

GAME DAY

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Best Bet
Washington at UCLA,
12:30 p.m., ABC



Friday, October 12, 2001

UO reserves are enjoying the spotlight

■ The Ducks' depth chart was cleared out against Arizona, and many of the same players could play against California

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

When Oregon backup quarterback Jason Fife stepped on the field Saturday against Arizona, Duck fans everywhere cheered.

Fife wasn't playing because starter Joey Harrington had pulled a hamstring or because Harrington had thrown five interceptions. He was playing because Harrington engineered a blowout, the Ducks' first this season, against the Wildcats. When Fife entered the game, the score was 56-14, Oregon.

Fife, who went 4-of-5 for 46 yards Saturday, said that getting reserves into the game is a good thing for the team and the reserves themselves.

"It was a good moment for me," Fife said. "I wanted to play earlier in the season, and figured once the Pac-10 started I wouldn't get a chance."

Sophomore Erik Cheney, a backup linebacker who, like Fife, played his first collegiate game against Arizona, said the experience was exciting.

"It was probably the biggest rush of my life," Cheney said.

Cheney tallied the first tackle of his career in Arizona, and was one of 37 Oregon reserves who were given a chance to play.

"It's fun when new players get an opportunity to perform," Oregon Head Coach Mike Bellotti said. "It gives them a greater sense of being part of the team, and that sense of ownership and family."

Sophomore Matt Floberg had an opportunity to perform Saturday, but in a different form than he's used to. Floberg, who has played in three other games this season, got his first-ever touches at tailback against Arizona, when Onterio Smith and Maurice Morris sat out most of the fourth quarter.

"I was running plays I wasn't used to," Floberg said. "But it was fun."

All 37 reserves who played will be licking their chops in anticipation of playing time against California. The Golden Bears are 0-4 this season and have been outscored by an average of 22.3 points per game.

The Ducks, though, say they will not overlook the Bears.

"They're a really good team," Floberg said. "They're a lot better than everyone thinks."

"Cal's one of those teams that, if we take them for granted, we're going to get beat," Fife said. "But I don't think we will. It would be nice to get back in and get another shot."

Cheney will also be shooting for his second field appearance in an Oregon uniform this Saturday.

"Hopefully we can pull something out like a 63 or a 70, so I can hop back in," Cheney said.

Still, Cheney said the difference between the two teams could be intensity, and that could lead to the starters going all the way for both teams.

"I think Arizona just didn't show up to play," Cheney said. "I think Cal will show up to play."



Adam Amato Emerald

Oregon cornerback Rashad Bauman (17) and the Ducks' secondary will look to shut down California quarterback Kyle Boller on Saturday.

Oregon not overlooking Cal

■ The Ducks are favored by 13 points, but aren't taking the winless Bears lightly

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

Undefeated versus defeated. Yawn. Stretch. Snooze. Right?

Not so, say the fifth-ranked Oregon Ducks (5-0) as they prepare to play their third road game in as many weeks against California (0-4) at 12:30 p.m. Saturday in Memorial Stadium.

"I don't think Cal has been given enough respect, so you can't overlook them," Oregon linebacker Wesley Mallard said. "If you look at the records of all the teams they've played, they only have one loss."

Mallard has done his homework, as the Golden Bears' four opponents (Illinois, Brigham Young, Washington State and Washington) have a

combined 18-1 record. Cal will be well-rested for Oregon considering it hasn't played since it nearly defeated the Huskies, 31-28, on Sept. 29.

Of course that means that last Saturday the Bears were glued to Oregon's lopsided 63-28 victory at Arizona, and what they saw was a team on a mission.

"They've got a lot of momentum," Cal head coach Tom Holmoe said. "They had a good win. I won't say that I feel much more confident, but I think the extra week of preparation has helped."

For the Ducks, the road win at Tucson has bolstered their confidence and shown them what is possible if everyone gets on the same page.

"We feel that Arizona really was our breakout game," tailback Onterio Smith said. "We had a good one against Utah State, but not near as good as the performance against Ari-

zona. Cal will be looking for a 'W' so we know they're going to come out and play us hard.

"We just have to take it to them." Both Smith and starting tailback Maurice Morris certainly took it to Arizona. For the first time since Oct. 15, 1994, the Ducks had two 100-yard rushers in a game. Morris and Smith almost accomplished the feat against Utah State, but Smith's total was just short of triple-digits at 98. Smith led all rushers Saturday with 131 yards with Morris right behind him at 110.

That, combined with a receiving corps that is clicking with quarterback Joey Harrington, is displaying the type of Oregon offense that many people predicted would be the best in the Pacific-10 Conference.

"Our depth at tailback and receiver is starting to show," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "(Against Turn to Preview, page 3B

Bruised Bears seek their first season win

■ Facing the possibility of their first winless season in 104 years, the Bears host Oregon, hoping to end a seven-game losing streak

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

It wasn't supposed to be this way for California head coach Tom Holmoe.

In 1997, the former San Francisco 49ers defensive back took over for departed coach Steve Mariucci, who left for Holmoe's former squad. With players like wide receiver Bobby Shaw and offensive lineman Jeremy Newberry, Holmoe was expected to bring a winning tradition to the Berkeley, Calif., school. Five years later, however, the Golden Bears still have not found their identity. And if they don't find it fast, it could mean the end to

Holmoe's stay in California.

At 0-4 overall and 0-2 in Pacific-10 Conference play, the Golden Bears are staring at their first winless season since 1897, a span of 104 years. And back then, the team only played five games per season.

However, their four opponents — Illinois, BYU, Washington State and Washington — have gone a combined 18-1 this season.

Two weeks ago, the Bears looked as though they may have found what they were looking for in a surprising 31-28 loss to Washington. Cal jumped to a great start against the No. 10 Huskies, only to see their conference foe come back in the game's final quarter.

"I don't know what to say," senior wide receiver Sean Currin told the Oakland Tribune after the game. "It

was a lot of fun in the first half. We were moving the ball so well, we felt like we were unstoppable. I haven't seen the offense play like that since I've been here."

But two weeks later — following a week off — the Bears are still winless. Though the Cal offense showed some potential against Washington, it is still as dormant as Mt. Hood. Quarterback Kyle Boller, the one-time California state player of the year, has not shown the playing ability he was brought to the Bay Area for. In his four games this season, he has completed 66 passes in 119 attempts (55.5 percent) but for only 829 yards. While that is an improvement on last year's stats for the junior, it is still not enough to bring the Cal offense back to glory.

But no one is giving up on the

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THE BOX

Key Number:
18-1

Combined record of the four teams (Illinois, BYU, Washington State and Washington) that have beaten Cal this season. It won't get easier for the Bears, who face No. 7 UCLA next weekend after taking on No. 5 Oregon on Saturday.

Pac-10 Rankings:

Total Offense
Oregon.....3
California..7

Scoring Offense
Oregon.....4
California..9

Passing Offense
Oregon.....3
California..4

Rushing Offense
Oregon.....3
California..8

Total Defense
Oregon.....9
California..10

Scoring Defense
Oregon.....5
California..10

Passing Defense
Oregon.....9
California..10

Rushing Defense
California..3
Oregon.....7

Quotable

"We feel that Arizona really was our breakout game. We had a good one against Utah State, but not nearly as good as the performance against Arizona."

Onterio Smith
Oregon tailback

Key Number, Part II:
10,341

Difference in average attendance for Oregon and California, in Oregon's favor, despite the fact that Cal's Memorial Stadium holds over 33,000 more people than Autzen Stadium.