

IN BRIEF

Pac-10 likely to have two BCS representatives

The way things are going in the Pacific-10 Conference, there could be as many teams playing in the four Bowl Championship Series games as there are in the other 24 bowls.

No. 1 Southern California can clinch a berth in the Rose or Orange bowl with a win against Arizona this week, and No. 4 California is in good position to grab an at-large spot in the BCS with wins in its final three games.

Arizona State and the winner of this week's UCLA-Oregon game also will be bowl bound. But after that it gets dicey. The conference could have anywhere from zero to three more bowl teams, leaving four spots possibly open.

Being unable to fill all of its bowl slots is less important to commissioner Tom Hansen than getting two teams into the BCS for the third time in the system's seven years.

"That's the important measurement," Hansen said. "We've been the best conference top to bottom for a number of years. People said, 'You have good teams but not great teams.' This year we have two great

ones. It's a very fine development. I'm proud of it."

It also has some outside observers very interested in how the next few weeks play out in the Pac-10.

Because every bowl berth the Pac-10 doesn't fill is one that could open up for a school from the Mid-American Conference or an independent such as Navy.

Hansen has already given the Silicon Valley Bowl and Emerald Bowl permission to talk to other teams in case the Pac-10 doesn't have teams for those games.

— The Associated Press

Preview: Ground game should be strong for Oregon

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particularly against the run. UCLA ranks dead last in the Pac-10 against the run and the pass.

According to Bellotti, the Bruin defense has struggled due to youth and inexperience up front, but isn't counting on them to fold in front of the Oregon offense.

"Their defense, though at times not playing the way they want, shutout Stanford a couple of weeks ago, which is a huge statement to me," Bellotti said. "I think their defensive line has been their problem all year based on injuries and lack of experienced personnel."

A bright spot for the UCLA defense has been the stellar and consistent play of linebacker Spencer Havner. The Butkus and Rotary Lombardi Award semifinalist, given to the nation's best linebacker and best lineman, respectively, is averaging a conference-high 12.2 tackles per game. He leads the nation in solo tackles with 8.1 per game.

Another bright spot for the Bruins might be that three Oregon starters are currently nursing injuries and are seen as day-to-day decisions.

Wide receiver Demetrius Williams continues to nurse a case of turf toe. Tight end Tim Day's ankle and calf are healing, while offensive lineman Robin Knebel is still recovering from a previous ankle injury.

While the Ducks may be down a

few players, they still have dynamic juniors in quarterback Kellen Clemens and running back Terrence Whitehead.

Clemens continues to step up his game level, ranking just ahead of Oregon State's Derek Anderson to lead the conference in total offense. He ranks third in passing efficiency and is tied for third in touchdown passes after throwing four touchdowns against Cal last weekend.

But for the Ducks, their running game will be the key against a weak Bruin defense.

Whitehead is second in the conference in rushing and fourth in all-purpose yardage.

Fullback Dante Rosario said his team should have success this week running the football.

"Washington State ran the ball for 300 yards, and it's an opportunity for us to have a big rushing game," Rosario said. "Terrence or whoever runs the ball, if they run the ball hard, they will have a big game."

For Oregon, the win means more than a bowl bid; it guarantees its record-setting 11th consecutive winning season.

"A winning season is the first rallying cry," Bellotti said. "Bowl eligibility is the bonus on top of that ... We have the opportunity to go to a very good bowl game."

"We just have to do our job."

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Pac-10: Arizona's defense will be tested against No. 1 USC

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third, fourth and fifth, respectively, in the conference in tackles and will need to use good technique to put Arrington to the turf and not allow a second effort from him.

On Tuesday, Cal head coach Jeff Tedford commented on Washington's defense and the Huskies in general.

"When you watch them on tape, they have been snake-bitten a lot," Tedford said. "But their defense is playing pretty well. They're flying around; they're playing hard, and there is no evidence of quit anywhere in them."

"We don't have any consistency, and more than that, we haven't been able to make big plays ... Everything's hard right now offensively."

KEITH GILBERTSON | Washington head coach

Earlier in the week, Washington head coach Keith Gilbertson expressed little concern for his defense in this Saturday's game but acknowledged his dismay for his team's lack of offense.

"We don't have any consistency, and more than that, we haven't been able to make big plays," Gilbertson said. "Everything's hard right now offensively."

**Arizona (2-7, 1-5)
at No. 1 Southern
California (9-0, 6-0)**

It is a good thing that Arizona beat Washington last weekend to give first-year head coach Mike Stoops the first conference win of his career because this Saturday they go on the road to face the top-ranked team in the nation.

The Trojans of Southern California have amassed an 18-game winning streak in the course of two seasons and aim to make their 19th

straight win a career day for their junior quarterback Matt Leinart, who is a legitimate Heisman Trophy candidate. Leinart leads the Trojans and the second best offense in the Pac-10 into this Saturday's game looking to stay undefeated and bound for the Orange Bowl in early January. If the Trojans win, they will capture at least a portion of the Pac-10 Championship.

On Tuesday, Southern California head coach Pete Carroll expressed his team's excitement for this Saturday and the close of the regular season.

"It's really fun for us, after all of these games, to now have an opportunity to play for a Rose Bowl bid," Carroll said. "It's an incredible accomplishment for us. We have to do a tremendous job in preparation this week to focus and get our job done."

Arizona's defense will have its hands full all game trying to keep pace with Leinart and sophomore tailback Reggie Bush. The Wildcats are currently ranked fifth in the conference in total defense, but did not fair well last time they faced Cal — a team of similar caliber in offense to the Trojans. In last week's 23-13 win over Washington in Tuscon, Ariz., the Wildcats shutout the Huskies in the second half and scored their first defensive touchdown of the season on freshman cornerback Wilrey ' 33-yard fumble recovery.

Scott J. Adams is a freelance sports reporter for the Daily Emerald



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