







Manase Hopoi cuts upfield in Washington's 20-17 season-opening loss to Air Force. Hopoi led the Pacific-10 Conference in tackles for a loss with 22 last year. The senior defensive tackle is questionable to play against Oregon.



## Huskies invade Autzen intent on stealing a win



Ducks look to avoid a costly letdown against one-win Washington

BY SHAWN MILLER SPORTS EDITOR

The West Coast's hottest rivalry reheats Saturday as the Washington Huskies (1-4 overall, 0-2 conference) visit Autzen Stadium in search of their first conference victory against No. 20 Oregon (5-1, 2-1).

The two programs are currently headed in different directions, yet have the distinct possibility of meeting for the conference crown in the coming years.

Oregon is led by a veteran group of seniors, while Washington is rebuilding. But the Ducks could be there in the near future with the departure of the starting quarterback, running back, top wide receiver, Hback, etc. And that is just on offense.

The Oregon defense will have to reload with the loss of both starting corners, a starting linebacker and most likely two starting defensive linemen (assuming junior Haloti Ngata heads to the NFL draft).

In the meantime, the Ducks are flying high after a 31-17 victory at then-No. 17 Arizona State last week, while the Huskies are in the second year as the Pacific-10 Conference doormat.

After falling behind 10-0 in the first quarter last week, Oregon scored 24 unanswered points. Arizona State cut the lead in half with a touchdown midway through the third, and took over in Oregon territory after intercepting a pass on the Ducks' ensuing possession. However, Oregon cornerback Justin Phinisee intercepted the Sun Devils' next pass and returned it 51 yards. The Ducks put the game



Arizona State tailback Rudy Burgess (3) is tackled by six Oregon defenders. The Ducks held Burgess to 25 yards rushing last week.

away with a 34-yard touchdown reception by Demetrius Williams in the fourth quarter.

Washington, which had a bye last week, has been recuperating from a near-upset of No. 12 UCLA two weeks ago. The Huskies led late in the fourth quarter, but the Bruins scored with just more than one minute remaining in the game to earn a 21-17 win.

"A team coming off a bye has the benefit of recovery time regardless of whether it's the third, fourth or fifth week of the season," Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti said. "And the extra preparation time to not only prepare for their opponent, but prepare themselves - maybe new plays and new ideas."

That is what Washington has done; it has been focusing on correcting the miscues and preparing for the Ducks' wide-open offense.

'We're working on Oregon the whole week, on their schemes, some of the things they're trying to bring at us," Washington defensive tackle Manase Hopoi said. "Also, we worked on correcting the little things we were doing

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