



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

Wide receiver Keenan Howry and the rest of the Ducks' offense must repeat their steadfastness against Idaho to beat UCLA.

## Matchup

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Oregon enters Saturday's game defending a 16-game home winning streak, the longest such streak in the Pac-10. The last time the Ducks lost at Autzen Stadium was on Oct. 11, 1997 — to the Bruins.

Just ask ESPN how important this game is. The sports network will be on stadium grounds at 8 a.m. broadcasting its weekly "College GameDay" show.

"We know we've got to step it up," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "We've got to step it up a level because it's league play, and we've also got to step it up because of the caliber of team we'll be playing."

Not one current Oregon player has experienced beating UCLA, and the last two losses could best be described as heart-wrenching. Two years ago, the No. 11 Ducks lost a nationally televised, 41-38 overtime battle to the No. 2 Bruins in Pasadena. Last season, Oregon rallied from a 34-10 fourth-quarter deficit before losing 34-29 when Marshaun Tucker was tackled on the one-yard line at the end of regulation play.

It was a strong possibility that the Ducks could have been headed to

the Rose Bowl had Tucker made it into the end zone.

So, needless to say, the blood runs deep with the Bruins.

"This will be a big game for us, especially for the guys who were part of the last two times we lost to these guys," defensive end Saul Patu said. "We've definitely got something to prove; not just to ourselves, but also to our fans and the people who support us."

On the ground, UCLA is led by junior tailback DeShaun Foster, a first-team Freshman All-American

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in 1998 who was slowed last season by a sprained right ankle. Foster ranks seventh nationally and second in the Pac-10 in scoring with 12 points per game and second in the Pac-10 in rushing with 140.7 yards per game.

Oregon's rushing defense, ranked eighth in the conference, could have its hands full with Foster.

"We have to capitalize on their mistakes and correct our mistakes," Patu said. "If we capitalize on the good things that we've been doing, we'll be just fine."

Redshirt sophomore quarterback Ryan McCann has come up big for the Bruins in place of injured Cory Paus. Last week against Michigan, McCann completed 15 of 21 passes for 160 yards and two touchdowns in the second half.

But a hostile Autzen Stadium crowd could rattle UCLA's offense. Granted, the Bruins did beat then-No. 3 Alabama and Michigan in the preseason, but both of those victories happened in the comfort of the Rose Bowl.

"Last year we didn't fare very well on the road," UCLA head coach Bob Toledo said. "We didn't win a game on the road last year whereas the previous seasons we did pretty good. I always tell them that you have to win at home. But to win a championship, you have to win on the road."

The Ducks must overcome the inconsistencies in their offense if they are to beat UCLA. Starting quarterback Joey Harrington connected on just 10 of 22 passes against an overmatched Nevada squad, and a week later, Oregon's receivers dropped several key passes in the loss to Wisconsin.

Last Saturday, the offense had its most complete performance of the season against Idaho. Harrington completed 14 of 21 passes for 173 yards and four touchdowns, and tailback Maurice Morris ran 76 yards on 14 carries for two touchdowns.

Save a few cross-country touchdown sprints by the Badgers' Michael Bennett, the Ducks' defense has been solid so far this season. Oregon leads the Pac-10 in passing defense and is third in total defense.

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