

Matt Hankins/Emerald

Akili Smith, shown here against USC, threw for 442 yards against Washington last week for the fifth-highest total in school history.

Ducks

Continued from Page 1B

"We know coming in that they're going to want to run the football, but they're not a one-dimensional team," Bellotti said. "They can spread you out and throw the ball as well as anybody in the conference."

Quarterback Ryan Kealy, who is questionable after undergoing arthroscopic knee surgery, is fourth in the Pac-10 in passing efficiency after throwing for more than 2,000 yards as a freshman last season.

Oregon counters with Akili Smith, who is second in passing efficiency and leads the Pac-10 in total offense.

Smith's main target could again be junior wideout Tony Hartley, who set a school record with 242 receiving yards on nine catches in Oregon's 27-22 win over Washington last week.

"That was a great performance by him and Akili Smith," Arizona

State head coach Bruce Snyder said. "Everything offensively from the Oregon team emanates from Akili Smith. You can't overdo anything with them because Smith has the ability to get the ball to a number of different guys, but Tony got our attention, that's for sure."

Hartley will be matched up against a Sun Devil defensive backfield that includes 1997 all-Pac-10 safety Mitchell Freedman and honorable mention all-Pac-10 cornerback Courtney Jackson.

"They're physical," Hartley said. "They're probably the most physical corners we'll see this year — but beatable."

Snyder's attention will also be on the Oregon backfield, which will again feature freshman tailback Herman Ho-Ching.

Ho-Ching ran for 47 yards on 17 carries last week in his first action since injuring his knee on his second carry against San Jose

State on Sept. 19.

"Coach told me on Monday that he wanted me to start, and he said just go out there and do what you can do," Ho-Ching said. "I couldn't really do anything against Washington because my knee wasn't really healed."

Bellotti has worked out Derien Latimer and Jerry Brown, as well as Ho-Ching, with the first-team offense.

"We're making a lot assumptions with regards to a true freshman," the coach said. "But I've been very pleased with his attitude, his work ethic and certainly his ability to pick things up, because he hasn't had that much practice time."

Also expected to return but not start is offensive tackle Marco Aguirre, who has missed three games since injuring his knee against UCLA on Oct. 17.

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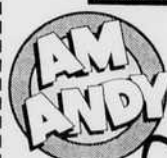
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