

# Pac-10 set to prove rankings are no fluke

■ No more byes: Every Pac-10 team is in action this weekend, looking for revenge

By Adam Jude  
Oregon Daily Emerald

It's a great weekend for Pacific-10 Conference football.

Heading into Saturday's matchups, seven Pac-10 teams boast rankings in the top 30, led by Oregon's No. 9 Associated Press standing. And don't be surprised if, in two days, that figure changes.

Three of the five games have spreads of eight points or less, which should lead to an exciting, and perhaps surprising Saturday.

## Stanford (2-3, 1-1) at Oregon State (3-2, 1-1)

What in the mug is going on in Beaverville? Head coach Dennis Erickson has the Beavers off to their best start since 1967... is anyone in Eugene a little nervous?

"We're making a great deal of progress," Erickson told The Register-Guard, "but I'm not into moral victories."

The Beavers narrowly lost in Seattle last week, 33-30, and are looking to take out their losing frustration on last season's Pac-10 champion, which lost 20-14 against Notre Dame last week.

One of Stanford's biggest weaknesses is at quarterback. Randy

Fasani went down with a knee injury earlier this season and his status for this weekend is still questionable. If he can't go, redshirt freshman Chris Lewis will have to make the trip.

Since 1969, the Cardinal is 13-4 against the Beavers in Corvallis. However, Stanford head coach Tyrone Willingham said he sees a huge difference from the Beavers of old.

"What's happened is their stadium is becoming one of those unfriendly places for the enemy to walk into," Williams said of Reser Stadium. "They're starting to create some very nice things in their program that allows them to have success."

Oregon State's Ken Simonton is fourth in the nation with 164 yards per game, but was held to just 104 yards against Washington.

"This young man really attacks the line of scrimmage, or shall I say the goal line," Willingham said of Simonton. "He is very determined and very good."

## Washington State (3-2, 1-1) at No. 22 Arizona (4-1)

Last year in Pullman, Arizona won 30-24 on a questionable call in the game's final play.

But Cougars head coach Mike Price said he is not bitter about the last-second loss.

"We haven't talked about it much," Price said. "I'm sure we have kids who remember what exactly did happen. It wasn't Arizona's fault."

Price said it was a bad call on the official's part that cost the Cougars the game.

"I feel it wasn't a catch," he said. "It's not a rallying cry for us this year, though."

To be competitive against Ari-

zona this year, however, Washington State must play even better against a Wildcat defense that is second in the nation against the run — allowing just 62 yards per game — and No. 6 overall in points allowed at 10.2 per game.

"We just have to double our effort to continue to prove that we deserve to be ranked," Arizona head coach Dick Tomey said. "We did a good job of handling the fact that we were underrated earlier in

“Against Oregon you see that [UCLA] wasn't as strong as suspected; they have a few weaknesses. They have some things that they can explode on and they can be really good, but if they don't have all their people together they can struggle at times.”

Tom Holmoe  
Bears head coach

the year, and now we have to do the same thing with the recognition that we have gotten."

Cougar quarterback Jason Gesser leads the conference with a 147.5 pass efficiency rating and has not thrown an interception in four games.

"When you look around the conference, there were a lot of returning quarterbacks, but Gesser is leading the conference in passing efficiency by miles," Tomey said.

If the Cougars can put up 42 points against the Wildcats — like they did in their 42-35 victory over Boise State last week — they might

have a chance in Tucson. Washington State's defense, however, has been its Achilles heel; it allowed 474 yards to Boise State.

## No. 13 UCLA (4-1) at California (1-4, 0-2)

Things aren't looking so golden for the Bears: It's pretty sad when the team's only strong spot is its punter.

Oh yeah, the Bruins are also raging for revenge after losing to the Bears 17-0 last year.

"It left a terrible taste; not just [for] me but all the offense," UCLA quarterback Cory Paus told The L.A. Times about last year's performance against Cal. "We didn't play particularly well last year as a whole. But that game was the worst offensive performance."

Despite posting the worst Pac-10 record, Bears head coach Tom Holmoe said he sees some weaknesses in UCLA's game, which has given his team some confidence.

"Against Oregon you see that [UCLA] wasn't as strong as suspected; they have a few weaknesses," Holmoe said. "They have some things that they can explode on and they can be really good, but if they don't have all their people together, they can struggle at times."

UCLA comes off a much-needed bye week to refresh some of its many injured players.

Tailback DeShaun Foster, one of the nation's leading rushers, went down with a fractured hand against Arizona State Sept. 30 and is not expected back for at least a couple weeks.

"A lot of people didn't think we'd be 4-1 right now," UCLA head coach Bob Toledo said. "A lot of the big teams have already gone down. I predict that the winner of this conference will have one loss."

# ASU, UW ready to light it up

■ Offensive-minded  
Washington and Arizona State battle it out for second place

By Adam Jude  
Oregon Daily Emerald

It's a clash of teams with identical records and identical desires.

And it's not going to be easy for either of them.

After a tight 33-30 victory over Oregon State last week, the No. 11 Washington Huskies head to Tempe, Ariz., in hopes of continuing their march toward the post-season.

Arizona State, coming off a 30-10 wallop of California, is 4-1 on the season and a win against the Huskies would do wonders for the Sun Devils' Rose Bowl dreams as well.

"This is a big game," Arizona State head coach Bruce Snyder said.

"Not only are we playing a good opponent, but we're both fighting to stay in that group that can still make it to the Rose Bowl. So I think you're going to find two teams that can really go after each other. This is a

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Rick Neuheisel  
Husky head coach

huge game for us and for them. We're both in the same boat. We both have an oar and we're going to beat each other over the head with it and see who can knock the other guy out of the boat."

Washington leads the Pac-10 in

total offense with 414.8 yards per contest while the Sun Devils are the best passing team in the conference.

"They have struck and struck quickly," Husky head coach Rick Neuheisel said of Arizona State's big play offense. "They are not throwing for an unbelievable percentage; it's just the yards they are getting per attempt, which is the major concern."

Neither team's defense has proven itself yet this season. The Huskies are the worst rushing defense in the conference and allowed Oregon State 474 yards of total offense. Similarly, Arizona State is ranked eighth in the Pac-10 in total defense.

Don't be surprised if both teams score more than 50 points.

The key to the game: If the Huskies can take a lead into the fourth quarter, a win is almost guaranteed. The Sun Devils have scored just nine points this season in the final period, while allowing their opponents to score 27.

## NAME THAT DEFENSE

Want to name the Oregon football defense?

They're a gang and they're green, but defensive coordinator Nick Aliotti said that these Ducks can't share the same nickname as the 1995 Rose Bowl squad. So, we at the Emerald sports desk are hosting an informal "name that defense" competition.

It's simple: Just e-mail your nickname ideas to Smittside@aol.com. We'll publish the top-10 ideas in next week's Homecoming Game Day supplement, along with your name, of course. For the top nickname, we are giving away a copy of the 1995 book titled, "The Year of the Duck." The book is written by former Oregon sports information director George Beres, and it is a detailed look into the Oregon Ducks' 1995 Rose Bowl season, full of unique anecdotes and captivating pictures.

And hey, who knows. Your idea might make headlines across the nation.



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