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Pac-10 powers show up in nationwide rankings

Conference players tune up for the last time before Pac-10 play starts next weekend

Around the Pac-10

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

The last week of nonconference play is finally upon the Pacific-10 Conference and the league's true colors are beginning to show through.

The balance of power has begun to shift to the west with four teams from the Pac-10 holding down spots in the Associated Press top 20.

Week 4 is here. The Pac-10 season is rounding the first turn. Bring it on.

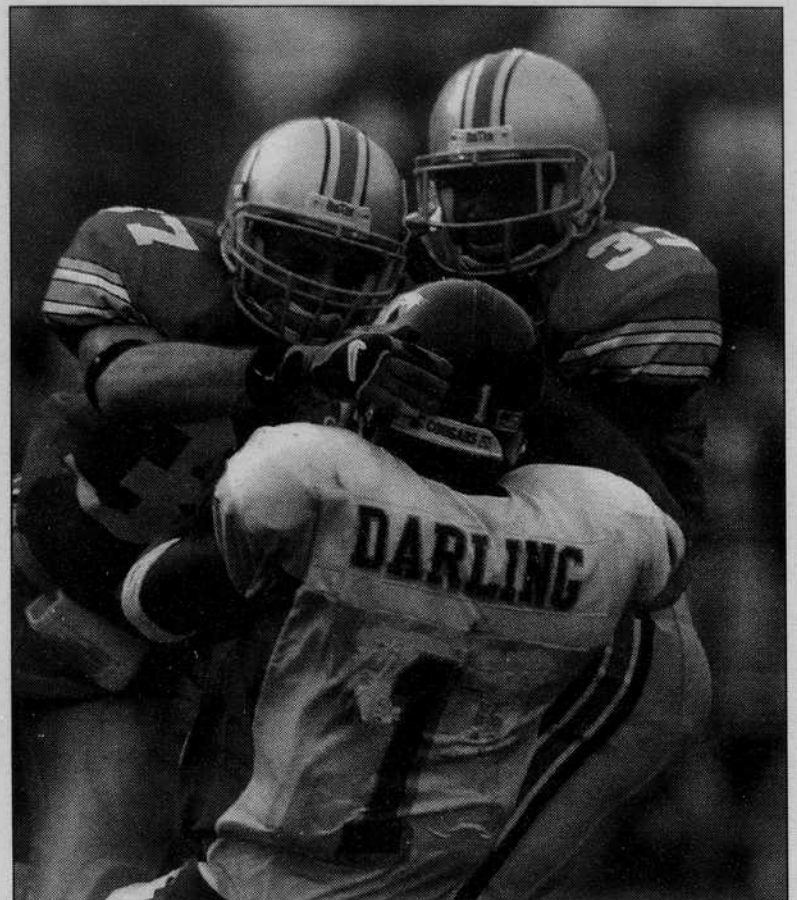
Arizona (2-0) at No. 22 Wisconsin (4-0) 9 a.m., ESPN2

The Badgers and Wildcats hook up in what could be an underrated contest.

The two schools have never met but Arizona head coach John Mackovic is 4-0 lifetime against Wisconsin. He was perfect against the Badgers while the head man at Illinois from 1988-91, including the last two against current Wisconsin head coach Barry Alvarez.

Arizona was not chosen to make much noise in the Pac-10 this season, and while that's still up in the air, the Wildcats could get off to a 3-0 start if quarterback Jason Johnson can continue his hot play. He threw for 416 against Utah last week and is second nationally with 378.5 yards per game of total offense.

Alvarez survived a tough season last year and is primed to lead his Badgers to the top of the Big 10 in what is shaping up to be a down year for the conference. Wisconsin has the edge in the contest and should roll to victory.



Phil Masturzo Akron Beacon-Journal (KRT)

Devard Darling and Washington State will try to rebound from a loss to Ohio State.

Colorado (1-2) at No. 20 UCLA (2-0) 12:30 p.m., ABC regional

This game should have been the highlight of the weekend for the Pac-10, but Colorado's dismal performance against USC last weekend erases that possibility. The Buffaloes were destroyed by the Trojans, 40-3, and are on the downswing this season.

Craig Ochs is out for Colorado and UCLA has successfully replaced DeShaun Foster at running back with Akil Harris, setting the table for another blowout.

But don't count Colorado out. The Buffaloes lost to a tough Colorado

State squad before controlling the ball in a win over San Diego State the next game.

Air Force (2-0) at No. 23 California (3-0) 2 p.m.

The sound heard after California's 46-22 victory over then No. 15 Michigan State last weekend? The collective jaw-dropping of just about every college football fan who realized this Golden Bear squad might have some talent.

Cal looks to extend its winning streak, which dates back to 2001, to five games against Air Force, a team Cal has defeated in the past four matchups.

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