

Month of November continues to haunt the Cougars

Arizona's defense has held its opponents to 13 points in the fourth quarter and ranks third in the Pac-10 in total defense

By Ryan Frank
Sports Editor

Another November, another month of turmoil for the Washington State Cougars.

Washington State continued its propensity to falter in the all-important month of November, losing to Arizona State 44-31 last Saturday in Tempe, Ariz.

Going back to 1993, the Cougars are 1-10 in the month of November, something head coach Mike Price said had nothing to do with the loss.

"I'm not going to go over the reasons," Price told the Associated Press, expressing irritation at persistent questions about the November losses. "[ASU's] offensive line

and defensive line had more to do with it than the date."

The Cougars looked to be in control of their own destiny and headed for a season-ending showdown with Washington for the Pacific-10 Conference title and the Rose Bowl berth, but all that went out the window with the loss.

A tradition that seems to stick for Washington State in this month.

Last season, the Cougars were 5-3 before losing three games in November to finish 5-6. To their credit, they were playing three of the hottest teams in the conference: UCLA, Stanford and Washington.

But this season, Price said there is no question where his team will go from here.

"I guarantee you we are bouncing back," Price said.

With home games against Southwest Louisiana coming up, they have a prime opportunity to do just that before finishing

FOOTBALL

Pac-10 Notes

with Stanford at home and Washington in Seattle.

Bruin heat:

After their two games, the UCLA Bruins looked like they would be competing with Oregon State for the conference cellar.

How times have changed.

Seven games and seven wins later, the Bruins are not only making headway in the conference, but on the national level as well.

After dismantling Stanford last weekend, UCLA moved up two more spots to No. 10 in the Associated Press Top 25 and now has a bye to prepare for Washington on Nov. 15.

If the Bruins can continue their winning streak and get by the Huskies at home, they finish up with Southern California, a game that is certainly winnable.

Those two wins would put the Bruins in position for a possible Rose Bowl berth, a far road to have traveled since the first two losses.

Closing in on a record:

A big part of why the Bruins are on a seven-game winning streak is running back Skip Hicks.

After rushing for three touchdowns against Stanford last Saturday, the senior from Texas has 20 touchdowns, a mark that ties the school record and is only three short of the Pac-10 record.

Deceiving the numbers:

Cal may rank last in the conference in total defense, but that doesn't mean it just sits and watches.

The Golden Bears defense is holding their opponents to the lowest pass completion percentage, 45.8, in the conference.

Cal showed its defensive prowess last weekend in its 33-14 win over Oregon State.

Perimeter: Kent's new system puts Madden at wing

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But don't look for one player to take over. Kent stresses that his offense will be one of balance.

"We're not going to have a superstar like Kenya [Wilkins] that's going to go out and get you 25 a night," he said. "They'll all get a chance to play, and they'll all get a chance to score."

The top returning scorer is Curry, the lone returning starter from a team that made the NIT last season. He was also one of the top defensive players, as evidenced by his 35 steals, tops for returning players.

"Jamar needs to get an understanding of team defense because sometimes he gets going and wants to guard everybody on the floor," Kent said. "Once he understands how to harness that energy he's going to be very effective."

Curry and fellow senior Madden are the only remaining regulars from the 1994-95 Oregon team that made the NCAA Tournament. While Kent maintains that the leadership of this team has yet to be established, both players mention their propensity to lead through their actions — if not vocally.

"I consider myself a leader not just because I'm a senior, but because I've got a good understanding of how hard that group worked in 1994-95 to get to the tournament," Madden said. "Knowing the mental process we went through to get there, I expect to be a leader both on and off the court."

Madden's versatility on the court should prove valuable to the Ducks this season. The 6-foot-6, 211-pounder from Fresno, Calif., has seen most of his action for Oregon in the post as a power forward. However, Kent's

system calls for Madden to play the wing, running the floor and finishing plays.

Another player who can help both inside and out is Smith, the sophomore from Churchill High School in Eugene who redshirted last season to improve his strength.

"He can score inside, but he's going to be a pretty big threat on the outside as well," Kent said. "I feel pretty comfortable with him having a green light to shoot the ball whenever he wants to go out on that perimeter."

Smith and his fellow redshirts, Quinine and Manlove, will be counted on to provide a spark for the team whenever necessary.

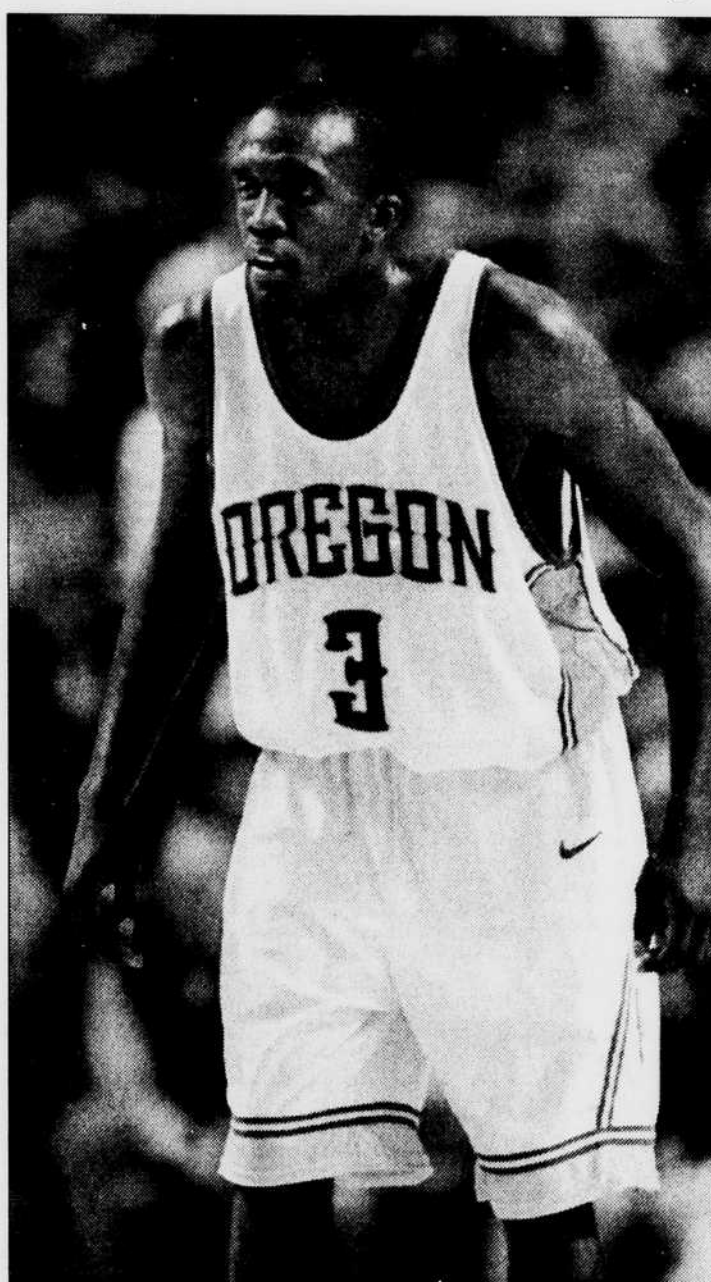
"I expect them to make not a good contribution, but a huge contribution," Madden said. "Sometimes [the regulars] might not be performing to our upper level, so we've got to depend on them to come in and win ballgames for us."

Both Quinine and Manlove have been lauded by Kent and their teammates for their ability to score.

"Donte Quinine is going to be a human highlight film," Madden said. "And Tyron was an All-American coming out of high school, so that speaks for itself."

The final piece of Kent's perimeter puzzle is one of the biggest, the 6-foot-1 junior Brown. "Uptown," the son of former NBA player "Downtown" Freddy Brown, is the returning team leader in three-pointers and will be the Ducks' top jump-shooting threat.

"He will be a much better shooter this year if he just understands good shot/bad shot," Kent said. "Judging from this summer, I really think he's come a long way in that area."



Senior Henry Madden's versatility should allow him to play in the post and on the perimeter.

Rolen owes Trachsel for NL Rookie of the Year award

Scott Rolen would have lost his rookie status had a pitch by Chicago pitcher Steve Trachsel not broken his arm

By Ronald Blum
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Scott Rolen owes his National League Rookie of the Year award to Steve Trachsel.

On Sept. 7, 1996, the Chicago pitcher broke Rolen's right forearm with a pitch in the third inning of the Cubs' game against the Phillies. At the time, Rolen had 130 at-bats — the maximum a player is allowed before losing his rookie status.

One more at-bat and Rolen would have

been ineligible for this year's award.

"This would be a good time to thank Steve Trachsel, who was a big part of this," Rolen said Tuesday after he won the NL Rookie award in a unanimous vote. "At the time, I wasn't really happy with him. Now I might give him a call and thank him."

Philadelphia's 22-year-old third baseman broke the Los Angeles Dodgers' five-year hold on the award after becoming the youngest NL player to reach 90 RBIs since Darryl Strawberry in 1984. Rolen led NL rookies in batting average (.283), runs (93), hits (159), doubles (35), homers (21) and RBIs (92).

"I think I exceeded anything I could have

fathomed," he said. "I hope I haven't reached a pinnacle now. I hope there's something more for me in baseball and in life."

Rolen was the Phillies' second-round pick in the June 1993 amateur draft. He became the first Philadelphia rookie to lead the team in homers and RBIs since Greg Luzinski in 1972, and had the most homers and RBIs for a Phillies rookie since Willie Montanez in 1971.

And Rolen accomplished this while playing for a last-place team that went 68-94 and finished 33 games out of first.

"It wasn't difficult to go out and play hard and play to win," he said. "We won four games in June. That doesn't mean I'm just going to come in and say, 'We'll be better in two years.'"

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Old Dominion Dispatch



By
Patty
McConnell

Foul Weather Driving Tips Checklist

- ✓ Headlights Aimed
- ✓ Brakes Checked
- ✓ Brake Lights
- ✓ Turn Signals & Taillights

REMEMBER!

- Flashing red lights on school buses means stop.
- Wet pavement and fall leaves mean slick pavement.
- Leave for work 5 minutes earlier than usual (your boss will love it!)
- If you drive a vehicles with ABS brakes don't pump your brakes, apply steady pressure when in a braking situation.
- Use your seat belts.
- Place small children in car seats in the back seat of a vehicle whenever possible.
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