

A Letter from an Oregon Fan to Matt Barkley

By Joseph Manuel

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Dear Matt,

Wow! What a year for you so far! Rarely do we see true freshman quarterbacks such as yourself play so majestically, especially under pressure.



We love the fact that you are a 19-year-old kid from California making national news on the gridiron. Way to represent the West Coast, kid!

We have been watching you for quite some time now. Your first performance (vs. San Jose State) didn't particularly wow us, even though you went 15-of-19 with 233 yards and one touchdown. We all pointed out that it was against San Jose State, and that Pete Carroll himself could have put up those numbers.

The big thing we were all waiting for was your first away game, which was at the Horseshoe in Columbus, Ohio, no less. We all wanted you to fail miserably and prove to the nation that you were just a fluke, and that the University of Southern California would be garbage in the Pac-10 this year.

Boy, were we wrong!

Not only did you keep your poise, but you came out the victor over Ohio State and the hated Terrelle Pryor and really proved your worth nationally as well.

You wholeheartedly earned your respect and dismissed any notion of you being a 19-year-old media darling who was getting attention just because of the team you play for. Once again, congratulations.

As we monitored your progress (we know you would have beaten the Washington Huskies had you been healthy), the excitement started building within us, and we marked the date of your visit on our calendar.

We are so glad that you have continued to play at a stellar level, because we want your status as a top-tier quarterback to still be intact when you pay us a visit. We want you to believe that you are truly a great quarterback, and that nothing can stop you. We want this confidence.

Then, of course, we want to obliterate this aforementioned confidence on Halloween night.

Playing at home in Southern California is no doubt a comfortable, safe atmosphere. Playing at the Horseshoe might have gotten a little noisy, but you have proven that just a little noise won't rattle you.

After you beat our neighbors last week, we just wanted to give you a little warning: When someone beats up on our little brother, then, as big brothers, we have no choice but to retaliate and show you that only we are allowed to pummel our lesser siblings.

Be warned.

Also, we would like to direct you to the words of Adrian Peterson. He has witnessed great success in the NFL; he survived his trip to visit us, and we wish you the same success in the future.

"It was like some sort of crazy torture in the movies. How do people do that so long without taking a breath? I think my ears are still ringing."

Mr. Peterson lived to tell about his visit and is now the best running back in the NFL; we want you to survive your visit as well and become a good quarterback. After all, we don't want to kill you.

We just want to make sure our team comes out on top this year. We believe that a small sacrifice will be needed. Your eardrums are what we are after—and we will stop at nothing to get them.

When you burn a timeout after your very first huddle, just remember that there is no shame in doing that. It happens to all first-time quarterbacks when they visit us; they just aren't used to having to communicate with their motions.

After Oct. 31, we wish you the best of luck in the future. We know you can make it big, and we apologize in advance if your visit creates any chronic long-term health effects, mentally or physically.

Just wanted to say one final thing though: Whatever happens this Saturday, it's nothing personal. If anything, take it all as a sign of respect.

We know you are just 19, and hey, if you really do want to get your revenge, you should still be around to visit again for your junior season. We'll be waiting.

Once again, no hard feelings, Matt. We just really want that Rose Bowl this year.

Love,

The University of Oregon

P.S. Nice hair.