

OREGON vs. ARIZONA

GAME PREVIEW

Saturday, September 13
7:00 p.m. (PDT)

Arizona Stadium
Tucson, Arizona

Radio: Oregon Sports Network
(Jerry Allen, Mike Jorgensen)

Live TV: TBS

by Jim Nakadate

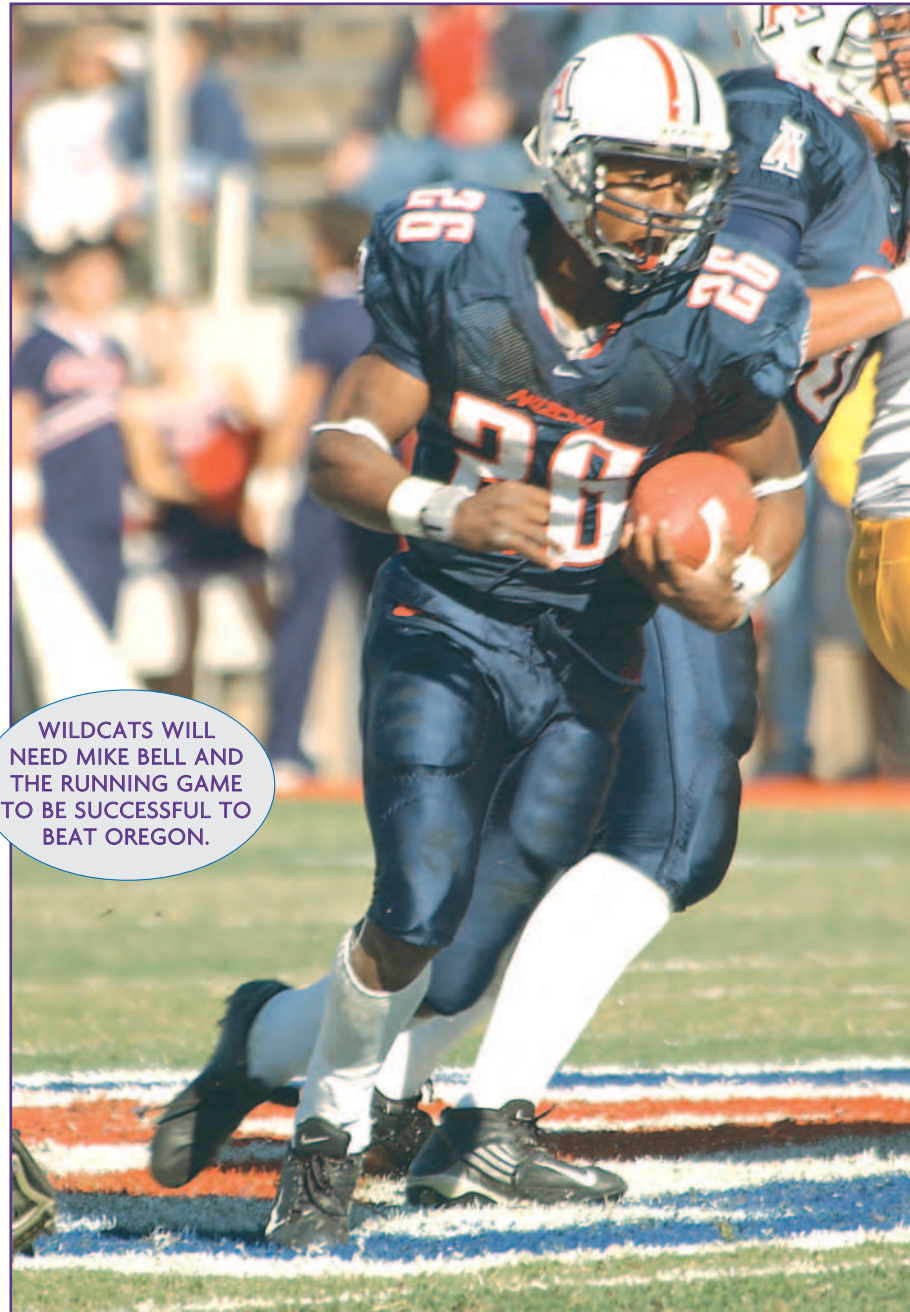
Series Record: Oregon leads, 16-12
Head Coach: John Mackovic
(3rd year), 9-14
2002 Record: 4-8, 1-7
(tied for ninth in Pac-10)
2003 Record: 1-1, 0-0

THE HISTORY Oregon has beaten Arizona four years in a row. In 1999 it was by a score of 44-41 in Tucson, in 2000 the Ducks won 14-10 at Autzen, and in 2001 it was a 63-28 cruncher in Tucson. Last year the Ducks had a slow start, but woke up in time to post a 31-14 road victory; Onterio Smith rushed for 145 yards, Jason Fife threw for 244 yards, and the Oregon defense held the Wildcats to 30 yards on the ground, but allowed 302 yards through the air, (a disturbing pattern that would be repeated the rest of the season). This Saturday's game will be the fifth time in six years that the Ducks will be under the lights in Tucson, but according to the last two encounters there, it just doesn't matter.

THE DUCKS are coming off a lackluster 31-23 win over an over-matched Nevada team in front of the home folks at Autzen. Oregon had 399 yards of total offense to Nevada's 301, but was very inconsistent on both sides of the ball. For the most part the Ducks dominated the line of scrimmage in outrushing the Wolf Pack, 188 yards to 57. However, even with the D-line providing a lot of pressure up front, the Oregon pass defense gave up 244 yards and two touchdowns. After putting up 24 points in the first half, the Oregon offense went AWOL for the rest of the game, leaving it up to the defense to score on an interception return in the third quarter.

For the second time this year the Ducks played well early in the game, then had to hold on in the second half as the opponent made a charge. The Oregon coaches and players need to find a way of sustaining their efforts for an entire game and they'd better do it soon. The competition is only going to get tougher, starting this week against Arizona, which has more talent than either Mississippi State or Nevada. If fatigue is the problem, then better conditioning and getting more quality players into the rotation will be important. If it's second-half strategy, then the Oregon coaching staff has to do a better job at self-evaluation and halftime adjustments. On the immediate horizon, the Arizona Wildcats are enough to worry about. Nationally-ranked Michigan next week is a whole different story.

THE WILDCATS find themselves



WILDCATS WILL
NEED MIKE BELL AND
THE RUNNING GAME
TO BE SUCCESSFUL TO
BEAT OREGON.

Photo courtesy: University of Arizona Media Services

at a crossroads this year, at least as their success or failure on the field will impinge on the career of head coach John Mackovic. In his first year (2001) Arizona won just five games overall and two in conference play. Last year they beat three bad non-conference teams and only one from the Pac-10. However, the bigger story surrounding the team was a nasty team revolt, manifested by a large group of players that met with the university president, registering complaints about Mackovic's heavy-handed treatment of players. Shortly thereafter, in an emotional news conference, Mackovic admitted that he may have handled some situations incorrectly, but that he would change his ways. Most importantly, he didn't resign and the university didn't fire him. So the entire college football community has been watching the start of this season to see, (a) if Mackovic has indeed turned over a new leaf, (b) if his team will respond to his coaching in a positive manner, and (c) if Arizona can escape the conference cellar as most pre-season polls have predicted.

In their opening game two weeks ago the results seemed to indicate the answer was "yes" to the first two questions. The Wildcats hit on all cylinders, beating up on Texas-El Paso,

42-7, in Tucson. The Arizona offense displayed a balanced attack with 217 yards rushing (four touchdowns) and

229 yards passing (two touchdowns). The defense held UTEP to 275 yards of total offense. Mike Bell led the running backs with 119 yards, while former Aloha High School (Beaverton) quarterback Nic Costa and backup Ryan O'Hara each threw a TD pass. It was a strong showing albeit against a weak WAC opponent.

However, last weekend reality came to town in the presence of 15th-ranked LSU from the SEC. The Bayou Bengals notched an impressive 59-13 win, dominating on both sides of the ball for the entire game. The Wildcats were outsmarted, outthustled, outquicked and pushed around from the get-go, leading one to believe that either LSU is a very good team (probably), or that Arizona is a very bad one (possibly).

The hard numbers showed the Tigers with double the Wildcats' yardage on the ground, 182 to 91. LSU ran the ball 56 times, while Arizona had only 27 rushing attempts. Joseph Addai was the Tigers' leading rusher with 86 yards on 18 carries (5.4 yards per), with several of his teammates getting opportunities as LSU got further ahead as the game wore on. Arizona running backs Clarence Farmer (8 carries for 61 yards) and Mike Bell (13 carries for 41 yards) found themselves bottled up all night, surrounded by the fast, hard-hitting defenders from Baton Rouge. Farmer did find the endzone late in the fourth quarter for one of his team's two TDs, but Bell instead found a slight injury when he was tackled and came down hard on his arm late in the game. His status for this week's game against the Ducks is unknown.

Through the air LSU quarterbacks Marcus Randall and Matt Mauck combined for nine completions on 25 attempts and two touchdowns; their receivers ran free and open most of the night, led by Michael Clayton

University of Arizona TWO DEEP

OFFENSE

WR 18 LANCE RELFORD (6-0, 197, Sr.)
83 Mike Jefferson (6-1, 205, Fr.)
T 59 CHRIS JOHNSON (6-3, 323, Jr.)
69 John Abramo (6-4, 294, So.)
G 75 REGGIE SAMPAY (6-3, 298, Sr.)
79 Keith Jackson (6-5, 285, Fr.)
C 67 KEOKI FRASER (6-3, 301, Jr.)
63 Tom Robinson (6-4, 317, Jr.)
G 66 KILI LEFOTU (6-5, 298, So.)
71 Erick Levitre (6-1, 262, Fr.)
T 68 BRANDON PHILLIPS (6-8, 320, Sr.)
76 Peter Graniello (6-6, 294, Fr.)
TE 87 STEVE FLEMING (6-6, 260, Jr.)
46 Matt Padron (6-5, 265, Fr.)
QB 7 NIC COSTA (5-11, 211, So.)
15 Ryan O'Hara (6-6, 198, Fr.)
HB 11 MIKE BELL (6-0, 210, So.)
32 Clarence Farmer (6-0, 218, Sr.)
FB 36 GILBERT HARRIS (6-2, 222, So.)
35 Sean Jones (5-11, 230, So.)
WR 82 BIREN EALY (6-2, 175, So.)
84 Ricky Williams (6-2, 209, Jr.)

DEFENSE

DE 92 CARLOS WILLIAMS (6-43, 298, Jr.)
62 Clifton Stanford (6-4, 277, Fr.)
NT 90 CARL TUITAVUKI (6-3, 325, Sr.)
94 Paul Philipp (6-35, 290, Fr.)
DE 94 PAUL PHILIPP (6-35, 290, Fr.)
54 Lionel Dotson (6-4, 242, Fr.)
LB 51 COPELAND BRYAN (6-4, 242, So.)
56 Andre Torrey (6-4, 237, Jr.)
LB 55 MARCUS SMITH (6-6, 235, So.)
49 Matt Molina (6-1, 237, Sr.)
LB 42 JOE SIOFELE (6-2, 245, Sr.)
57 Justin Stewart (6-1, 246, Jr.)
LB 44 PATRICK HOWARD (5-11, 228, Jr.)
40 Joh McKinney (6-0, 223, Fr.)
CB 9 GARY LOVE (5-9, 175, Sr.)
10 Zeonte Sherman (5-11, 192, Jr.)
SS 19 LAMON MEANS (6-3, 196, So.)
30 Tony Wingate (6-1, 210, Jr.)
FS 6 DARRELL BROOKS (6-1, 202, So.)
33 Clay Hardt (6-1, 199, Sr.)
CB 8 MICHAEL JOLIVETTE (5-9, 180, Sr.)
13 Luis Nunez (6-0, 191, Jr.)