

ASU: Hagan, Walter atop Pac-10 in offense

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in the Pac-10, allowing only 12.75 points per game.

According to senior quarterback Andrew Walter, a defense that allows few boundaries to be broken has eased the pressure of an overly eager offense.

"It makes us feel real relaxed," Walter said. "It helps us out more than ever. It has always been that the offense has to play great and hope for a turnover here and there and throw up some big points. That is not the way it is working out this year, thankfully. If we can play great special teams and defense than I think we will be tough to beat every week."

Junior linebackers Jamar Williams and Dale Robinson have been bright spots in Arizona State's illuminating defense. Robinson's four sacks are tied for first in the conference. He is second in the Pac-10 in tackles for loss (7.5). Robinson has 39 tackles (18 solo) this season. Williams has three interceptions so far, ranking him fifth in the nation.

ASU has recorded seven interceptions, two fewer than conference leader USC.

Hagan's hero credentials

Wide receiver Derek Hagan saw his streaks of six straight 100-yard receiving games and games with at least one touchdown disappear when he accumulated only 66 yards on seven catches.

The junior is second in the Pac-10 in receiving yards with 112.8 per game and has led his team in receiving for the first four games. Hagan was the team's leading receiver last year with 66 receptions and 1,076 yards, including six 100-yard receiving games.

Wish upon a Walter

Walter leads an offense that averages 301.8 yards per game, which is second best in the Pac-10 and 10th in the nation. Of Arizona State's 16 touchdowns this year, 14 have come through the air.

The senior quarterback is already receiving Heisman Trophy consideration as he aims to break several school passing records and possibly one or two Pac-10 conference records this season.

He has surpassed Jake Plummer as the career-touchdown-pass leader. Walter, with 8,552 career passing yards, is only 275 yards shy of tying Plummer's record. He had 3,877 yards in 2002 and 3,044 in 2003, good for first and second in ASU's single-season passing record.



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Arizona State wide receiver Derek Hagan is averaging 112.8 yards per game, which ranks him as sixth in the nation.

Walter is now scoping a Pac-10 record held by John Elway. His record of 77 career touchdown passes is in jeopardy now that Walter has tallied 67.

"Andrew wants to be known as a quarterback who wins games," Koetter said. "He is setting all kinds of records."

"He wanted to make himself a better player, and probably more so than that, he wanted to leave this team better than it was at the end of last year. You can already see that he has done that. Andrew is one of the key leaders on this team."

He has turned in at least 200 yards passing in 21 of his 28 career starts. Of those 21 games, he has thrown for more than 400 yards six times. He tied his game-high in touchdown passes when he completed five against Iowa two weeks ago.

Triple threat

Among those standing on the Arizona State sideline this weekend will be three men who have impacted Oregon football at one point or another, but none of them will be wearing shoulder pads or a helmet.

Koetter worked as Bellotti's offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Oregon for the 1996 and 1997 seasons. Arizona State has averaged 31.1 points per game, and scored 50 or more points four times, in the three-plus years Koetter has coached in Tempe.

Arizona State's passing game coordinator and quarterbacks coach Mark Helfrich and assistant head coach, special teams coordinator and tight ends coach Tom Osborne have both spent time on the Ducks coaching staff.

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