUX 93 ALEC EICKERT 93 JASON SLOAN 94 JONATHAN KENION 95 SPENCER STARK 96 CHRISTIAN FRENCH 97 WILL GENSKE 97 JALEN JELKS 98 JORDAN KURAHARA 99 SAM KAMP	TE 6-6 LB 6-3 WR 6-5 WR 5-8 TE 6-3 LB 6-3 DL 6-5 PK 5-1 DL 6-2 DL 6-2 LB 6-5 TE 6-4 DL 6-6 DL 6-6	222 SO. 191 RFR. 201 RSO. 180 RSO. 242 RSO. 2550 RSR. 256 FR. 210 RFR. 275 RFR. 275 RFR. 270 FR. 245 RJR. 215 FR. 268 FR. 220 FR. 290 RJR.
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# GRASU'S MISSING HIS SENIOR NIGHT, BUT ISN'T DOWN FOR THE SEASON

→ JOSEPH HOYT. @JOEJHOYT

**OREGON CENTER HRONISS GRASU** will not be suiting up for the Ducks on Saturday.

Instead Grasu, who has played in 50 games for Oregon over his fouryear career, will be forced to watch from the sideline for his final game at Autzen Stadium.

In preparation for the game against Colorado, Grasu is reminiscing on the experiences he has had, rather than focusing on missing the final game in his home stadium.

"I'm doing whatever I can to get back as soon as I can," Grasu said. "But not being able to play on senior night, I had a lot of great memories in Autzen and this Saturday will still be another great memory for me."

On Tuesday morning, Grasu, wearing a boot on his left foot, emerged after practice riding a green medical knee scooter to help him maneuver the Hatfield-Dowlin Complex. Though he wasn't on the field for practice, Grasu's impact was still felt among the team.

"He's been awesome," quarterback Marcus Mariota said. "He's going to continue to get healthy. He's going to take it one game at a time and he's going to find ways to get better, but at the same time he's still out there and he's still Hroniss. He's going to find ways to get people to hear his voice



and find ways to get people to listen to him. We're very fortunate to have that. Hroniss is one of those guys we really look up to."

Head coach Mark Helfrich said that his team is "the luckiest group of guys in the country" to be associated with Grasu on a daily basis.

"His contributions, on and off the field, have been so significant in some ways known and some ways unknown," Helfrich said. "The thing you can say about that guy is that he's an unbelievable teammate. In every facet of what that means."

Grasu said that he has been in constant communication with doctors as he's taking a day-by-day approach to his recovery. Though he ruled himself out for the game against Colorado, he noted that he's not finished playing this year.

"This season is not over for me and it's not over for the team,"

Grasu said.

On Saturday, 17 seniors will be playing in their final home game for the Ducks. The Autzen Stadium swan song will be a sentimental moment for the Ducks head coach.

"It'll be hard," Helfrich said. "It'll be really hard, but it's hard because it's been great. It's hard for all the right reasons."

For Mariota, seeing his teammates play in their final game is a perk from making the choice to return to school this past offseason.

"I've made a lot of close friends in the senior class – a lot of guys that I really look up to," Mariota said. "It's going to be one of those times – it'll be bittersweet obviously – but at the same time it'll be one of those experiences that you come back to school for and you get to enjoy. To see those guys go off as one of the most successful classes in Oregon football history, it's pretty cool."

"THIS SEASON
IS NOT OVER
FOR ME AND
IT'S NOT OVER
FOR THE
TEAM."

**HRONISS GRASU** Oregon center.



 $Will the \ Ducks \ be \ working \ to \ impress \ the \ College \ Football \ Playoff \ Committee \ at \ the \ expense \ of \ the \ Buffaloes?$ 

It's the final home game at Autzen Stadium this year and the matchup features two teams heading in completely opposite directions. Oregon continues to surge as the season concludes, while Colorado is simply trying to remain competitive in its second season under Mike MacIntyre. With that said, the matchup still warrants discussion. Sports staff reporters Andrew Bantly and Ryan Kostecka give insights and predictions for a matchup that appears lopsided on paper.

Will style be a factor in how Oregon defeats Colorado on Saturday for the College Football Plavoff Committee?

KOSTECKA — Not this game and not in this situation. The Ducks are expected to beat Colorado handily, so the difference between a 20-point win will be no different than a 40-point win. With that being said, Oregon will have to make sure that it leads from the get go and not let this game be close in any way.

BANTLY – I don't think style is a factor to the Playoff Committee, though there will, no doubt, be some style points involved on Saturday. I

think it's more about how dominant Oregon will be in the win, as it needs to be. It needs to be because anything else shows that Oregon may have a chink in its armor and therefore hurt its playoff chances.

Oregon's defense seems to be coming into its own. Will this contest versus Colorado provide further momentum for the unit and how many yards do you see the Buffaloes gaining?

KOSTECKA — Colorado runs the ball pretty well, so the Ducks will have to make sure their defensive line will be up to the task. The more interesting note is Colorado wide receiver Nelson Spruce and his 9.9 catches per game. He'll be a good test for Ifo Ekpre-Olomu and the secondary. Overall, I think Oregon holds Colorado to sub-250 yards through the first three quarters, but with the substitutes in, Colorado ends up with about 350 total yards.

BANTLY — Colorado is a bad offensive team. This should make the secondary of Oregon, which hasn't been the best this season, look really good. But I think the run is where Oregon might be vulnerable. Oregon allows

# **OREGON LOOKS** LIKE IT CAN KEEP THE BUFFALO **STAMPEDE UNDER CONTROL**

162.7 yards defensively on the ground while Colorado's numbers are about that offensively. But the fact is that Oregon will be dominant against Colorado and should keep the Buffalo stampede under 350 yards of total offense.

What is your prediction and why?
KOSTECKA — Its tough to make predictions like this when these two teams are heading in different directions. How long does Oregon keep Mariota in the game if the Ducks are flying high? Questions like that make the score difficult to predict, but my guess is, that on senior day, Oregon crushes Colorado by a score of 57-20

BANTLY — Oregon 52, Colorado 17. Depending on how long the starters will be in the game, Oregon has the opportunity to score as many points as it wants. I think the defense is going to be playing to keep Colorado off the scoreboard the entire game, as it should.

BY ANDREW BANTLY, RYAN KOSTECKA AND JUSTIN WISE



→ WEEKEND GAME-WATCHING

# SAM'S PLACE TAVERN: YOUR DD AND PRIVATE SHOW

There are only three games this week featuring ranked teams squaring off, there's plenty to keep fans interested.

# HERE ARE THE TOP GAMES TO WATCH THIS SATURDAY:

No. 9 UCLA vs. No. 19 USC (ABC, 5 p.m.): The Bruins must win their final two games to clinch the Pac-12 South division, while USC needs a win and then an Arizona State loss. USC's Cody Kessler and Nelson Agholor have become one of the most dangerous quarterback-wide receiver combinations in the nation. But, on the other hand, Brett Hundley and UCLA have the possibility of jumping back into the top-10 with a win.

No. 23 Nebraska vs. No. 25 Minnesota

No. 23 Nebraska vs. No. 25 Minnesota (ESPN, 9 a.m.): Minnesota controls its own destiny, and if it wins this week, it sets up a final week showdown with Wisconsin for the Leaders division crown. On the flip side, Ameer Abdullah looks to get going for the Cornhuskers and put more stock into his Heisman campaign.

No. 17 Utah vs. No. 15 Arizona (ÉSPN, 12:30 p.m.): Utah is all but eliminated in the Pac-12 South division, but that doesn't mean it can't continue to cause fits for its opponents. The Utes, behind Travis Wilson, Kaelin Clay and their talented defense, return home after beating Stanford last week, but will now face a high-octane offense with Arizona. Anu Solomon is the key for the Wildcats and if the quarterback can make smart decisions and protect the ball, Arizona is tough to beat.

Every week, The Emerald will feature a different sports bar from the Eugene/ Springfield area where students can watch the games. This week, it is Sam's Place Tavern in Eugene.

Though it's not very well known, Sam's



Who will make the College Football Playoff's final rankings? The next three weeks will determine who goes and who stays.

Place is arguably the number one spot to watch any Ducks sporting event, if you're not already attending it. Located five miles west of Autzen Stadium, it's not the ideal location to be near the action, but the tavern more than makes up for its lack of proximity.

# HERE ARE THE TOP FIVE REASONS TO CHECK OUT SAM'S PLACE TAVERN THIS WEEK:

- 1. To be a top-tier sports bars, you need TVs and Sam's goes above and beyond. Apart from the big TVs located throughout the building, each booth has its own private TV for whatever you choose.
- 2. Sam's offers a free shuttle (with the purchase of a meal/drink at the bar) to and from all Oregon football and

- basketball games. Drinking and driving is never an option.
- 3. With the cold weather, Sam's makes a phenomenal chicken fried steak that is sure to beat mama's home cooking and warm you up.
- 4. From Bingo Night to Buzztime trivia, the action is always going on and taking place. There's never a dull moment.
- 5. Wine, Dine and Lights: Sam's offers a special for \$39 where you eat dinner at the bar, get a wine tasting at an exclusive wine bar or winery and then travel in a shuttle to look at Christmas lights. The holidays are officially here.

BY RYAN KOSTECKA, @RYAN\_KOSTECKA







We make college better.



# **WHY COLORADO WILL BEAT OREGON**



The Colorado Buffaloes pass the ball on average, 48 times per game, which has led to the Buffaloes improving within the Pac-12.

**EDITORS NOTE:** Each week during football season, we feature an essay from the opponent's student newspaper on why Oregon will lose. This week's edition is from Andrew Haubner, an assistant sports editor at the CU Independent.

If we're talking pure zoology, a Buffalo tramples a Duck 10 times out of 10. In the world of football, the Ducks enter Saturday as heavy favorites, boasting one of the best offenses in the country.

So you're saying there's a chance. In fact, there is a chance, albeit slight, as the Buffaloes are no longer the proverbial doormat that they were 12 months ago. Colorado returned multiple weapons on offense, as well as a defense that has saved them from annihilation countless times this year.

Offensively, CU boasts one of the Pac-12's best passing games, led by junior wide receiver Nelson Spruce and his nation-

leading 99 receptions.

Even when the Buffaloes struggle, he has been exemplary, recording no fewer than six catches in a game. Oregon cornerback Ifo Ekpre-Olomu is slated to return this week, but Spruce is one of the best routerunners in the country. Also, while he is the centerpiece of this Colorado offense, he isn't the only effective player. Freshman receiver Shay Fields is a constant deep threat, complementing a running game that gets more potent each week.

This spells trouble for the Ducks, who give up an average of 25 points per game, and surrendered as much as 41 points against the University of California in week 8. Cal's highflying, aerial assault offense is eerily similar to Colorado's. The Buffs pass the ball, on average, 48 times per game.

Defensively, this game could very easily

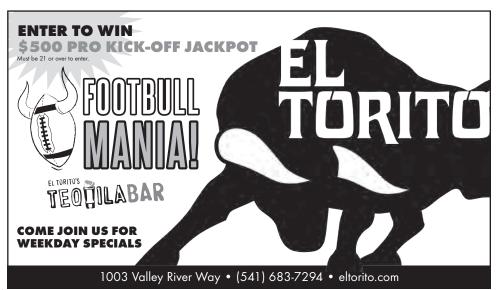
turn into a shootout, and that's based off of watching Marcus Mariota for two years. The Buffs are decimated in the defensive backfield after losing safeties Tedric Thompson, Marques Mosley and Terrell Smith over the course of 10 weeks. It also doesn't help that sophomore Addison Gillam still isn't the player he was last year. Illness has brought him down to a lowly 207 pounds, and senior Brady Daigh has taken on a lot of the secondlevel workload.

That being said, this defense has adopted something of a "never say die" mentality, which constantly keeps the Buffaloes in games that they otherwise would have no business being in.

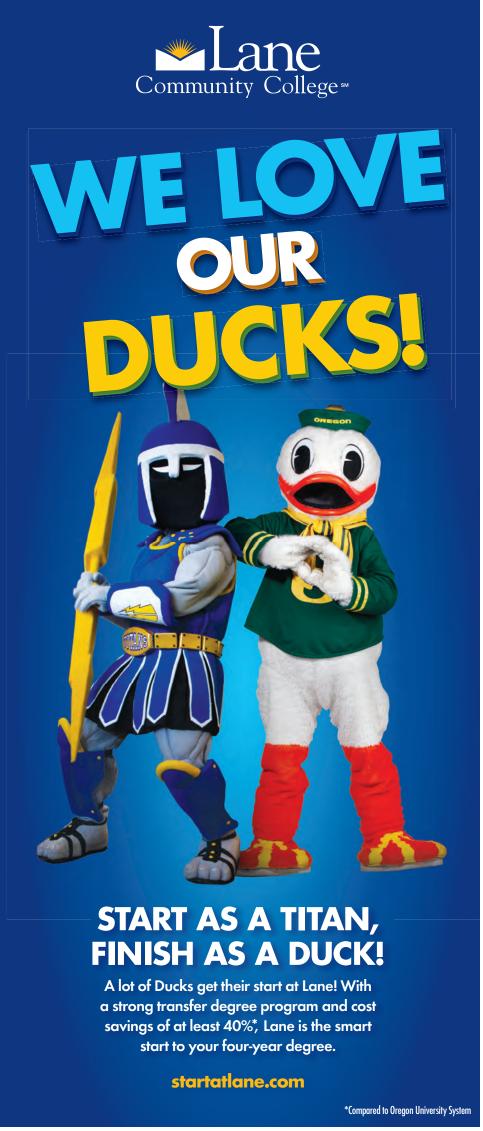
As an editor for the CU Independent, I am here to prop the Buffaloes up as much as I can, but I can't ignore the flaws in our squad. To me, if you're saying there's a chance, then there certainly is one.











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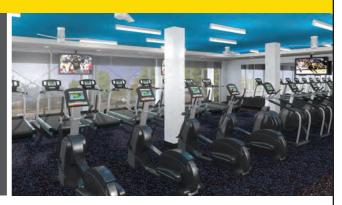
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