

## 8. UCLA

**Record:** 8-19 overall, 4-14 Pac-10  
**Scoring offense:** 59.4 ppg  
**Scoring defense:** 71.6 ppg  
**Watch:** Whitney Jones, F, 9.9 ppg, 5.1 rpg



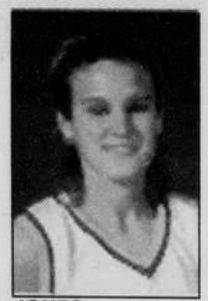
The Bruins took a big hit early in the season when star Michelle Greco was injured, and UCLA never fully recovered from that hit. Greco averaged 23.6 points during the season's first five games and once dropped 36 points, but she has sat the rest of the season for medical reasons.

In those first five games, the Bruins were 3-2. Since then, they're 5-17.

The Bruins have been hurt for offense all season long. In conference play, they rank last or ninth in field goal percentage (.342), three-point percentage (.251) and free-throw percentage (.659). Their defense isn't much better, as they rank in the bottom two for scoring defense, three-point percentage defense (.347) and rebounding defense (they give up 43.6 rebounds per contest).

If there's one consolation for UCLA, it comes in the form of a first-round game against ninth-seeded California. The Bruins have had the Golden Bears' number this season, beating them by 16 on the road and by 10 at home. The two teams last met on Friday, with UCLA winning 58-48 in Los Angeles. If the Bruins beat the Golden Bears for the third time, they will meet monolithic Stanford in the second round on Saturday.

—Peter Hockaday



JONES

## 9. California

**Record:** 7-20 overall, 2-16 Pac-10  
**Scoring offense:** 57.3 ppg  
**Scoring defense:** 63.9 ppg  
**Watch:** Ami Forney, F/C, 11.7 ppg, 6.7 rpg



California has had trouble with UCLA this season. Actually, the Bears have had trouble with a lot of teams this year. But it's Pac-10 Tournament time and anything can happen.

"We view it as a new season," Cal head coach Caren Horstmeyer said. "I'm excited. This is the postseason now."

The ninth-seeded Bears face off with

UCLA at 8:45 p.m. today at McArthur Court. In the two teams' first meeting, the Bruins dominated the Bears, 64-48. Last weekend, though, Cal put up a better fight, but still lost, 58-48.

It's always tough for a team to beat another three times in the same season, and the youthful Bears are optimistic they can pull off the win. It's certainly been a transition year in Berkeley this season as the Bears have worked in nine newcomers to the team, including six freshmen.

One of only two seniors, Ami Forney has led the charge amid a downtrodden season, averaging almost 12 points and seven rebounds per game. Forney will need to bring her game up another level against the Bruins if she wants to extend her Cal career at least an extra game.

Getting past Saturday, though, will be tough because if the Bears do beat the Bruins, they'd face top-seeded Stanford at 6 p.m. Saturday.

—J.S.



FORNEY

## 1. Stanford

**Record:** 28-1 overall, 18-0 Pac-10  
**Scoring offense:** 81.6 ppg  
**Scoring defense:** 61.9 ppg  
**Watch:** Nicole Powell, F, 15.9 ppg, 9.3 rpg



The question is there, hanging like a thunder cloud over the Pac-10 Tournament.

Can anyone beat Stanford?

Can anyone beat a team that has already gone undefeated — with ease — in the conference's regular season? That leads the Pac-10 in every offensive category other than free-

throw percentage?

Stanford's numbers speak volumes. The Cardinal have lost only once this season, to No. 3 Tennessee in December. Other than that, Stanford has been perfect, blowing out opponents by an average of 20.6 points in conference play. Powell, a sophomore, puts a human face on the machine-like Cardinal. Powell is a finalist for the Naismith Award, given to the nation's top player. She appears in the conference's top 10 for scoring and rebounding, but also leads the Pac-10 in assists

and is fifth in field-goal percentage.

But there is hope for the rest of the conference, even if it's only a teaspoon of it. Stanford's leading scorer, Portland native Lindsey Yamasaki, will miss the tournament. Yamasaki averaged 17.4 points per game.

One of the Cardinal's few close games this season came in Eugene, when Stanford managed to beat Oregon by only five points. Stanford will face the winner of Friday night's UCLA-California game on Saturday.

—P.H.



POWELL

## 4. Southern California

**Record:** 15-12 overall, 11-7 Pac-10  
**Scoring offense:** 71.3 ppg  
**Scoring defense:** 65.3 ppg  
**Watch:** Ebony Hoffman, F, 14.3 ppg, 9.0 rpg, 1.28 blocks



The Trojans' fourth-place tie in the conference with Oregon State, their first round opponent, marks their highest Pac-10 finish since 1997 and only the second time since then that they finished with a winning

record.

By virtue of two wins over the Beavers, USC was seeded No. 4 and Oregon State No. 5.

The Trojans are led by sophomore forward Hoffman, who has collected 11 double-doubles in 25 games this season. Guards Aisha Hollans (17.0) and Rachel Woodward (11.7) are also averaging in double figures in scoring.

Southern California leads the conference

in steals with 10.19 per game and offensive rebounds with 17.63 per game.

The Trojans are coming off a 69-58 win at home over California last weekend. Hoffman scored 24 points and collected 14 rebounds in the victory.

The weekend start for their game bodes well for the Ladies of Troy, as they are 7-0 in Saturday games.

—C.C.



HOFFMAN

## 5. Oregon State

**Record:** 15-13 overall, 11-7 Pac-10  
**Scoring offense:** 67.5 ppg  
**Scoring defense:** 65.7 ppg  
**Watch:** Felicia Ragland, G, 20.0 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 2.5 steals



The regular season ended with the Beavers tied for fourth with USC, but the Trojans were seeded in the No. 4 slot because of their two wins this season over Oregon State.

The Beavers head into the Pac-10 Tournamen-

ment coming off two straight wins over the Washington schools, including a 73-71 overtime victory against the Huskies.

Four of the Beavers' last seven games have gone into an overtime session. In those four games, Oregon State defeated Arizona, California and Washington and lost to Oregon.

Leading the way for the Beavers offensively, Ragland has averaged a conference-leading 2.25 three-point field goals per

game for a total of 63 made. Ragland also leads the conference in steals with 72 (2.57 per game) and scoring with 559 points (20.0 per game). She is 10th in the conference in rebounding with 6.3 per contest.

In the two prior contests between the Trojans and the Beavers, neither team has ever led by more than six points. Six is also the number of the combined margin of victory in those two games.

—C.C.



RAGLAND

## 6. Arizona

**Record:** 14-13 overall, 10-8 Pac-10  
**Scoring offense:** 74.7 ppg  
**Scoring defense:** 72.5 ppg  
**Watch:** Elizabeth Pickney, F, 16.3 ppg, 8.0 rpg



The Wildcats need a win Saturday afternoon to keep their season alive. And then another win Sunday afternoon. And then another win Monday evening.

Because unless Arizona wins the whole conference tournament, they won't be head-

ed to the NCAA Tournament and are on the bubble for the WNIT.

But the Wildcats have the potential to shock the rest of the conference. Arizona has won three of its last five games. Freshman guard Dee-Dee Wheeler has averaged 15.9 points per game over the Cats' last seven contests. Arizona has a big-time player in Pickney, who has scored more than 20 points nine times this season, and the Wild-

cats are 6-3 in those games.

Arizona will face cross-state rival Arizona State on Friday, and the 'Cats have seen the Devils before. Recently.

Arizona won the duel of the desert Saturday, beating Arizona State 72-66. Earlier this season, the Sun Devils won the battle 87-64 in Tempe. The Wildcats have won three of the last four overall.

—P.H.



PICKNEY

## 3. Arizona State

**Record:** 21-8 overall, 12-6 Pac-10  
**Scoring offense:** 66.7 ppg  
**Scoring defense:** 58.6 ppg  
**Watch:** Amanda Levens, G, 17.1 ppg, 3.4 rpg



Arizona State has recorded its second straight 20-win season, but the Sun Devils weren't pleased with ending their schedule with a loss to their in-state rivals.

Well, a week later, Arizona State gets a shot at revenge in a rematch with the Arizona Wildcats at 2:15 p.m. Saturday. The Sun Dev-

ils easily won the first meeting between the two Arizona schools, 87-64.

The Wildcats turned it up a notch on senior night, though, and beat Arizona State, 72-66, on Feb. 23. The Sun Devils finished the regular season tied for second in the Pac-10 with Washington, but couldn't find much reason to celebrate after losing to the Wildcats.

"We had high expectations for this year," senior Amanda Levens said. "We feel we are

better this year, and sometimes we don't play like that."

Levens and the Sun Devils should be back on their game this weekend, and don't be surprised if they make it all the way to Monday's championship game. Arizona State gets the luxury of avoiding Stanford in its first two potential match-ups. If the Sun Devils beat Arizona, they'd likely face Washington or Oregon on Sunday in the semifinals.

—J.S.



LEVENS