

UW: Huskies' depth will be tested this weekend

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With key games coming up against UCLA and Washington State, teams tied for second place in the conference, it could be easy for Washington to overlook the 4-4 (1-4 Pac-10) Oregon Ducks this weekend.

The situation is eerily similar to the game that kept the Huskies out of the Rose Bowl in 1995. Although that was a much different (and better) Oregon team, the circumstances are much the same: early November, three games left, at Husky Stadium, and Washington perched upon the top of the conference standings.

The Huskies have been praised for their depth all season, with several freshmen, redshirts, freshmen and sophomores called on to fill in because of injuries.

"I am very pleased with the youth on this team," Lambricht said. "With the 10 freshmen who have contributed and the growth of some young athletes that are now giving us really good depth and in a couple of cases some starting."

That depth will be tested and will likely be a key to the game this week, with Huskies quarterback Brock Huard probable but hobbled by a sprained ankle and running back Rashaan Shehee out with a knee injury.

Freshman Marques Tuia-sosopo will start at quarterback if Huard can't go and is expected to play regardless. Tuia-sosopo is not exactly raw meat for the Ducks defense, though, having played seven games this season. He filled in for Huard for much of the Huskies' only loss of the season to Nebraska and played most of the second half during last week's 27-0 blanking of USC.

He has completed 22 of 34 passes for 385 yards and has thrown two touchdown passes and no interceptions.

He is a long way from matching Huard, who is one of the best quarterbacks in the conference and possesses a stellar 169.37 efficiency rating, but the Huskies don't lose much when Tuia-sosopo is in the game.

"The nice thing with Marques is that we don't really have to change the game plan," Lam-

Washington

■ 1997 SEASON: 7-1, 5-0

at Brigham Young	42-20
vs. San Diego State	36-3
vs. Nebraska	14-27
vs. Arizona State	26-14
at California	30-3
at Arizona	58-28
at Oregon State	45-17
vs. Southern California	27-0
vs. Oregon	Nov. 9
at UCLA	Nov. 15
vs. Washington State	Nov. 22
■ Leads all-time series with Oregon 55-30-5	
■ Has won 12 straight Pac-10 games	
■ 24-22 loss to Oregon in 1995 was Washington's last Pac-10 loss at Husky Stadium	

bright said. "He's very bright, he's very much into what we have been doing, and we really won't make any adjustment in particular, other than if we want to just highlight his running ability and put more emphasis on that."

Maurice Shaw, who will start in place of Shehee, isn't exactly a stranger to playing time either, although this will be his first start. Shaw has played all eight games, carrying the ball 88 times for 379 yards and five touchdowns.

Lambricht also doesn't expect to lose much by switching from Shehee to Shaw as the primary back.

"It shouldn't change anything, really," Lambricht said. "It gives us a little better power running inside because of his strength. He's a little bit more of a straight-ahead type of a runner."

One interesting streak to keep an eye on that doesn't bode well for the much-maligned Oregon defense: Shaw has the chance to become the fifth straight Huskies running back to rush for more than 100 yards in his first start.

However, the only streak the Huskies really care about is snapping the four-season drought without a Rose Bowl appearance, which they will be a step closer to if they can take care of the Ducks on Saturday.



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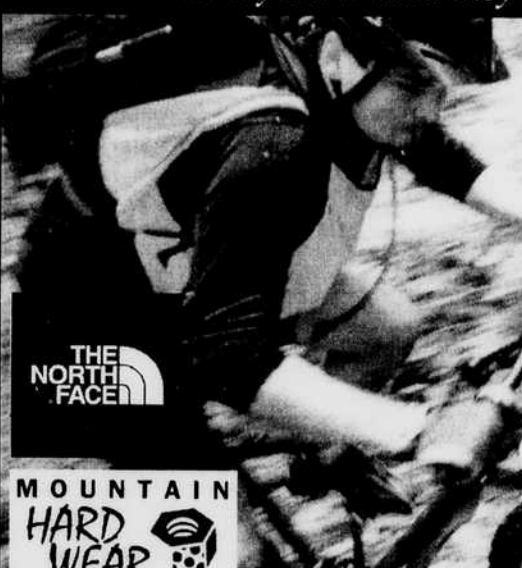
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