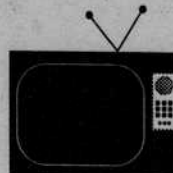


# GAME DAY

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**Best Bet**  
USC at Washington,  
12:30 p.m., Fox Sports Net



Friday, October 5, 2001

## QB Gesser, WSU host Erickson's Beavers

■ Washington State brings the best offense in the Pac-10 into the matchup against the Beavers

By Chris Cabot  
Oregon Daily Emerald

### Oregon State (1-2 overall, 0-1 Pacific-10 Conference) at Washington State (4-0, 2-0)

This game pits two teams that are presently sitting on opposite sides of the Pac-10 scale. Washington State is riding high after convincing wins over Idaho, Boise State, California and Arizona, and they have an offense that seems unstoppable. On the other hand, Oregon State comes into Saturday's game with some of the worst numbers in the conference, averaging 321 yards per game offensively while giving up 440 total yards per contest.

Cougar's quarterback Jason Gesser has thrown for a Pac-10-high 12 touchdowns while allowing only two interceptions. Mike Bush (also a starter on the Cougars basketball team) and Nakoia McElrath, who is fourth in the nation in receiving yards per game, are the main targets for Gesser. Running back Dave Minnich is second in the Pac-10 only to UCLA's DeShaun Foster in rushing yards.

Oregon State will also have a tough time dealing with the Cougar defense as it has only allowed 68.8 yards rushing per game and tallied 15 sacks in four games.

Beaver's tailback Ken Simonton, who is having a sub-par season for his standards, needs just one more point to become the leading non-kicker on the Pac-10 career scoring list.

### Louisiana-Lafayette (1-3 overall, 0-1 Sun Belt Conference) at Arizona State (2-1 overall, 0-1 Pac-10)

This is the first meeting ever between the Ragin' Cajuns and the Sun Devils, and it promises to be a good one. That is, if you like a good old-fashion blowout. The spread on the game is 33.5 in favor of Arizona State and that gives a good indication of how the game should go.

As expected, the Sun Devils are trying to approach the game with a focused mindset.

"Competition is competition," head coach Dirk Koetter said. "We don't get to compete enough, and we don't care who it's against."

The Ragin' Cajuns have lost games to Minnesota, Southern Mississippi and Middle Tennessee State. Their lone win came against Nicholls State on Sept. 1.

Offensively they are led by quarterback Jon Van Cleave, running back Jerome Coleman and receivers Nick Dugas and Marcus Wilridge.

"These guys are a spread-you-out type of team," Koetter said. "This will be a totally different type of game plan for us."



Adam Amato Emerald

Junior wide receiver Keenan Howry suffered a contusion in his ribs against Utah State, but he is likely to play in Saturday's game at Arizona.

## Pac-10 road test awaits Ducks

■ Joey Harrington returns to the scene of his first comeback victory when the Ducks travel to Arizona

By Jeff Smith  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Adjectives spewed from first-year Arizona head coach John Mackovic's mouth this week when describing Oregon quarterback Joey Harrington.

While Mackovic has yet to coach against Harrington, he saw plenty of the signal-caller last season while working as a college football analyst for ESPN.

"I have great admiration and respect for him," Mackovic said. "He doesn't quit. He has the poise, confidence, courage and toughness to stand in the pocket and deliver the ball."

"Joey has been called the 'come-

back kid,' and I have to agree with that."

Certainly that's been Harrington's tag over the last year and his reputation has only grown since leading the Ducks on a last-minute, game-winning scoring drive against USC on Sept. 22.

But where did the 'comeback kid' get his first break? Where did his first come-from-behind thriller take place at, and who was it against?

Naturally, that would be at Arizona Stadium on the evening of October 23, 1999, when a young energetic sophomore quarterback entered the game in the third quarter and led the Ducks to a wild 44-41 victory against the Wildcats. Harrington, who replaced then-starter A.J. Feeley, had engineered the first of his much-talked-about eight comeback wins.

Almost two years later, that fresh-

faced Harrington is now the seasoned veteran of the seventh-ranked team in the country and is leading his team back to Tucson, Ariz., Saturday for a 7:15 p.m. duel in the desert with the Wildcats (3-1).

"Last time we were there we pulled one out in Joey's debut," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "It's a fun place to play. There's great emotion whenever Arizona and Oregon step on the field together."

That held true for last season's game at Autzen Stadium when both teams entered the contest sporting 5-1 records. After Oregon grabbed the 14-10 first half lead, the game turned into a defensive battle.

No points would be scored in the second half as the Ducks would capture the crucial win that would send

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## 'Cats ready for the fight against Oregon

■ After last season's near win at Autzen Stadium, the Arizona Wildcats are looking to end the Ducks' five-game winning streak

By Hank Hager  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Four points.

That's all the Arizona Wildcats needed last season to upset Oregon.

Four measly points.

But instead, the Ducks (4-0 overall, 1-0 Pac-10 Conference) narrowly defeated the Wildcats (3-1, 0-1) 14-10 in Eugene on Oct. 21, 2000. Had Arizona quarterback Ortege Jenkins's last minute pass been caught, the Ducks may have been the team that went on

to a 5-6 record and out of bowl contention after losing five in a row to end the season.

Instead, then head coach Dick Tomey's squad dropped from 21st in the nation at the start of the Oregon battle, to tied for fifth in the Pac-10 at 3-5.

It's a year later, and all bets are off for the 'Cats.

Tomey has been fired after leading the team to its worst record since 1996 (5-6). In comes John Mackovic to replace the embattled coach. But it won't be an easy job for the former head coach at Texas, Illinois and Wake Forest in the collegiate ranks and at Kansas City in the NFL.

Jenkins has graduated after leading

the Wildcats for the past two seasons. Junior Jason Johnson takes over the reins and hopes to lead Arizona back into Pac-10 prominence. He beat out a group of six untested players for the spot, having been the only one to throw a pass in a Division I football game. Prior to the start of this season, though, he had thrown only 11 passes in two years. In his four 2001 starts, he has thrown for 911 yards in 117 attempts.

The real key to Arizona's offense may come from their backfield. Sophomore running back Clarence Farmer leads the 'Cats rushing offense after netting 84 yards on 16 carries last week against Washington State.

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## THE BOX

**Key Number:**

114

National rank of Oregon's passing defense, which is giving up 349 yards per game. However, the Ducks' secondary has helped lead the team to a +1.75 per game turnover ratio, which ranks eighth-best in the country.

**Pac-10 Rankings:**

**Total Offense**

Oregon.....4  
Arizona.....8

**Scoring Offense**

Arizona.....5  
Oregon.....6

**Passing Offense**

Oregon.....5  
Arizona.....8

**Rushing Offense**

Oregon.....4  
Arizona.....7

**Total Defense**

Arizona.....4  
Oregon.....8

**Scoring Defense**

Oregon.....5  
Arizona.....8

**Passing Defense**

Arizona.....6  
Oregon.....9

**Rushing Defense**

Oregon.....3  
Arizona.....4

### Quotable

*"We're in the A- to B+ range...I'm excited to say we haven't played our best game yet, and we're 4-0."*

Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti, on his team's position heading into seven-straight Pac-10 games.

**Key Player:**

**Michael Jolivet, Arizona cornerback.**

Jolivet was on the receiving end of the Ducks' single biggest hit of last season, when he had his helmet blown off by Oregon linebacker Wesly Mallard. But Jolivet will also be keying on Oregon quarterback Joey Harrington, who led a last-minute winning drive in Tucson two seasons ago for his first big win.