

Short-handed ASU faces Huskies

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP) — Arizona State is down to 69 players on scholarship — 19 fewer than allowed — and its young quarterbacks are among the walking wounded, but coach Bruce Snyder knows things could be worse.

"I don't think our ship was ever close to capsizing or anything, but we may have been listing a little bit," Snyder said Monday, dissecting a 38-30 victory over Stanford and looking ahead to No. 19 Washington.

Even at full strength, the Sun Devils wouldn't be able to manhandle the Huskies, Snyder acknowledged.

"They're clearly the best team that we have faced this year, athletically," Snyder said. "But we have them here, we have a little bit of momentum, and maybe a little hope."

Snyder said he hoped sophomore quarterback Grady Benton, sidelined and relegated to No. 2 by a sore shoulder, would be able to throw this week.

Meanwhile, freshman Jake Plummer continues to amaze Snyder with his poise. Plummer relieved Benton in the second half of an Oct. 9 loss to Washington State and hit 16 of 30 passes for 253 yards.

Then he threw for 237 yards against Oregon and 200 yards against Stanford, emerging from his second college start with a sprained ankle.

Arizona State (5-2) ended a two-game skid last Saturday and won its first Pacific-10 Conference game in four tries against the Cardinal. At the same time, Washington (5-2, 3-1) battered Oregon 21-6.

Oregon beat Arizona State 45-36 in Sun Devil Stadium the previous weekend, and Snyder said he believes Washington has the best talent in the Pac-10.

Huskies coach Jim Lambright said he has been able to keep the program going after the resigna-



Arizona State running back Mario Bates ran for 127 yards last week against Stanford.

tion of Don James in part by reminding players that the other Pac-10 schools voted Washington out of a chance to play in the Rose Bowl for two years.

"We use a lot of rallying points. One of them has been that the vote was 9-0 against us, and, yes, we'll keep using that as a motivating factor — that there was not one team that was on our side," Lambright said.

The Sun Devils put together their best rushing attack of the season to top the Cardinal and end a three-game losing streak.

Tailback Mario Bates had 127 yards in a career-high 37 carries, and backup George Montgomery added 100 to a team total of 270 rushing yards. It was the first time since 1990 that Arizona State has had two backs gain 100 yards in a game.

The Sun Devils also improved on special teams, an area Snyder said was a beacon of hope.

Jon Baker hit three of four field-goal attempts, including a career-best 51-yarder — tying Steve Rausch (1990) for the fourth-longest in school history.

"The kicking game again played really well. The punt return (unit) was good. In the kicking game, we made some plays," Snyder said.

He said the atmosphere was noticeably brighter since the win, from his home on through the athletic department.

"Winning solves so many problems. It's funny how you can play just as well and lose, and you don't feel as if you've accomplished anything," Snyder said.

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Three Duck backups out for the year

Surgery has been scheduled for three reserves on the Oregon football team, including backup defensive end Mark Slymen, head coach Rich Brooks said Wednesday.

Slymen was sidelined in last Saturday's game against Washington with an ankle injury, which later was evaluated as ligament damage in the lower right leg. He will be out for the year.

In addition, reserve offensive guard Tasi Male-

peai and reserve defensive end Jerome Perryman will have surgery to repair chronic injuries. Malepeai has been bothered with left shoulder problems most of the season and Perryman will undergo operations to repair damage to his right knee and left shoulder within the next few weeks.

Brooks said it is hoped all three will be able to participate in drills next spring, which begin in late March.

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