

Pac-10 sorts itself out with top matchups

The Pac-10 enters the third week of conference play

Around the Pac-10

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

All 10 Pacific-10 Conference teams will get a shot to prove they are worthy of the conference crown Saturday.

Oregon is the only team that hasn't wavered in its quest for greatness, as the Ducks are the only undefeated Pac-10 team remaining this season. Two other teams in the Pac-10 have only lost one game and only one team is below .500.

Four Pac-10 teams are nationally ranked in the Associated Press top-25 poll, highlighting the rise to national prominence of the conference.

Arizona (3-2, 0-1 Pac-10) at No. 22 Washington (3-2, 0-1)

Things look good for the Huskies in this matchup, if history is a guide. Washington leads the series with the Wildcats 13-4-1, winning the last three and eight of the last 10.

Washington could need anger-management classes after last weekend's loss to California. The Golden Bears

handed the Huskies a 34-27 loss, the first time Cal has beaten Washington since 1976. The streak was 19 consecutive wins for Washington.

Arizona has had trouble lately with injuries, as star halfback Clarence Farmer was out with a knee injury.

But last week wide receiver Bobby Wade had a career-high 12 catches for 151 yards against Oregon. Quarterback Jason Johnson has been picked off just three times in 166 passing attempts and is averaging 269.8 yards per game for the Wildcats.

But in the quarterback competition, the Huskies easily prevail over the Wildcats. Washington quarterback Cody Pickett is averaging 373.6 yards per game and destroying the Pac-10 quarterback competition in that category, while also carrying a 66.2 completion percentage.

Pickett just missed his third-consecutive 400-yard passing game with 399 yards against Cal last week.

Last year was a battle between Arizona and Washington, with the Huskies prevailing 31-28 in Seattle. Pickett passed for a school-record 455 yards and Johnson passed for early touchdowns, but had to leave the game with a concussion. It's sure to be another fierce battle if the Cats can find a way to isolate the Dawgs' passing game.



Adam Amato Emerald

Quarterback Chris Lewis (10) and the Stanford Cardinal look to upset No. 12 Washington State in Palo Alto on Saturday.

No. 12 Washington State (5-1, 2-0) at Stanford (1-3, 0-1)

The Cougars enter this weekend's matchup riding the momentum train. Washington State has won five of its last six Pac-10 road games and stole a win from the Trojans on Saturday in overtime.

The Cardinal has a commanding lead in the series at 30-21-1 since the teams first met in 1936, and Stanford has won eight of the last 10 overall. But the Cougars prevailed last year in a match to remember.

Both teams strolled into Palo Alto still undefeated and only one would remain that way as Washington State prevailed 45-39. It was all offense as the teams combined for 525 yards and 59 points in the first half alone.

Stanford has started with a rough

schedule, with three of the Cardinal's first four games on the road. A loss to No. 9 Notre Dame last weekend snapped Stanford's three-game win streak against teams ranked in the top 10. Stanford is currently the only team in the Pac-10 to have a losing record.

The offensive matchup will be interesting for the two teams, as the Cardinal dominates on the ground and the Cougars lead in passing. Stanford fullback Casey Moore is averaging 6.5 yards per carry, making him the top rusher by average in the Pac-10.

Washington State quarterback Jason Gesser ranks fourth in the Pac-10 at 266.2 yards per game. Gesser recently passed Drew Bledsoe and Ryan Leaf on the WSU career total offense list last week with 7,278 total offensive yards. Although Gesser has been hurting

from a rib injury, it hasn't swayed his performance.

Oregon State (4-2, 0-2) at Arizona State (4-2, 1-0)

Things are not looking too good right now for Oregon State. Not only have the Beavers started conference play with two losses, but the last time they won in Tempe, Ariz., was in 1969, back before the Sun Devils were a Pac-10 team.

Arizona State at a huge advantage in the series at 20-7-1. The Sun Devils have owned nine of the last 10 against the Beavers and have won 14 straight in Arizona. Last year the Beavers led 24-20 into the fourth quarter but eventually lost 41-24.

But this is 2002. Oregon State sophomore quarterback Derek Anderson has 17 touchdown passes, Turn to **Pac-10**, page 9B

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USC, Cal renew historic rivalry for conference bragging rights

There will be a Golden State war in Los Angeles this weekend

Game of the week

Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

This rivalry dates back to even before your father was born. It's a matchup that neither team takes lightly.

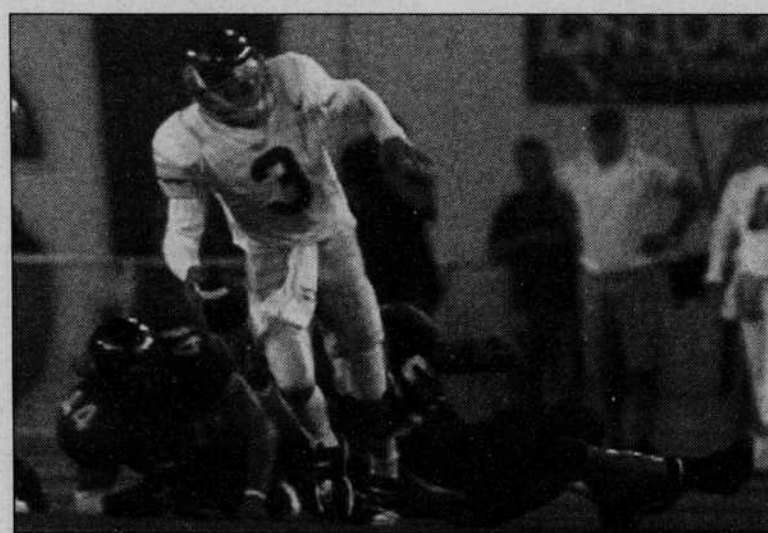
It began in 1915. And this Saturday, USC and California will duke it out for the 90th time.

Meeting No. 89 between the teams wasn't exactly beautiful. In 2001, the Trojans reversed a three-game losing streak to Cal and handed the Golden Bears their 12th-straight loss, a 55-14 blowout.

USC had a solid attack in that game and produced 448 yards while the Trojan defense limited Cal to 12 first downs and 223 yards of total offense on four forced turnovers. The Trojans lead the series 55-29-5.

But that doesn't mean the Golden Bears need to worry. Cal won the last three in the series before the loss last year. Those three games were in Los Angeles, where this weekend's game will be held.

Cal is riding high after they upset Washington 34-27 and snapped the Huskies' 17-game home winning streak Saturday. For the Golden Bears, it was the second time this year they beat a nationally-ranked



Adam Amato Emerald

Quarterback Carson Palmer and the Trojans host Cal for the schools' 89th meeting.

team on the road.

The Trojans have been dominant at home recently and anybody that walks into L.A. Coliseum should worry about their streak. USC has won its last five home games, shutting out Oregon State and UCLA in that stretch.

The numbers game is split between the teams. Bears quarterback Kyle Boller has passed for 637 yards and eight touchdowns over the past two weeks as Cal has outscored opponents 142-38 in the first half over that stretch.

California leads the Pac-10 and is tied for fourth nationally in turnover

margin, forcing 13 more turnovers than it's giving up.

USC leads the Pac-10 and ranks fourth nationally in total defense at 267.2 yards per game. The Trojans also lead the league in pass defense.

The Trojans are all over the top of the Pac-10 leaderboard in statistics as they have allowed a Pac-10-low three touchdown passes and opponents only have a 43.2 completion percentage against them. All of USC's opponents are 0-5 on fourth-down-conversion attempts.

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