

# Sports

OREGON FOOTBALL

## Ducks dominate USC, 56-24

■ Oregon shrugs off a 10-0 deficit early to run roughshod over the Trojans in L.A.

By Greg Beacham  
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES — Oregon's defense began the game by giving up a 16-play touchdown drive. Justin Herbert then threw only his second interception since last November.

The Ducks had barely survived back-to-back close games in the previous two weeks, and their winning streak appeared to be in peril again when they fell 10 points behind Southern California after the first quarter.

A calming little chat on the Coliseum sideline kept Oregon firmly on track in the College Football Playoff race with another blowout win.

Herbert passed for 225 yards and threw three touchdown passes to Juwan Johnson in the second half, and No. 7 Oregon recovered from a slow start to cruise to its eighth consecutive victory, 56-24 over USC on Saturday night.

Oregon (8-1, 6-0 Pac-12) obliterated that early deficit by scoring a touchdown after each of four turnovers by USC freshman quarterback Kedon Slovis during a 19-minute stretch spanning halftime. Freshman Mykael Wright also returned a kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown shortly after Brady Breeze returned an interception 32 yards for a score late in the second quarter.

But the Ducks looked shaky in the opening quarter until they settled down and got to work.

"We just looked at each other," Herbert said. "We knew that we're a special group, and we just needed to calm down and say, 'This isn't us. We're going to do better.' And we addressed that and got to move the ball pretty well. We knew we were better than that. We just had to fix things."

Herbert and receiver Jaylon Redd rushed for touchdowns in the first half for Oregon, which remained on track for the Pac-12 North title and a good shot at a playoff spot.

Oregon coach Mario Cristobal claimed he won't pay much attention to the first playoff rankings, but he has opinions.

"Without question, I feel we need to be in that conversation," Cristobal said. "And we need to keep getting better."



Luis Sinco / Los Angeles Times-TNS

Oregon wide receiver Juwan Johnson, left, cuts toward the end zone on a 37-yard touchdown reception in the fourth quarter against USC at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum on Saturday.

... We started a little bit slow. But once we got going, we really got going."

Herbert went 21 for 26 despite that ugly early interception, which was thrown straight to USC's Isaiah Pola-Mao. It ended Herbert's streak of 133 straight passes without a pick, the second-longest in the nation. Herbert had thrown just one interception in his previous 362 pass attempts in Pac-12 road games during his four-year career.

Oregon also committed 12 penalties for 157 yards and had two defensive players ejected, but racked up more than enough points to stay perfect since its season opener.

Slovis threw for 264 yards and three touchdowns on a USC-record 57 pass attempts, but his three interceptions and a fumble erased the Trojans' solid start. Slovis and Air Raid offensive coordinator Graham Harrell surpassed Todd Marinovich's single-game record of 55 attempts for the Trojans, set in 1989.

"You can't commit turnovers like that, but sometimes it happens," Slovis said. "You've just got to move on and play the next play."

Michael Pittman Jr. and two-sport freshman Drake London caught first-half touchdown passes for USC (5-4, 4-2), which fell out of first place in the Pac-12 South with its third loss in five games.

"We made enough mistakes tonight against a

top-10 team," USC coach Clay Helton said. "You can't win a ballgame turning it over four times and have the penalties that we had and expect to beat that team. We just didn't execute like I know we can."

The Ducks finally got moving in the second quarter after Verone McKinley III intercepted a pass that ricocheted off London's hands. Pola-Mao was ejected for targeting during the ensuing drive, which ended with Herbert's 10-yard TD run, his first of the season.

Slovis then fumbled on a play from the Ducks 3 while trying to avoid a sack. Oregon responded with a 92-yard TD drive, and Breeze got his pick-6 moments later.

Pittman made a TD catch 20 seconds before halftime, but Wright responded with Oregon's first TD kickoff return since the 2017 season opener.

"They provided all the momentum," Cristobal said of the Ducks' two TD returns. "Those two plays took us into the locker room with a lot of juice and a lot of energy."

### LATE SCORES

Pittman's younger brother, Oregon receiver Mycah Pittman, caught a TD pass from Tyler Shough with 6:50 to play.

Touted USC freshman Kyle Ford then made his first career catch for a 20-yard touchdown with 3:11 to play.

### JUWAN'S GRABS

Johnson, the Ducks' senior

Penn State transfer, had seven catches for 106 yards after making just six previous receptions all season.

"I don't know if Oregon has had a receiver like him in quite a while," Herbert said. "The way he runs and moves for a 6-5 guy is something special."

### INJURIES

Herbert left the field slowly during the third quarter after taking a big hit in the thigh, but he returned just two plays later. "I knew that it wasn't anything bad, but it was just really painful," Herbert said.

### THE TAKEAWAY

Oregon: The Ducks' defense and special teams responded splendidly to the early test with one big play after another. USC's shakiness was a credit to the Ducks' steadiness, and they'll need it during their finish against the Arizona schools and Oregon State before a probable trip to the Pac-12 championship game.

• USC: The Trojans didn't have the toughness or the perseverance to pull off an upset, and Helton's five-year tenure could draw to a close this month if USC's new athletic director agrees with his demanding new fans.

### UP NEXT

• Oregon: An off week, followed by a visit from Arizona on Nov. 16.  
• USC: Visit Arizona State next Saturday.

OREGON STATE FOOTBALL

## Road warrior Beavers rout Arizona, 56-38

By John Marshall  
AP Sports Writer

TUCSON, Ariz. — Oregon State went into its bye week looking for ways to exploit the many holes in Arizona's defense.

When the Wildcats switched coordinators this week, the Beavers didn't change anything — and still blew right through them.

Jake Luton threw for 328 yards and three touchdowns, Jermar Jefferson ran for three more scores and Oregon State sliced through Arizona's listless defense for a 56-38 victory on Saturday.

"New D coordinator, what's that going to look like and we just looked at the tape, focused on what we do well," Beavers head coach Jonathan Smith said.

Arizona (4-5, 2-3 Pac-12) fired defensive coordinator Marcel Yates this week, replacing him with former NFL assistant coach Chuck Cecil.

The coordinator change changed little on the field.

Oregon State (4-4, 3-2) manhandled the Wildcats up front while churning out big plays, scoring 35 points by halftime and racking up 572 total yards.

Luton finished 20 of 26 and threw two TD passes to Isaiah Hodgins, who had seven catches for 150 yards.

Grant Gunnell threw for 269 yards and two touchdowns for the Wildcats, who have lost four straight.

"When things go well, it's easy for everybody," Arizona coach Kevin Sumlin said. "When things happen the way they've happened the last few weeks, it's important to stick together."

Arizona fired Yates and linebackers coach John Rushing this week after allowing 132 combined points in three straight losses. The Wildcats were 118th in scoring defense and 119th defense heading into Saturday's game.

The trend continued.

Luton hit Hodgins on a 21-yard TD pass on the Beavers' opening drive and a wide-open Noah Togiai for a 23-yard score to close the first half. Jefferson scored on TD runs of 1 and 5 yards, and Artavis Pierce added a 4-yard TD run.

Oregon State had 385 yards and a 35-19 lead by halftime.

Jefferson scored on 5-yard run to open the second half and Luton's 25-yard TD pass to Hodgins put the Beavers up 49-31 in the fourth quarter.

"I think we knew what was possible and it's all coming together," Oregon State tackle Blake Brandel said. Arizona's offense tried to keep pace.

Gunnell found Gary Brightwell on a swing pass that turned into a 38-yard touchdown with the help of a key block by receiver Cedric Peterson.

J.J. Taylor scored on a 3-yard run to cap a drive pushed along by four Oregon State personal foul penalties — two each for facemask and roughing the passer.

Arizona twice had to settle for field goals after driving inside the Beavers' 10-yard line, the first after Taylor had a TD run negated by a holding call.

Peterson turned a short pass over the middle into a winding 35-yard touchdown early in the third quarter and Brightwell scored on a 10-yard run.

Taylor added a 2-yard TD run in the fourth quarter to pull the Wildcats with 49-38, but Oregon State continued to gouge their defense to put it away.

"When stuff like this happens, a lot of people point fingers, but we can't do that," Taylor said. "We've got to stay being us, remind us of what kind of team we are and work together."

### THE TAKEAWAY

Oregon State has built some momentum in the second half of the season, now needing two wins to become bowl eligible for the first time since 2013.

Arizona's defense is in disarray, leaving the Wildcats spiraling away from bowl contention after opening the season 4-1.

PAC-12 FOOTBALL

## Utah rallies to top Washington, 33-28

By Tim Booth  
AP Sports Writer

SEATTLE — The past month looked, and felt, so easy for No. 9 Utah. One blowout after another. No tests for the Utes to answer.

They knew traveling to Washington would be different, and they were right. The Utes were challenged; falling behind early and rallying late, and in doing so solidified their spot in the College Football Playoff conversation.

Tyler Huntley threw for one touchdown and ran for another, Jaylon Johnson returned an interception 39 yards for a score, and No. 9 Utah overcame an 11-point first-half deficit to beat Washington 33-28. The Utes did their part in keeping pace in the Pac-12 South race and bolstered their CFP resume with a road win over a talented opponent in a place where it's never come easy for Utah.

"It says a lot. We've had a lot of games, the last three games or whatever it's been by putting up 40 points and our defense looking impeccable," Utah running back Zack Moss said. "When we can do this and come on the road and win a game like this and doing it the way we did, that's what championship teams do and that's what we've been missing the last couple of years."

The Utes (8-1, 5-1 Pac-12) picked up just their second all-time win over the Huskies — oddly enough both coming in Seattle — leaning on a defense that forced Washington quarterback Jacob Eason into three turnovers and got just enough offense from Huntley and friends to rally from an early 14-3 hole.

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