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■ Game of the week



COURTESY | STANFORD ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Stanford defensive tackle Julian Jenkins (94) has totaled 43 tackles and 5.5 sacks for a struggling Cardinal defense this year.

Stanford and Oregon State battle for postseason lives

The Beavers venture to Stanford to play the Cardinal; the winner will barely keep their bowl hopes afloat

BY ALEX TAM
FREELANCE SPORTS REPORTER

Oregon State and Stanford will fight for survival to remain in contention for a bowl game this weekend.

Both teams need a win, while the loser will be out of the hunt for the big postseason payday as Oregon State (4-5 overall, 3-3 Pacific-10) travels to face Stanford (4-5, 2-4) in Palo Alto, Calif., at 2 p.m. Saturday.

After nearly defeating No. 1 USC in a 28-20 loss at home last week, Oregon State head coach Mike Riley said he hopes his team can bounce back and not look back at what could have been a monumental upset.

"It is truly one of those times where we can't look back," Riley said. "There can be no hangover. It has to be our best preparation of the year for this game."

The Beavers have won their last two road games against Arizona and Washington. However, they've won three straight road games only twice since 1969.

If Oregon State wins, its bowl future could hinge on the Civil War game against Oregon on Nov. 20 in Corvallis.

"No matter what, when we get to that point it will be exciting," Riley said. "If that's one of the residuals, then that's a big deal — there's no

getting away from that."

When asked what worried him most about playing Stanford, Riley said he was "concerned in all areas about this game."

On defense, the Cardinal is experienced with 10 starters being either a junior or senior. Senior cornerback Leigh Torrence already has four interceptions on the season, which ranks second in the Pac-10.

Stanford had only allowed three touchdown passes all season before giving up four touchdowns to Arizona State's Andrew Walter. The Cardinal, however, still rank 26th in the nation in scoring defense, allowing just 18.6 points per game.

"You've got to be very careful, and at the same time, you have to be aggressive," Riley said. "You have to make some throws that are smaller windows down (in the red zone) to get anything."

Stanford head coach Buddy Teevens said the whole success of his defense is due to his team's depth on that side of the ball.

"We play a lot of people defensively," Teevens said. "We roll a lot of guys through the front and the linebacking core. We're way up in the league in terms of defending the red zone. That's a positive for us."

Stanford's passing defense will be

severely tested against an Oregon State offense that ranks ninth in the nation in passing.

Quarterback Derek Anderson is the Beavers all-time leader in passing yardage (10,026 yards) and touchdown passes (68). Last weekend against USC, Anderson's 330 passing yards put him as one of five quarterbacks in Pac-10 history to throw for at least 10,000 yards in his collegiate career.

Riley said it will be important for his offensive line to protect his quarterback against the variety of blitzes that Stanford plans to send.

"It all starts with protection," Riley said. "If you can pick (up the blitzes), you have a better chance of being able to throw the ball."

Teevens said he is hoping Anderson does "not have his best day and for us to have our best day against him."

"Anderson is an accurate passer and a tough kid," Teevens said. "They're not afraid to put the ball in his hands and he makes good decisions. The critical point is putting pressure on the quarterback, but Anderson handles it well. We'll try to make him rush his throws before the development of the pass route."

In last season's matchup between the two teams, Oregon State dismantled Stanford in a 43-3 victory in Corvallis. Anderson threw four touchdown passes in that game, including two to receiver Mike Hass.

Teevens said his team realizes that

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