

# PATH to PASADENA

A sullied reputaion as the 'Pathetic-10' Conference hasn't kept the teams of the Pac-10 from being bowl-game contenders

By Jeff Smith  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Aretha Franklin's voice is echoing throughout the Pacific-10 Conference this year.

"All I'm asking is for a little respect... just a little bit... baby..."

"R-E-S-P-E-C-T, find out what it means to me."

Obviously, the 1999 season started out disastrous for the league and ended worse with only one of the five Pac-10 bowl teams coming away with a win — Oregon's Sun Bowl victory over Minnesota. In fact, it was the Pac-10's worst season in 17 years.

This year we've already seen the Pac-10 teams go up against some big-time programs such as Michigan, Wisconsin, Alabama, Texas and Penn State.

Now we get to see what they can do against each other.

One of the best parts of the Pac-10 has always been its unpredictably, so expect the unexpected in the ensuing months.

And as for respect? Non-conference wins are nice. But bowl games taste so much sweeter.

**1. USC TROJANS**  
Last year: 6-6, 3-5 Pac-10, tied for sixth



Head coach: Paul Hackett, third year

Returning starters: 14 (6 offense, 8 defense)

Player to watch: TB Sultan McCullough

Outlook: The USC athletic department was maybe sending the 2000 Trojans a message when it made up its football encyclopedia, er, media guide. Maybe the thinking was that by producing a 370 page history lesson, the Trojans will realize that excellence is expected in this program and that a season without a bowl game (such as last year) is not acceptable.

In any regards, it seems this year's team is up to the challenge. Obviously the key will be how sophomore quarterback Carson Palmer responds to a full season after missing most of last season due to former Oregon rover Michael Fletcher — who crunched Palmer last fall at Autzen Stadium and broke his collarbone.

The defense is the best in the Pac-10 and a big reason why are Butkus Award Candidates Markus Steele and Zeke Moreno.

It appeared as though the Trojans' season opening 29-5 win over Penn State on Aug. 29 meant something, but then the next week the Nittany Lions fell on its face at home, losing to Toledo 24-6. So the jury may still be out.

Still, expect Palmer to show off his NFL-esque skills and lead USC to its first Rose Bowl win since its 41-32 victory over Northwestern in 1996.

**2. OREGON DUCKS**  
Last season: 9-3, 6-2 Pac-10, tied for second



Head coach: Mike Bellotti, sixth year

Returning starters: 9 (5 offense, 4 defense)

Player to watch: TB Maurice Morris

Outlook: ESPN says that Oregon could be last year's Stanford. Oregon doesn't mind being compared to the Cardinal as long as it means the Ducks get to play in Pasadena on Jan. 1, 2001.

But in order for the Ducks to even begin thinking about such rosy dreams, they must start the Pac-10 season strong. The schedule makers weren't exactly kind to Oregon as it must face three of the Pac-10's best in its first three games.

Luckily for the Ducks, UCLA and Washington must come to Autzen Stadium, but then the Ducks will flock to Los Angeles to face the Trojans in the Coliseum. Oregon must win at least two of those games to stay in the race, and be sure to close out its season with three wins — at Washington State, home against California and at Oregon State for the Civil War. The biggest question mark for the

Ducks was answered emphatically in their season-opening 36-7 whooping over Nevada — their defense. Granted, the Wolfpack aren't exactly a Pac-10 offense, but holding an opponent to only 103 total offensive yards is impressive. Not to mention that Nevada finished with -3 rushing yards.

If the defense, anchored by seniors Matt Smith at linebacker and Saul Patu at defensive end, can continue to step up, the Ducks should once again be bowling under the nation's bright lights. Look for them to be in San Diego, Calif., on Dec. 29 for the Holiday Bowl.

**3. WASHINGTON HUSKIES**  
Last season: 7-5, 6-2 Pac-10, tied for second

Head coach: Rick Neuheisal, second year

Returning starters: 13 (6 offense, 7 defense)

Player to watch: QB Marques Tuiaosopopo



Outlook: The first year is over. Now the real work begins for head coach Rick Neuheisal.

Husky fans were accepting of the 7-5 mark and the close loss to Kansas State last season in the Holiday Bowl. But this year, especially with all of the pre-season hype, a record of just 7-5 is not going to get it done.

What is expected of this team is its first Rose Bowl berth since the 1993 season, nothing less. The Huskies do have as good a shot as any to get there with some key returnees and one of the best quarterbacks in the nation in Tuiaosopopo. But some weaknesses that could prevent such success are a thin defensive line, a lack of a deep threat at the wide receiver position and a shortage of

depth behind Tuiaosopopo.

Neuheisal makes no secret about his love for his starting quarterback, even saying last year that Tuiaosopopo is the type of person he wished his daughter would bring home some day. But some fear that Neuheisal's aggressive style of using Tuiaosopopo in the option could get his quarterback injured. The senior is coming off a season in which he ranked 10th in the Pac-10 in rushing with 541 yards and six touchdowns.

And in the first game of the season, Tuiaosopopo went at it again with 15 carries due to the lack of production in the backfield. Washington starting running back Paul Arnold must be a consistent threat and help keep his quarterback away from opposing defenses' tackles. Because if Tuiaosopopo goes down, so do the Huskies in the Pac-10.

**4. UCLA BRUINS**  
Last season: 4-7, 2-6 in Pac-10, ninth

Head coach: Bob Toledo, fifth year

Returning starters: 13 (6 offense, 7 defense)

Player to watch: RB DeShaun Foster

Outlook: No team best illustrated the 1999 demise of the Pac-10 better than the UCLA Bruins. After back-to-back 10-2 seasons in '97-'98, the Bruins finished an embarrassing 2-6 in league play.

"The camaraderie was bad and the chemistry was horrible because of that," head coach Bob Toledo said. "There were no leaders."

The Bruins were eager to erase the memory of last year, and did so, with a convincing 35-24 win over

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Officiate Fall Term. Officiate intramural volleyball, flag football, and indoor soccer. First meeting is Wed. Sept. 27 at 6:00pm in the Ulrich Room (Rm 63) in the Student Recreation Center.



## Recreational Sports

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### Fall Term 2000

League	Manager Meetings	Location	Time
Flag Football	Oct. 2	*SRC Multipurpose 4	4:00P.M.
Indoor Soccer	Oct. 9	*SRC Ulrich Room	4:00P.M.
Volleyball	Oct. 10	*SRC Ulrich Room	4:00P.M.
3-on-3 Basketball	Oct. 18	*SRC Ulrich Room	4:00P.M.
Cross Country Meet	Nov. 1	Pioneer Cemetery	3:30P.M.

League	Playoff Meetings	Location	Time
Flag Football	Oct. 26	*SRC Multipurpose 4	4:00P.M.
Volleyball	Nov. 1	*SRC Ulrich Room	5:00P.M.
Indoor Soccer	Nov. 2	*SRC Ulrich Room	4:00P.M.
3-on-3 Basketball	Conducted via e-mail		

One-Day Events	Deadline	Dates	Location
Football Scramble	Oct. 2, 5P.M.	Oct. 3-4, 4-6P.M.	Grass IM Field
Indoor Soccer Scramble	Oct. 9, 5P.M.	Oct. 10-11, 7-9P.M.	*SRC Courts 4 & 5
Volleyball Scramble	Oct. 10, 5P.M.	Oct. 12, 7-9P.M.	B54 Gerling Annex
Cross Country Meet	Oct. 31, 5P.M.	Nov. 1, 3:30P.M.	Pioneer Cemetery
Raquetball Tournament	Nov. 2, 5P.M.	Nov. 4, 11A.M.	Raquetball Courts

Special Events	Deadline	Dates	Location
18-Hole Golf Scramble	Oct. 6	Oct. 15	Diamond Woods
Fall Tennis Classic	Oct. 24, 5P.M.	Oct. 27-29	Covered Courts
Fitness Week	Oct. 30-Nov. 3	Oct. 30-Nov. 3	*SRC

For more information, stop by 102 Esslinger Hall or call 346-4113. Visit our Web site: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~pars/>  
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\*Student Recreation Center



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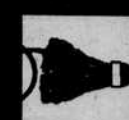
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