

College Football

# Wildcats, Ducks take different routes to improve defenses



AP Photo/Reed Saxon  
**Oregon linebacker Johnny Ragin III speaks at the Pac-12 football media day in Los Angeles on Thursday.**

## Pellum taking demotion in stride

By **DAN GREENSPAN**  
*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — When Arizona and Oregon decided to make changes on defense after disappointing 2015 seasons, they did so in a wildly disparate fashion.

The Ducks demoted defensive coordinator Don Pellum and replaced him with former Michigan head coach Brady Hoke, while the Wildcats completely overhauled their staff, adding rising star Marcel Yates from Boise State.

The varying approaches reflect both the coaches and programs that met in the 2014 Pac-12 title game won by Oregon. The Ducks have long valued staff continuity,

promoting offensive coordinator Mark Helfrich to the top job in 2013 while five assistants including Pellum have been with the program for at least 13 seasons.

Arizona coach Rich Rodriguez has never been a wallflower, removing his long-time coordinator Jeff Casteel in January and scrapping the 3-3-5 defense, a staple since Rodriguez's tenure at West Virginia.

"Instead of just putting a Band-Aid on it, let's just go and start all over again," Rodriguez said at Pac-12 media day on Thursday. "It was better just to start all over again, scheme-wise, personnel-wise, recruiting-wise. It just wasn't working out."

An injury-ravaged Arizona defense allowed 35.8 points per game last season, with All-America linebacker

Scoby Wright (knee/foot) limited to just three games and 25 different players making one start.

Oregon linebacker Johnny Ragin said Hoke has done the same for the Ducks, but Helfrich has been just as impressed with how Pellum has welcomed the change.

"What he did blew me away, just as far as his passion to sell Brady Hoke on the recruiting trail. There needs to be a sociological study done about how great that was," Helfrich said.

Pellum has been with the program for all but two years since 1984 as a player, administrator and assistant, electing to maintain his ties to Oregon even after his defense ranked last in the Pac-12 in points and yards allowed last season.

"Coach Pellum is an Oregon man through and through,"

Ragin said. "He has been there longer than a lot of us (players) have even been alive, so he is really dedicated to the program and dedicated to our success."

For Oregon to rebound from a 9-4 season — nowhere near the recent high-flying standards set by Chip Kelly or quarterback Marcus Mariota — the defense must replace five starters from its defensive front. The tally includes standout lineman DeForest Buckner, who was drafted No. 7 overall by the San Francisco 49ers.

But Helfrich saw benefits from the turnover, enjoying how players pushed to make their mark.

"We would have found a home for DeForest, don't get me wrong, but the newness, the freshness, the competitiveness that they approached it with was awesome," Helfrich said.

NFL

# Miller, Wilkerson, Tucker shed franchise tags with big deals

By **DENNIS WASZAK JR.**  
*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Von Miller got a monstrous contract, befitting a sack-happy Super Bowl MVP. Muhammad Wilkerson and Justin Tucker also received big paydays, shedding their franchise tags and getting new deals.

Kirk Cousins, Alshon Jeffery, Eric Berry and Trumaine Johnson, however, will all be playing this season under the value of their tags after they and their teams failed to agree on long-term contracts by the NFL's Friday deadline.

Miller and Denver spent the offseason in a contract stare down this season, but the sides

agreed to a six-year, \$114.5 million deal that includes \$70 million guaranteed.

Miller and agent Joby Branon parlayed patience into a record-breaking deal in terms of overall value and guarantees. The outside linebacker received \$23 million at signing and will earn \$61 million over the first eight

months of the blockbuster deal that makes him the highest-paid player outside of quarterbacks in NFL history.

Miller's camp had rejected the \$38.5 million the Broncos offered in guarantees, and Miller threatened to sit out the season barring a long-term deal. About two hours before the 4 p.m. EDT deadline, the

cornerstone of the league's best defense accepted the Broncos' blockbuster offer and tweeted a photo of himself in his orange No. 58 jersey with the caption "For Life."

The New York Jets pulled off a last-minute stunner, signing Wilkerson to a five-year extension shortly before the deadline. Wilkerson had a career-high 12

sacks last season. The deal is reportedly worth more than \$85 million, including \$37 million in guarantees.

Tucker and the Baltimore Ravens agreed to a four-year contract. Since joining the Ravens as a free agent in 2012, Tucker has an 87.8 percent success rate that is second-best in NFL history.

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**HOROSCOPES**  
By Holiday

SATURDAY, JULY 16, 2016  
**ARIES** (March 21-April 19). You're helpful. You realize when a person needs help but isn't saying, or perhaps even knowing, that this is the case. In today's instance it's best to wait for the request, otherwise you'll over-help, which helps no one.  
**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20). Your group is strong and so is its persuasion, but you are among the strongest minds in it. Instead of falling into the "group think," you'll be a thought leader, showing the way for your crew.  
**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21). You tell your stories to friends in a lighthearted manner, but you're also very aware of the light these anecdotes cast on you. You're the consummate politician!  
**CANCER** (June 22-July 22). People are still asking you what's going to happen. They want information that is perhaps best spoken by time itself. You may have a compelling feeling about the future, but you certainly don't want to spoil the ending.  
**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22). The ones who seem like they have it all together may not have it all together, not by a longshot. But they have it enough together in a few areas to help you in the way you need right now, so go with that.  
**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Real life is not a drill. There are no dress rehearsals. Each moment is distinct and impossible to do over. But don't let that make you so nervous that you don't participate. Messing up is half the fun.  
**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). To pretend to know is a very common thing for children to do. It's part of the can-do spirit. Without a little arrogance, no one would dare. People around may pretend too much today though, and that makes for problems if you buy in.  
**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Do you care more about who gets the credit, or do you care more about what gets done? Both sides of the equation are important now, but things will turn out best when you decide which matters more to you.  
**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). This project you're involved in is getting hard, weird, awkward, maybe even painful. You've known failure, you've had setbacks, but you're not even close to being finished. In many ways you haven't even started!  
**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You have the right to be different, and knowing this makes you feel free - even if what you are most compelled to do is make the same choice as the others.  
**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). It's comforting to have a friend on your side; however, what you need more than comfort now is the eye of disinterest, the heart of justice and the voice of knowledge - however friendly or unfriendly it may be.  
**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20). You may feel slightly reckless, and it's time to rein it in. You didn't get where you are without exercising a degree of self-control. If you can control a little, you can control more.  
**TODAY'S BIRTHDAY** (July 16). In some way you've been mismatched, but that's all about to change. There's a sparkle in your eye, and it draws in the people who can most make you happy. The journey of getting to know yourself helps matters now through September. Experiment, dare and, most of all, break free from a situation that has become something of a trap. Leo and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 30, 44, 12, 22 and 18.

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