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Conference games heat up during fifth week of play

Arizona is taking baby steps toward winning a game, while UCLA looks to remain perfect in Pac-10 play

Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

Finally, there is a week of Pacific-10 Conference play with no non-conference matchups and no bye weeks for any teams. Expectations for many teams have begun to evaporate, if not disappear, since the beginning of the season that began eight weeks ago.

**Arizona (1-6 overall,
0-3 Pac-10)
at California (3-5, 1-2)**

If it was any other year, this game would be a yawner. But this isn't any ordinary year.

California has been resurgent since the addition of Jeff Tedford as its head coach, and while Arizona hasn't done much of anything this season, it has become more competitive in recent weeks.

Arizona has interim coach Mike Hankwitz calling the shots, and it seems to be working. The Wildcats

were only one defensive stop away from upsetting current Pac-10 unbeaten UCLA two weeks ago.

California is coming off of a near-upset bid against UCLA as well. Arizona rolls into Memorial Stadium having won the last matchup between the Golden Bears and the Wildcats in a barn burner, 52-41.

The Wildcats have a two-headed quarterback of sorts. Nic Costa completed two touchdown passes against the Bruins and Kris Heavner threw for another.

Arizona should be well rested coming off a bye week, so Hankwitz can further his impression on the Wildcats.

**Arizona State (4-3, 1-2)
at UCLA (5-2, 3-0)**

Cannon-armed Andrew Walter leads the Sun Devils into the Rose Bowl on Saturday to take on UCLA.

The Bruins survived a fourth-quarter scare from Cal last weekend, only to prevail in overtime. Arizona State has had two confidence-boosting games in both wins against Oregon and last week against North Carolina.

First-year head coach Karl Dorrell has his Bruins looking to be the surprise team of the Pac-10. A tough non-con-

ference schedule, which includes Colorado and Oklahoma, has prepared UCLA for the enigma that is the Pac-10.

**Oregon State (5-2, 2-1) at
Washington State (6-1, 3-0)**

Washington State continues to control its own destiny toward a potential Pac-10 crown, while Oregon State must bounce back after a disappointing loss at the hands of Washington.

Oregon State, coming off a bye week in which it had two weeks to prepare for the Huskies, came out listless against an inspired Washington squad. Steven Jackson has rushed for 926 yards this season, which is good for more than five Pac-10 teams. However, he finished his day — and maybe his Heisman Trophy hopes — with 49 yards rushing on 22 carries against the Huskies.

The Cougars lead the league in interceptions with 14 but have thrown only five themselves, which is the best among the Pac-10 teams. Washington State holds the Pac-10's longest conference winning streak at four games and has won five straight overall.

Scott Archer is a freelance sports reporter for the Emerald.

Conference favorites set for battle

Washington and USC take aim at one another in the Pac-10's game of the week

Scott Archer
Freelance Reporter

The biggest Pacific-10 conference game slated for play this week would have been Oregon State against Washington State, but the Beavers didn't hold up their end of the bargain last week and were pounded at home by a resurgent Washington team.

All eyes have been moved to the

USC-Washington tilt, set to take place on Saturday in Seattle. The game will be regionally televised on ABC.

USC (6-1 overall, 2-1 Pac-10) continues its bid for a shot at the national title. In the first Bowl Championship Series standings released this year, the Trojans are ranked seventh. The Trojans dominated Notre Dame last week, 45-14, on national television.

Washington (4-3, 2-1) was outgunned last year when the two squads met. It was an aerial display as heavyweights Carson Palmer and Cody Pickett tried to one-up each

other for the win. The Trojans came out on top, 41-21. Palmer threw for 348 yards and four touchdowns, while Pickett threw for 350 yards and three touchdowns.

"Nobody has stopped (USC)," Washington head coach Keith Gilbertson said. "They have such balance and diversity in their offense. So you just hope that you can slow them down. They are going to get the points and move the ball because that is how talented they are."

Scott Archer is a freelance sports reporter for the Emerald.

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