

Reversal of roles in 90th Apple Cup

Skip Hicks and the Bruins take on the Pac-10's best run defense

By Alex Pond
Sports Reporter

No. 11 Washington State (9-1, 6-1) at No. 17 Washington (7-3, 5-2)

Just two weeks ago, who would have thought the Huskies would be reduced to playing the role of spoiler in the 90th edition of the Apple Cup?

Certainly not Huskies fans, who were beginning to make travel plans to Pasadena as their beloved Dawgs sat atop the Pacific-10 Conference with a perfect 5-0 record.

But that's exactly the case as Washington stumbles into Saturday's game having suffered two embarrassing conference losses in a row, the latest a 52-28 thrashing at the hands of UCLA last Saturday, which knocked them out of the Rose Bowl picture.

Now, the Huskies can only take solace in trying to dash the Cougars' Rose Bowl hopes, a role that has been reversed from what usually takes place in this series.

For the Cougars to earn their first trip to the Rose Bowl since 1931, they need to beat the Huskies and hope UCLA beats Southern California on Saturday, or that Arizona beats Arizona State on Nov. 28.

But first things first, they need to take care of Washington in Husky Stadium, something they haven't done since a 21-20 victory in 1985.

The game pits Washington

Pac-10 Schedule

Nov. 22

Oregon State at Oregon
California at Stanford
Washington State at Washington
UCLA at Southern California

Pac-10 Standings

	Pac-10		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
Arizona State	6	1	8	2
UCLA	6	1	8	2
Wash. St.	6	1	9	1
Washington	5	2	7	3
USC	4	3	6	4
Arizona	3	4	5	5
Oregon	2	5	5	5
Stanford	2	5	4	6
California	1	6	3	7
Oregon State	0	7	3	7

State's high-powered offense, which ranks first in the Pac-10 in pass offense (343.1 yards per game), total offense (500.4 yards per game) and scoring offense (42.6 points per game) against a Washington defense that ranks first in total defense (323.3 yards per game), second in pass defense (208.8 yards per game) and second in scoring defense (19.5 points per game).

Washington State, which has lost the last two games in the series, will be looking to avenge last season's 31-24 overtime loss in Pullman.

The Cougars were held to 16 yards of total offense in the first

half and trailed 24-0 in the third quarter before putting together a massive rally. Quarterback Ryan Leaf passed for 218 yards in the fourth quarter and led three touchdown drives in the final nine minutes as the Cougars tied the game at 24-24 to force overtime.

However, Washington prevailed when quarterback Brock Huard connected with Jerome Pathon on a three-yard touchdown pass in the first overtime, and the Cougars were held scoreless on their possession.

A couple of interesting side notes: Leaf needs one touchdown pass to break the Pac-10 single-season record set by California's Pat Barnes last season.

Washington has not lost three games in a row since 1989.

UCLA (8-2, 6-1) at Southern California (6-4, 4-3)

One week after beating Washington, the Bruins turn into the biggest Washington fans south of Seattle.

If Washington beats Washington State and the Bruins beat the Trojans, UCLA will represent the Pac-10 in the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day.

The Bruins come into the game on a major roll, having won eight straight games since losing two in a row to begin the season. They are fresh off perhaps their most impressive outing of the season in the win over Washington.

UCLA blew the game wide open with a 38-point explosion spanning from midway though

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Civil War: Seniors play last game at Autzen

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Poulan/Weed Eater Independence Bowl, the Sports Humanitarian Bowl, or the Las Vegas Bowl.

But what on paper looks like a wash for the Ducks (they are favored by 17 points) is never a guarantee, no matter how bad Oregon State is. The Civil War game is where the Beavers like to flex their muscles and give it their all to ruin the Ducks' season.

That's why, said Bellotti, the key to the game is to play with emotion.

"Especially on the defensive side of the ball," Bellotti said. "Historically, there is a reason that this has been a low-scoring game, partly that is due to this being a very emotional game which tends to favor defense."

The Oregon defense will be seeing a very different Beaver offense than the one it's faced in recent seasons. New Oregon State head coach Mike Riley has entirely revamped the offense, ridding it of the option and introducing a pass-oriented attack.

Which, considering the Ducks have the worst run defense in the conference, might be just the kind of relief they are looking for to get back on track after giving up 405 rushing yards to Arizona State last Saturday.

In fact, the Beavers have gone from being one of the league's better running teams to the league's worst, averaging only 80.5 yards per game.

Beaver quarterback Tim Alexander, recruited to run the option by former head coach Jerry Pettibone, has adapted well to the passing game, throwing for 1,530 yards and four touchdowns.

"I've been impressed with his toughness," Bellotti said, "the accuracy with which he is throwing the ball and the quickness of his release."

Offensively for Oregon, consistency of the ground game is the big key Bellotti said.

Oregon

- 1997 SEASON: 5-5, 2-5 vs. Arizona (W) 16- at Nevada (W) 24-20 vs. Fresno State (W OT) 43-40 at Stanford (L) 58-49 vs. Washington St. (L) 24-13 vs. UCLA (L) 39-31 vs. Utah (W) 31-13 at USC (L) 24-22 at Washington (W) 31-28 at Arizona State (L) 52-31
- Leads all-time series with OSU 50-40-10
- Has won 18 of last 22 games against the Beavers
- With win, would clinch its fourth straight winning season for first time since 1935.

"Our chance to win the game will be decided in a large part by our ability to run the football," he said. "Saladin [McCullough] needs to have a big game."

Not to be lost in all the Civil War hype is that it is Senior Day for Oregon.

Playing at Autzen Stadium for the last time include McCullough, wide receiver Pat Johnson, tight ends Blake Spence and A.J. Jelks, offensive linemen David Weber, Seaton Daly and Matt Nichols, fullback Eric Winn, free safety Jaiya Figueras, defensive lineman Desmond Byrd and Trey Towns, and linebackers Garth White, Jeff Branson and Curtis Moore.

"This a group of seniors that has played a very active role over the last four years of Oregon football," Bellotti said. "Four years that has included a Rose Bowl, a Cotton Bowl and a bowl-eligible team last year. Many of them have played significant roles in the development of the program and the continuing of the winning spirit. We would like to send them out winners."

1,000: 175 yards will break Moore's record

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"I was upset," McCullough said. "I didn't really care about the 1,000 yards. I was really upset we lost." A fact that wasn't lost on Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti.

"I feel badly that wasn't something that we could have all gotten excited about," Bellotti said. "Because certainly a 1,000 rusher, the first one in the regular season since Derek Loville in 1987, I think is a tremendous accomplishment, one that obviously he deserves tremendous accolades for because he is a special back."

If there is one thing McCullough has become for Oregon it is a special running back.

After transferring from junior college last season, he tied the school record for most touchdowns in a single season with 15 and gained 708 yards on the ground in just seven games.

"He's as good as anybody who has ever played a game here," Bellotti said. "He's been a joy to coach, he's a good football player, he's a team player, and I

can't say enough good things about him."

Neither can Campbell.

"He's probably a combination of all the best guys I've had here," Campbell said in the Sept. 22, 1997 edition of the Emerald. "He's the total running back at this point."

McCullough on the other hand seems to take it all in stride.

He was not even aware that only five other Ducks had accomplished what he just had. Nor did he know how many yards he needed to break Moore's 26-year-old record.

"I am not going to be trying to break the record," McCullough said.

When told that he needed just 175 yards against Oregon State on Saturday, a number certainly reachable against the eighth-ranked run defense in the conference, McCullough changed his mind. "They shouldn't have told me that," he said.

While he was excited for McCullough, Campbell said the se-

nior was living up to expectations.

"This is kind of what we expected from him," Campbell said. "I am just happy to see that it did turn out that way. It started out a little bit slow, but he got on track and had some good runs and fortunately they got a little blocking done for us."

The blocking was somewhat of a question mark coming into the season, and McCullough said his production behind a suspect line should help him come NFL draft time.

"I think for me to get 1,000 yards ... I think that shows a little something of my ability," he said. "Everybody knows I don't have the best line in the world and for me to make things happen with the line that I have ..."

Whether his 1997 performance catapults McCullough into the high rounds of the NFL draft remains to be seen, but the certain fact about the senior from Pasadena, Calif., is that he left a mark on the Oregon program that won't soon be forgotten.

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