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# Passing games become vital when slumping squads meet

The Sun Devils and the Beavers are out to justify the preseason hype

**Scott Archer**  
 Freelance Reporter

The top conference matchup this week features two teams predicted as contenders for the Pacific-10 Conference championship.

At least they were prior to the start of the season.

Arizona State (2-1 overall) and Oregon State (3-1) square off in what could potentially be a high-scoring affair.

Last week, the Arizona State of-

fense, usually known for its passing attack, was shut out in a 21-2 loss to No. 13 Iowa.

Meanwhile, Oregon State snapped Boise State's 13-game winning streak in Corvallis last weekend.

Arizona State has dominated the series, winning 21 of 28 meetings while winning the last seven overall. The Sun Devils pulled away in a defensive battle last year, 13-9.

Offense is expected to take over Saturday when the teams meet in Corvallis; however, with both teams possessing big play quarterbacks and fast receivers, Oregon State also boasts the conference's top running back, junior Steven Jackson.

"(Jackson) is a premier back," Arizona State head coach Dirk Koetter said. "(Derek Anderson) has his up-

and downs, but when on, he is as good as anyone."

As Anderson goes, so go the Beavers. He had one of his worst games as a Beaver on Sept. 5 at Fresno State, where the junior threw five interceptions and the Bulldogs defeated the Beavers, 16-14.

Last week Anderson threw for a career-high 408 yards against Boise State.

Arizona State quarterback Andrew Walter is just as likely to pick apart a defense with the deep threats the Sun Devils possess.

"(Arizona State) likes to throw the ball down the field," Oregon State head coach Mike Riley said. "They've made big plays in the past, and we've been inconsistent. We've given up too many big plays."

Scott Archer is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

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## GAME

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Day has become an emerging piece of the Oregon offense, as has the tight end position. He and Nate LiaBraaten combined for five receptions in the win over Michigan.

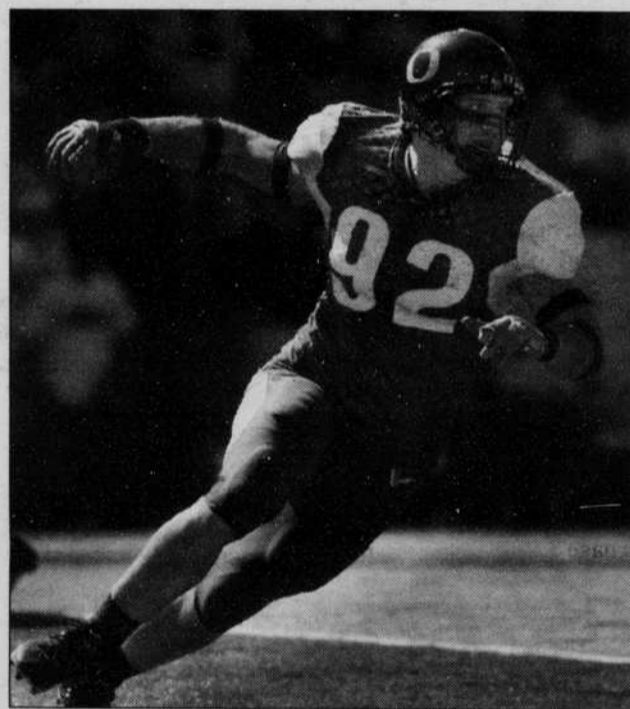
Day had a 21-yard reception during Oregon's 17-play opening drive. Quarterback Kellen Clemens found the tight end on fourth-and-one, getting the Ducks to Michigan's 4-yard line.

Oregon failed to get into the end zone on the drive, but it illustrates the team's balanced attack last week.

"I think everything came together (last week)," Day said. "We were hitting on the right cylinders, and plays were working well. The offensive line did well. The game seemed to be the game for the tight ends. We were always ready to get the ball, and when it came, we were ready."

The game against the Cougars is the second in a row at Autzen for the Ducks and the only time this season that Oregon will play two consecutive games at home.

The fan noise at Autzen when Oregon played Michigan, which Day and defensive lineman Robby Valenzuela said was the loudest they had ever heard, could play a part in the game against the Cougars.



Devan Long had one of Oregon's four sacks against Michigan.  
**Mark McCambridge**  
 Senior  
 Photographer

"(Washington State's) fans are kind of rowdy, so they get to come down and see our fans," Valenzuela said. "Our fans are just out of control, and that's what we need. It screwed (Michigan's) offense up, so it worked well."

And for the second week in a row,

the game is set to be an ABC regional telecast, with Keith Jackson and Dan Fouts in the booth.

This is where the real Pac-10 fun begins.

Contact the sports editor at [hankhager@dailyemerald.com](mailto:hankhager@dailyemerald.com).

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