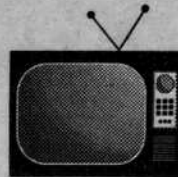


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Best Bet
NHL: San Jose at Buffalo,
5 p.m., ESPN2



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Thomas Patterson Emerald

If he hopes to end his collegiate career in a major bowl game, senior quarterback Joey Harrington must carry the Ducks to victory in their final four games.

Fiesta Bowl still a possibility for No. 13 Oregon

■ Despite the loss to Stanford, the Ducks, ranked 13th in the BCS, could still claim the Pac-10 championship

By Adam Jude
Oregon Daily Emerald

Come Saturday in Pullman, Washington State couldn't care less about Oregon's now defunct national championship dreams — the 10th-ranked Cougars are in the hunt for themselves.

And a win over the former fifth-ranked Ducks wouldn't hurt their chances.

Oregon (6-1 overall, 3-1 Pacific-10 Conference), on the other hand, is looking to get back on track after a 49-42 loss to Stanford on Saturday, ending a four-year-old, 23-game home-winning streak.

"Sometimes when you shoot for the stars, feelings get hurt," Oregon wide receiver Keenan Howry said. "We're still shooting for No. 1, there's no point to play for anything less."



Head coach Mike Bellotti's team led the Cardinal 42-28 in the fourth quarter, but consecutive blocked punts helped Stanford score 21 unanswered points to seal the win.

In the Bowl Championship Series poll released Monday, Stanford (4-1, 2-1) was ranked right behind Oregon at No. 14.

"The most important thing is not what happened (against Stanford), where we got knocked down," Bellotti said. "It's whether you get back up or not."

"I have a lot of faith in this group of kids. I think they're resilient, I think they're tough and courageous."

With the Cougs, ranked 10th in the BCS, Arizona State and No. 5 UCLA are on the horizon in the next three weeks, the Ducks still have a shot at playing in January, albeit not the coveted Rose Bowl, barring a miracle.

Best-case scenario: Oregon's greatest hope, it appears, would be the Fiesta Bowl in Tempe, Ariz. With the national championship in Pasadena this year, the Pacific-10 Conference champion, assuming it's not one of the top-two teams in the BCS, will follow in Oregon State's footsteps and play in the desert on New Year's Day.

That means the Ducks would, of course, have to win their last four games, including a bout in Los Angeles with the Bruins, who are ranked third in the BCS poll released Monday.

If the Ducks win out, Stanford — which plays UCLA this weekend — and Washington would have to lose one of their remaining games.

Should they falter in one of their remaining contests, the Ducks could probably count on another trip to either, in order, San Diego for the Holiday Bowl, El Paso for the Sun Bowl or to the new Seattle Bowl.

"The national title is always a goal, and when you lose it, you reevaluate your goals," Bellotti said. "Now, our goal will be to go to the Fiesta Bowl, or whatever the highest bowl is that we can go to."

"My goal is, and always will be, to win the national title. It just looks as if it will have to be pushed back a year now."

Worst-case scenario: The Ducks lose out, and if they're lucky, pack their bags for the Las Vegas Bowl, which this year plays host to the Pac-10's fifth-place team on Christmas day.

But don't bet on it.

The problems: Besides Washington State and UCLA, the only remaining undefeated teams in the Pac-10, the Ducks should have some concerns about their defense, which is ranked ninth in the Pac-10.

To their credit, the Ducks' defense was worn down Saturday after being on the field for more than 35 minutes against Stanford.

"We just didn't make the plays we needed to make," linebacker Kevin Mitchell said after the loss. "We were on the field for quite a long time. The defense has got to come out and make a stop ... we just didn't wrap up."

The key: Joey Harrington must continue to be solid and the defense must cut down on the big plays. But most important, Oregon's special teams must play fundamental football in order for the Ducks to have a shot at a BCS bid.

Five Pac-10 teams in first BCS rankings

■ The BCS is officially released with the Ducks out of the top-10, while Oregon's Keenan Howry earns recognition from the Pac-10

By Jeff Smith

Oregon Daily Emerald

After weeks of waiting, and wondering, and waiting some more, the big day finally arrived.

But because of Saturday's defeat to Stanford, the first results of the Bowl Championship Series hardly made a splash in the land of the Oregon Ducks.

The BCS, a computer-generated ranking that decides the two opponents in the national championship game, released its

first list of teams Monday with the Pacific-10 Conference having a strong showing.

UCLA (6-0), which is ranked fifth in the coaches poll and fourth in the Associated Press poll, entered the BCS poll at the No. 3 spot.

"This BCS stuff, it doesn't really matter right now," UCLA head coach Bob Toledo said Monday. "There is a lot of football to be played."

The next-best Pac-10 team is Washington State (7-0), which cracks the top-10 in the BCS at No. 10.

The remaining members of the league to be ranked were Washington (5-1) at No. 12, Oregon (6-1) at No. 13 and Stanford

(4-1) at No. 14.

Oklahoma was awarded the top spot, meaning the Sooners control their own destiny in their quest for a spot in the Rose Bowl. Oklahoma faces its biggest test Saturday when it visits Nebraska, which was ranked second by the BCS.

Miami, which is currently occupying the top spot in both the coaches and the AP polls, was listed at No. 4 largely because its schedule strength is ranked 92nd in the country — the lowest of the 15 teams in the BCS.

But the Hurricanes don't appear too concerned about it as they pointed to the Oregon loss, among others, as an example that other top-ranked teams could tumble in the coming weeks.

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Oregon battles Gonzaga to start second-half

■ With the first-half out of the way, the Ducks take on Gonzaga tonight in hopes of reviving their season

By Hank Hager

Oregon Daily Emerald

With an 8-11 overall record and 0-9 record in Pacific-10 Conference play, Oregon volleyball flat-out needs a win. The Ducks have gone 10 games in a row without notching a victory and have yet to take a conference foe further than four games.

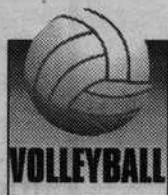
Enter Gonzaga, a team in seemingly the same shoes as the Ducks, but with one major difference — the Bulldogs have won in conference play, albeit in the weaker West Coast Conference. The Zags (6-11, 3-4) defeated Portland last week to end their first-half on a high note.

That reason alone makes the Ducks' mission a little bit tougher, but it's a task they're going to fight for.

"We've got to do anything we can to be successful," Oregon head coach Carl

Ferreira said. "That's the bottom line. We want to succeed."

By Ferreira's definition, the Oregon women have not succeeded since Sept. 8, when they defeated Boise State for their last win. However, in a season of losses, there has been some success.



The Ducks have by no means been the talk of the Pac-10, but they have some very serious talent. Juniors Lindsay Closs and Stephanie Martin go to Spokane, Wash., to take on the Zags after terrorizing their conference opponents. Senior Monique Tobbagi hopes to return to her early season form against Gonzaga, which is the first match of the second-half for the young squad.

"It's going to be a good second-half," Tobbagi said. "We've been working really hard and we're just on a roll right now."

Gonzaga, having played only Wash-

ington State from the Pac-10, is a virtual unknown to the Ducks. The Ducks will exchange game tapes with the Zags, although they are not required to do so in a non-conference match. But preparation for the match will still be tough.

"When you play a non-conference opponent at mid-season, you don't know as much about them," Ferreira said. "We do tape exchange with them, but you're in such a rhythm, separation-wise, to understand scouting reports, and then to apply (what you've learned)."

The Ducks are 6-2 all-time against Gonzaga, but have lost two of their last three matches to the Zags.

Westendorf movin' on up

In the last two matches, freshman Lauren Westendorf has become a presence for the Ducks, paving the way for what should be an impressive Oregon career.

"Lauren is a fast player, plays with a

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