

# UCLA braces for battle with hungry Wildcats

■ The once-mighty Bruins need to beat Arizona to salvage their sub-par season

By Peter Hockaday  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Every week, it seems, UCLA has some sort of crucial conference game. After losing to Oregon 39-10 in Eugene to start the Pacific-10 Conference schedule, the Bruins needed to beat Arizona State. They did. Then, after a triple-overtime loss to California in the Bay Area, the Bruins needed to beat Oregon State to stay afloat in the Pac-10 standings.

They didn't. Now, UCLA (4-3, 1-3) takes on No. 24 Arizona (5-2, 3-1) in what could be the Bruins' most important game yet if they want to salvage a spiraling season.

The Wildcats, on the other hand, need a win to be mentioned with Oregon, Oregon State and Washington as contenders for the Rose Bowl. "Both teams desperately need a win, and both teams really want to win," Arizona coach Dick Tomey said.

Saturday's game, then, could come down to pure desire.

"On any given Saturday anybody can win," UCLA head coach Bob Toledo said. "It usually just comes down to the team that plays just a little bit better, ends up winning the football game."

Arizona's defense wins football games for the Wildcats. Arizona averages only 24.6 points per game on offense — sixth in the Pac-10 — but gives up 16.0 points on defense, good enough for second in the conference.

The Wildcats' defense is an-

chored by a few key players. One is cornerback Michael Jolivet, who got spectacularly nailed by Wesley Mallard in last week's Oregon-Arizona game. Jolivet is one of the best cornerbacks in the country, and had eight of the Wildcats' 12 interceptions on the season.

The other key player is defensive end Joe Tafoya, who has been one of the hardest hitters on a hard-hitting Arizona defense this year. Named the defensive player of the week for Sept. 5, Tafoya has nine tackles for a loss, two forced fumbles and four broken-up passes this season.

On UCLA's side of the ball, not much has been going the Bruins' way recently. UCLA finally returned top running back DeShaun Foster last week, but the junior tailback rushed 18 times for only 56 yards, a 3.1 yards-per-carry average.

“Both teams desperately need a win, and both teams really want to win.”

Dick Tomey  
Arizona head coach

But the Bruins will need a lot more than a breakout game from Foster if they want to beat the Wildcats and start thinking about a bowl game.

There's the road thing. UCLA can't seem to win on the road, and should face a reasonably rough crowd in Tucson. The Bruins carry an eight-game road losing streak into Saturday's game.

But UCLA may never return to top form this season. If it does, it must start this weekend in Arizona.

This is, after all, another crucial game for the always-exciting Bruins.



Erin Swanson-Davies Emerald

Arizona defenders Jarvie Worcester (47), Lance Briggs (27) and Jermaine Chatman (23) gang up to tackle Maurice Morris last week.

## Pac-10 heats up as bowls loom

■ Saturday's matchups should answer some big questions about the conference race

By Peter Hockaday  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Pacific-10 Conference football just gets more exciting every week.

This Saturday, all the questions that seemed to have answered themselves could come undone.

Is Arizona for real? We'll find out when they take on UCLA in Tucson.

Is Joey Harrington better on the road than he is at home? He should thrill the crowd at Arizona State.

Is Southern California really that bad? We'll know the answer when they take on upstart California in Los Angeles.

Can Washington play on the road? We'll find out in a hostile Stanford Stadium environment.

And finally, is Oregon State going to contend for the Rose Bowl? They'll have a road block when Washington State comes to town.

Should we dissect the games?

**No. 9 Washington at Stanford**  
Washington (6-1, 3-1 Pac-10) survived a scare when California came to Seattle last weekend. Down 24-13 going into the fourth quarter, the Huskies rallied to score 23 points and crush the Golden Bears 36-24. Now Washington will face Cal's

Bay Area rival, Stanford (3-4, 2-2), which had a little drama of its own last Saturday against Southern California. Quarterback Chris Lewis, replacing injured starter Randy Fasani, threw a 20-yard bomb to Jamien McCullum on the final play of the game to give Stanford a 32-30 win.

This weekend, the pressure will rest squarely on Washington's shoulders. The Huskies still have a legitimate shot at the Rose Bowl, but must win the rest of their games to

“They're a team that's very capable of coming in here and beating us.”

Dennis Erickson  
Oregon State head coach, on the Cougars

get there.

Stanford is just looking for a bowl game and has to win three of its last four to achieve that feat. But after Washington, the road gets slightly easier for the Cardinal, who play UCLA at the Rose Bowl, then Arizona State at home and Cal in Berkeley.

**Washington State at No. 18 Oregon State**

Oregon State (6-1, 3-1) is another team that has the pressure mounting with each snap of the football. The Beavers are one of the best one-loss teams in the conference and must prove themselves once more against Washington State (3-4, 1-3).

"They're a team that's very capable of coming in here and beating

us," Oregon State head coach Dennis Erickson said about his former team, Washington State.

Erickson has reason to worry. The Cougars have a deceptive record and have taken Arizona and Arizona State to overtime in their last two games, but lost both. Washington State's emergence has come on the back of Jason Gesser, one of the league's best passers.

But the Beavers have Ken Simonton, the nation's fifth-best rusher, and quarterback Jonathan Smith, last week's Pac-10 offensive player of the week. Oregon State should continue to pave its way to the roses.

**California at Southern California**

The wheels have come off the USC bus. Now the season is gone, and coach Paul Hackett could be also. The Trojans (3-4, 0-4) must win their final four games to even become bowl eligible since they played an extra game early on.

California (2-5, 1-3), didn't have the expectations that USC did, but had nearly the same results. The Golden Bears' 15 minutes of fame for 2000 came when they beat UCLA in triple overtime in Berkeley, but they have dropped games to Washington, Arizona State and Washington State. Cal needs to win out if they want to go to a bowl, but with games against Oregon State and Oregon, that seems highly unlikely.

Hackett may be the only person in the world who cares about the outcome of Saturday's game between the Trojans and the Golden Bears.



**MEKALAS**  
Elegant Thai Cuisine

Authentic Vegetarian, Curry, & Seafood Dishes

Voted Best Asian Restaurant of its Kind in Eugene Inside the 5th Street Market

342-4872

the *Secret Garden*  
A Bed & Breakfast Inn



Ten delightful garden-theme rooms await you.

1910 University Street, Eugene, Oregon 97403  
541-484-6755 • fax: 541-431-1699 • 1-888-484-6755 Toll free  
www.secretgardenbbinn.com