

Pac-10 play opens in light of tragedy

■ The Pac-10 returns to action this weekend, looking to pick up where it left off two weeks ago

By Chris Cabot
Oregon Daily Emerald

After a sobering week off, the Pacific-10 Conference will return to the gridiron Saturday. A few teams are looking to beat up on non-conference opponents before the full Pac-10 schedule gets underway next weekend. All of the games will involve emotional tributes to victims of the national tragedies.

Idaho (0-2 overall, 0-0 Mountain West Conference) at No. 13 Washington (1-0 overall, 0-0 Pac-10 Conference)

The numbers point to a definite Washington victory in this game. The Huskies are coming off a 23-18 win over 10th-ranked Michigan last week, while Idaho has lost two straight to Washington State and Arizona. The Vandals trail in the overall series 2-30-2.

Recent national tragedies may prove to be a distraction for Washington, though. In addition to the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., 16 Husky boosters died in a plane crash last week while traveling in Mexico. Despite these unfortunate circumstances, head coach Rick Neuheisel is confident his team will not miss a beat on the field.

"This is a game of very competitive people, both coaches and play-

ers alike, and I think when you get back onto the field of play that competitive spirit is going to shine just as brightly as it ever did," he said.

During both the pregame period and halftime of the game in Seattle, there will be tributes to victims of both the tragedies.

Last season when the two teams met, Washington used a balanced offensive scheme gaining 239 yards on the ground and 235 through the air. The Huskies also took advantage of five Idaho turnovers, winning the game 44-20.

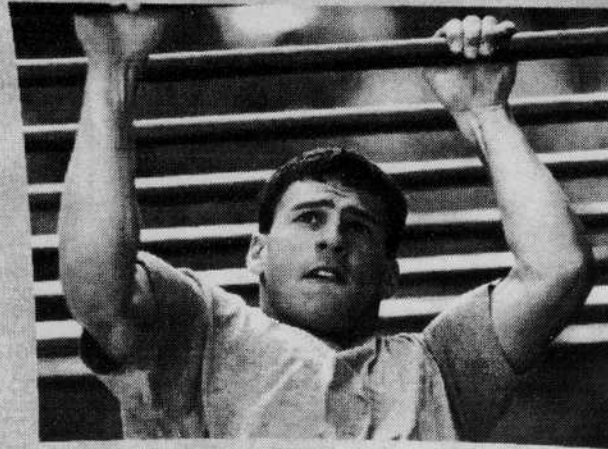
Neuheisel's squad is currently riding the longest winning streak in the Pac-10 at nine games. Unless Vandal quarterback John Welsh can come up with a phenomenal game and their defense can slow the Husky offense, the Dawgs should extend their streak to 10.

California (0-2, 0-0) at Washington State (2-0, 0-0)

The first game of the Pac-10 season will be held in Pullman, Wash. The last time Cal won at Washington State was in 1979, so both history and a better football team stand in their way of a win.

Despite passing for 291 yards in their last contest against Brigham Young on Sept. 8, quarterback Kyle Boller and the Bears lost 44-16. Boller often uses fullback Marcus Fields as his primary receiver. In Cal's first two games, Fields had nine catches for 133 yards and one touchdown. Head coach Tom Holmoe is not pleased with his team's play, though.

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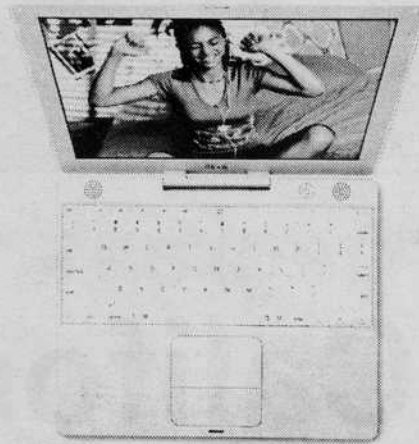
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