



Akili Smith beats a hard-charging Jeremiah Pharms in Oregon's 27-22 victory Saturday.

Ho-Ching could start at tailback

By Rob Moseley
Oregon Daily Emerald

A week after rushing for 47 yards in his first action since injuring his knee on Sept. 19, tailback Herman Ho-Ching may start on Saturday against Arizona State.

"Herman is taking some reps with the first team," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "Jerry Brown is taking reps with the first team and Derien Latimer is taking some reps with the first team. I will probably determine a starter after tomorrow's practice. But I think whoever starts, others will play also."

Ho-Ching said Tuesday that he is still working to get into shape in anticipation of starting.

"I'm impressed," Bellotti said. "He seems to be getting stronger every day."

While Ho-Ching may start on Saturday, Bellotti said he will be happy just to have tackle Marco Aguirre in uniform.

Aguirre, a 6-foot-4, 280-pound senior, has been sidelined since sustaining a knee injury against UCLA on Oct. 17. While he is unlikely to start against the Sun Devils, Bellotti said his presence will

be welcomed.

"Marco returning is one thing; him playing significant minutes is another," Bellotti said. "I'm not sure we're at that point yet. But Marco healthy is certainly one of our best offensive linemen, and we just need to try to put the best five on the field."

Bellotti hopes to shake Sun Devil jinx

Much has been made of Oregon being the Pacific-10 Conference's most successful team since 1994,

and Bellotti said that that record, along with playing at home, will provide added motivation for his players this week.

The fifth-year Ducks are 23-7 at home and a combined 29-16 since 1994.

"Based on historically as well as this season, we believe Autzen Stadium is a tremendous advantage to us," Bellotti said. "These seniors are on their way to possibly being the winningest program in the Pac-10 for their five years."

One team Bellotti and his se-

niors haven't enjoyed that much success against, however, is Arizona State. The Sun Devils were one of two teams Bellotti had yet to beat in his three years as head coach coming into this season, and the only one after the Ducks' 63-28 win over Stanford on Sept. 26.

"Obviously I would like to defeat them to get that monkey off my back, but I don't think that's motivation for the team," Bellotti said. "The fact that we as a team haven't defeated them in three years ought to be a great deal of motivation."

Harris most likely lost for the season

Linebacker John Harris, a 6-foot, 212-pound Chino, Calif., native who has played on kick coverage this season, injured his left knee against the Huskies on Saturday.

"It doesn't look good," Bellotti said on Sunday. "He doesn't have a lot of swelling, but they do think it is a torn anterior cruciate ligament, and that would probably require reconstruction."

Bellotti said Sunday that Harris would have an MRI performed Wednesday, and confirmed on Wednesday that the freshman's

Huskies basketball has high expectations for season

By Jim Cour
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — The expectations for the Washington Huskies are enormous.

After reaching the Sweet Sixteen last season, coach Bob Bender's team finds itself ranked 14th and given a chance to win the Pac-10 title.

The Huskies, with a program that was in shambles before Bender arrived six years ago, don't mind the pressure.

"We've got a very experienced team and a very deep team," Bender said. "Potentially, we're better this year because of our experience."

Led by 7-footer Todd MacCulloch, the Huskies open their sea-

son against UNC Wilmington Monday night at home. They begin league play Jan. 3 at Washington State.

"We've got a lot of athletic players who can run up and down the floor," said MacCulloch, a crew-cut Canadian who doesn't look like much of an athlete but is.

"I think we have a more athletic look," MacCulloch added.

With soft hands and a deft shooting touch, MacCulloch has twice led the nation in shooting percentage. Not bad for a kid from Winnipeg who was so far out of shape that he had trouble getting up and down the court when he arrived in Seattle five years ago.

As a junior, MacCulloch averaged 18.6 points and 9.7 rebounds to help Washington make the Sweet Sixteen for the first time since 1984.

The Huskies upset Xavier 69-68 and beat Richmond 81-66 in the NCAA tournament before losing to Connecticut 75-74.

From Bender's first season at Washington in 1994, when the Huskies went 5-22, the program has progressed light years. He tries to use it as motivation.

"You want to have a long memory," Bender said.

Washington has to keep its center on the floor this season if it's going to be successful because 7-1 Patrick Femerling passed up his senior season to re-

turn to Germany to play pro basketball. Femerling wasn't a big scorer but he was a big body on defense to replace MacCulloch when he was on the bench.

So MacCulloch can't afford to get into foul trouble this season and he knows it. His backup is 6-10 freshman Marlon Shelton, the son of former NBA player Lonnie Shelton. Shelton needs a lot of improvement.

"I think we're going to miss Pat a lot," MacCulloch said. "If he would have come back, it would have been a lot of fun."

Despite Femerling's absence, the Huskies still expect to have a lot of fun. This is the deepest and most talented of Bender's six Washington teams. In addition to

MacCulloch, the Huskies return two other key players; 6-4 senior guard Donald Watts and 6-5 junior guard Deon Luton.

Watts, son of former NBA player Slick Watts, had a breakthrough season as a junior when he averaged 16.9 points and improved his shooting percentage from 36 percent to 48 percent.

"I'm a whole lot more comfortable shooting the ball from the perimeter than I was before," Watts said.

Luton, a former high school center, was found by Bender in Del City, Okla. He had a sensational sophomore season, when he averaged 15.4 points and hit a school single-season record for 3-pointers.

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