

Week

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If the Huskies want to win, they need to protect Pickett. The Sun Devils lead the Pac-10 in quarterback sacks with 32 for minus-227 yards.

"We are playing a very hot team..."

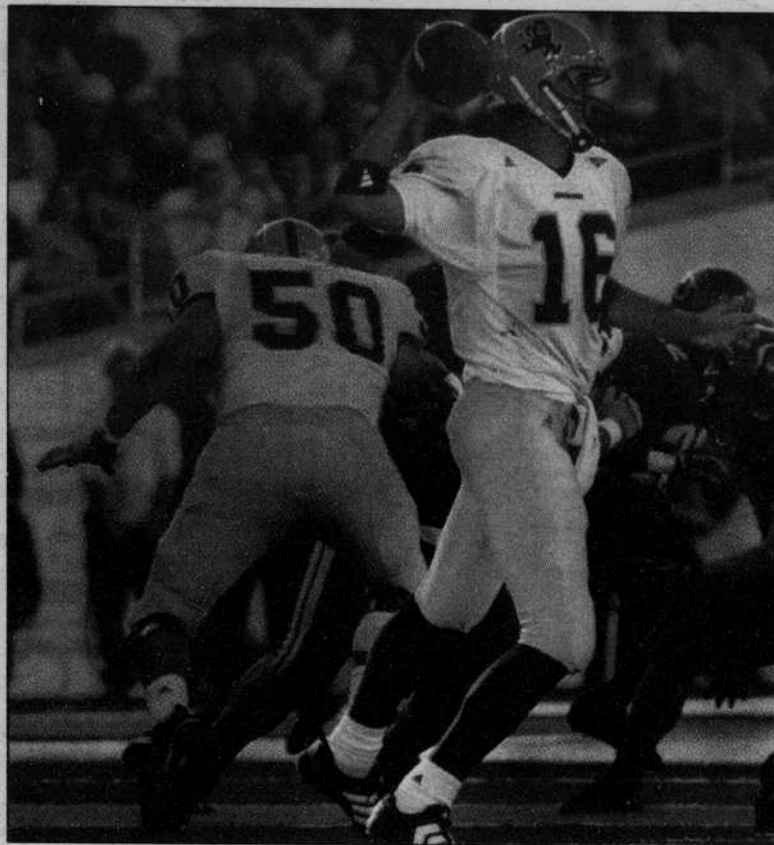
Rick Neuheisel
Washington head coach

The Huskies also need to protect the ball. Arizona State linebacker Mason Unck leads the league in fumbles forced, while fellow linebacker Josh Amobi leads the Pac-10 in fumbles recovered.

"We are playing a very hot team coming off a great win over the defending Pac-10 champions," Neuheisel said.

Saturday's game comes down to the quarterbacks playing well and keeping the ball moving forward. Whichever team is more successful will move ahead in the win column.

Mindi Rice is a freelance writer for the Emerald.



Arizona State quarterback Andrew Walter (16) looks to extend his hot streak.

Jeremy Forrest Emerald

USC

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bad, either, as senior strong safety Troy Polamalu was named by Sports Illustrated as one of five "Terminators" in college football this season.

He was described as a player "boasting an otherworldly combination of speed, strength and athleticism ... who can single-handedly kill off drives and wreak havoc on game plans."

Polamalu has 34 tackles for the Trojans in his third year as a starter and has become USC's first All-American first team safety since 1989.

"Troy Polamalu is one of the best players I've ever coached," USC head coach Pete Carroll said. "Pound for pound, he is our strongest player and he has been a star in our off-season conditioning program. I can't imagine a better safety in college football in 2002."

The Trojans aren't suffering from injuries like they were last year, but linebacker Aaron Graham is out to a hip injury and tailback Darryl Poston is out with a back injury, among others.

USC is one win ahead of the Ducks in Pac-10 play, but sits right behind Oregon in 15th in the Associated Press Poll, making Saturday's matchup all the more anticipated.

The Ducks had several streaks snapped in Saturday's loss to Arizona State, and USC is coming off a strong win over No. 22 Washington, but history does not prove favorable to the Trojans.

It's a question of whether history will repeat itself.

"It is an important opportunity for our team to go up against a team that was so hot last year and is off to another great start this season," Carroll said. "Oregon has been very effective in the Pac-10 over the last couple of years, so we're looking forward to this game."

Contact the sports reporter at jessethomas@dailyemerald.com.

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Oregon Daily Emerald

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