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# FOOTBALL

OREGON VS WASHINGTON STATE

## Cougars limp into Saturday's game

■ **WASHINGTON STATE:** The injured Cougars look to their run defense to stop Oregon Saturday

By Pete Schneider  
Sports Reporter

One of the only blemishes on Oregon's Rose Bowl season last year was an ugly, injury-plagued loss to the Washington State Cougars in Pullman. On Saturday, the Cougars will come to Autzen Stadium, and this time around, it is Washington State that is banged up.

The Cougars (3-3 overall, 2-1 in Pac-10) will be without three key players when they take on the 12th-ranked Ducks. Tailback Derek Sparks, middle linebacker James Darling and reserve free-safety Derek Henderson are all listed as questionable, but according to Cougar head coach Mike Price, they will not play.

"I think my main concern right now is the health of our team," Price said. "The USC loss last week was physical and we're all bruised up. It concerns me that we play the No. 12 team in the country without three of our main starters."

If Washington State is to enjoy any offensive success on Saturday, the Cougar running attack will have to figure out some way to gain yards against the Ducks' stingy rushing defense. The Cougars rank ninth in the Pacific-10 Conference in total rushing offense and is not helped by the loss of Sparks, who has been

averaging 38.8 rushing yards per game.

The Cougars must look to either senior Frank Madu or freshman Jason Clayton to fill in for Sparks. Neither one has any 1995 starts or has proved that he can run the ball effectively.

"We are not the best running football team right now," Price said. "We are just going to have to call running plays. Cal didn't run the ball very well against Oregon last week, but they only ran 11 rushing plays. I think we have a full complement of running plays — ones that will work — to choose from."

The loss of Henderson in Washington State's fifth-ranked pass defense secondary does not bode well for the Cougars. Henderson ranks third for Washington State in tackles and was the secondary's emotional leader. Sophomore Ken More, who has no starts this season, will fill in for Henderson.

A bright spot for Washington State is quarterback Chad Davis. The 6-foot-2-inch junior is averaging 227.7 yards of total offense this season and trails only Oregon's tailback Ricky Whittle in Pac-10 total offense. Davis has thrown only three interceptions this year and has hooked up with favorite receiver, Eric Moore (45.33 yards per game) to contribute to more than 1,200 passing yards this season.

Washington State is fifth in the Pac-10 in rush defense and will look to sophomore Phillip Glover to fill in for injured run-stopper

Darling.

"I am pleased with Phillip [Glover]'s performance, but I think he can play better," said Price. "He can look brilliant at times and often shows flashes of greatness, but at other times he can look like a young, inexperienced player."

The Cougar rushing defense statistics are a bit misleading, considering the fact that the unit gave up 428 yards on the ground to Nebraska earlier in the season. The defense has only allowed six rushing touchdowns over the last 10 games, dating back to last season.

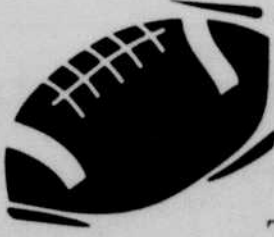
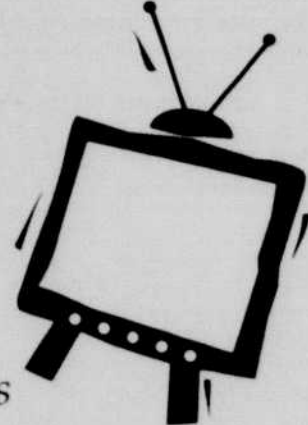
Price says that the team is not feeling any pressure right now and that the 12th ranked Ducks have more to lose on Saturday.

"We're talking about one game and one game only against Oregon," he said. "They are the Pac-10 defending champions and they need this game just as badly as we do for their chances to stay in the Rose Bowl race. I think the pressure is on them."

It was important during the practice week for Price to caution his team not expect the same type of Oregon team that was in Pullman last year.

"Last year we faced a team that was beat up and perhaps a little discouraged," he said. "The Ducks this year are a totally different ball club. This team is healthy, spirited, and has a winning attitude. It is also a much more confident team than we saw last season."

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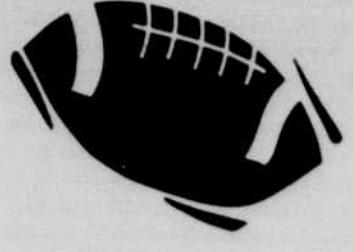
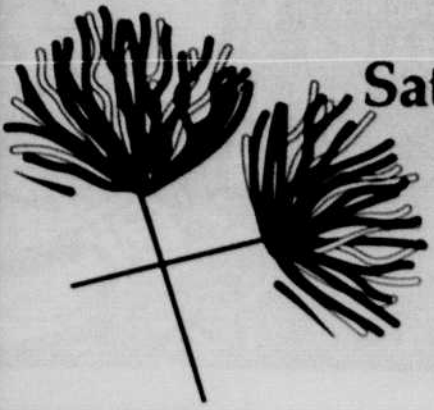
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**Saturday, October 21, 1995**

**5:00 PM**



Washington State Cougars vs. University of Oregon Ducks • Kick-off at 7:00 PM