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Softball

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Because it's a Pac-10 school, Oregon State is the only squad in the country to start conference play 0-5 and still be ranked. The Beavers are No. 16 in the NFCA/USA Today Poll.



WILSON

Since 1982, Pac-10 teams have won 13 NCAA championships.

Pac-10 pitchers have thrown 13 no-hitters this season.

Except for Oregon, which fell out of the poll last month, all the Pac-10 schools are currently ranked. This makes competition a

great preparation for the rigors of postseason play.

Washington head coach Teresa Wilson, who has led the Huskies to five straight World Series appearances, said that playing in the Pac-10 is "nothing short of war."

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Teresa Wilson
head coach,
Washington

“Every single game is played against an opponent that is capable of playing for the national championship,” Wilson said. “This Pac-10 war is good. It is ex-

citing. It is great softball. It's like the Yankees and the Braves playing every day. It is simply part of the process toward preparation for postseason play.”

With warm weather year-round, a high population base and first-class instruction, Cain said California and Arizona have proved to be the ultimate pools for gathering young players. In 1999, for example, 26 of the 52 All-Americans were from California. And 11 of the top-25 teams are currently West Coast teams.

But Cain said other conferences — particularly in Texas and Florida — are slowly gaining power and are ready to battle with the Pac-10.

“The Southeastern Conference is coming on strong,” said Cain, pointing out No. 3 Alabama, the only non-Pac-10 team in the top five. “The instruction is getting much better in the other parts of the country.”

On the other hand, Cain did admit that the Pac-10 has shown “no signs of slacking off.”

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