



AP Photo/Tom Hood

By [Peter Dudley](#)
 Guest Contributor
 Posted Nov 6, 2003

[More](#)

Oregon is 2-3 in the Pac-10 and 5-4 overall. Like the Bears, they are unranked in both polls.

Cal is a one point favorite in this game. Sagarin says this game should be even: Oregon at #54 has 73.53 points; Cal at #39 has 76.52 points. Factor in Oregon's 3.17 home advantage to give Oregon the benefit of 0.18.

Sagarin ranks [Oregon's](#) schedule as 27th-toughest; Cal's is 18th toughest. Oregon has beaten Mississippi St., [Nevada](#), [Arizona](#), [Michigan](#), and [Stanford](#). They lost to WSU, [Utah](#), ASU, and UW. They started the year 4-0, culminating with the home win over Michigan; since then, they are 1-4 with an average point difference of -17. At Utah was only a four point loss; They blew out Stanford in their last home game, 35-0.

Their two Pac-10 wins combined were by a score of 83 to 10 (36.5 points margin). Their three Pac-10 losses were by a combined score of 156-40 (38.7 points margin). At home, the Ducks are 3-1 with victories over Nevada, Michigan, and Stanford. Their home loss was a blowout to WSU (55-16). Clearly, this is a Jeckyl & Hyde team, capable of stomping weak teams, beating national powerhouses, and getting steamrolled by mid-level teams.

Cal, meanwhile, is only 2-3 on the road with losses to KSU, Utah, and [UCLA](#). The wins were last week's laffer at ASU and the 7-point cliffhanger at [Illinois](#). On the road, the Bears lost by 14, 7, and 3, and they won by 7 and 28. Generally, the Bears have a habit of playing close games, and the Ducks have a habit of hopping between blowout loss and blowout win.

Statistically, both teams have a good offense and a somewhat weak defense.

Offensively, the Ducks' strength is the running game, 4th in the conference at 142 yards per game and 13 rushing TDs. Cal, however, is 2nd in the conference at 156 yards per game and 17 rushing TDs. Oregon has the most fumbles in the Pac-10, however, with 12 in 9 games (WSU also has 12 in 9 games). Oregon's passing attack is also quite capable--6th in the conference with 264 yards per game and 14 TDs (8.1 yards per attempt). They are 3rd in percentage completion at 56%, and only Oregon and [USC](#) have two receivers averaging 80+ yards per game. The Ducks have given up 11 interceptions to the 14 TDs they've scored. Cal's passing attack is 7th in the conference with 242 yards per game, 19 TDs, just 6 interceptions, and 7.6 yards per attempt. Cal (59.7%) and USC are the only teams with better completion percentage than the Ducks. Cal has given up the fewest interceptions (6) in the league despite having played at least one game more than everyone else. In passing efficiency, Cal is #2 and Oregon is #3. Overall, both Cal and Oregon average 5.6 yards per play.

The Ducks score 26.7 points per game on average, while the Bears top that at 30.6. Meanwhile, Oregon gives up 29.7 points per game on average, while Cal gives up 24.8.

On defense, the Ducks' biggest weakness is pass defense. Against the run, they are 5th in the conference and give up just 105 yards per game. They've given up 12 rushing TDs and hold opponents to 3.1 yards per carry. On the year, Oregon has collected eight fumbles. Only 29% of the first downs they've given up have been by the rush, a highly lopsided figure compared to other Pac-10 teams (average of other teams is 40% by the run). This speaks either to the strength of their rush defense or to the weakness of their...

...pass defense is 10th in the conference at 274 yards per game. They have given up a league-worst 19 passing TDs and collected just 8 interceptions (9th in ints-per-game). They give up an average of 7.2 yards per attempt, which is middle of the Pac. Their allowed pass completion of 51.2%, however, is third-best in the conference, which moves them into 6th in pass defense efficiency. This might suggest that the completions they give up tend to be big plays. In fact, their yards per completion (14.1) is tied with ASU for second-worst in the conference. (UW is worst at 14.6 yards per completion.)

The Bears on defense are fairly similar. Cal is 8th in rushing defense at 151 yards per game, allowing opponents 3.9 yards per carry and 12 TDs on the season. The Bears have collected only seven fumbles, which is 2nd-worst in the league on a per-game average. The Bears are better against the pass, however, at 6th in the conference at 243 yards per game, allowing 17 TDs and 7.7 yards per attempt (13.5 yards per completion). The Bears have hauled in 11 interceptions.

In miscellaneous stats:

Oregon is last in the conference with a -7 turnover margin in 9 games (-.78) while Cal has climbed to third at +3 in 10 games (+0.30). The Bears are slightly better at both sacking opposing QBs and avoiding getting sacked, though not significantly. Cal is the least penalized team (yards per game) in the league, a full 25+ yards better than Oregon. Oregon is outstanding on 4th downs, best in the conference at both converting (60%) and defending (20%). The Bears are near the middle of both charts.

In the Red Zone, Oregon and Cal are essentially even. Oregon is #3 in red zone offense (79.3%) while Cal is #4 (78.4%); Cal is #3 in red zone defense (73.7%) while Oregon is #4 (74.2%).

On special teams, Oregon and Cal are the only teams with two punt returns for TDs on the year. Oregon is last in net punting at just 34.6 net yards per punt, but they are tied for best with just 1.7 yards averaged per opponent return. They've punted 53 times in 9 games but had only 15 returned (fewest in the league). This implies that the punter is in little danger of out-kicking the punt coverage. Oregon's field goal unit has hit 7 of 11 attempts (64%), while the Bears have converted just 11 of 21 (52%). This unit appears a weakness on both teams. Remarkably, Oregon and Cal have two of the only three Pac-10 kickers with 100% PAT conversion (Fredrickson is 35 of 35 and Siegel is 31 of 31). Yet both are near the bottom of field goal percentage.

Based on the stats, I think this game favors the Bears. Cal's passing attack is strong--good TD-to-Int ratio, high completion percentage, good yards per completion, several capable receivers and backs that can catch, a versatile set of plays. This matches up well against Oregon's weak pass defense, which gives up a lot of big completions and first-down completions and has a very poor TD-to-Int ratio. Cal also has a very strong rushing offense to battle Oregon's good rushing defense. But how good are they? They held WSU to just 84 yards on 40 carries early in the season. BUT: They gave up 159 yards rushing to ASU and 261 rushing to UW in their two blowout losses. Stanford even gained 101 yards on 35 carries, and they are abysmal. The Bears can either use the pass to set up the run, or try to establish a power running game--if they are successful in either phase, I think they will be highly successful in both.

On the other side, the Ducks offense is fairly balanced but not as strong as some of the offenses Cal has faced. If the Bears can shut down USC, there is no reason to think they can't match up well against Oregon. What worries me is the Ducks' running game; they have the league's third-leading rusher, and Cal has shown a tendency from time to time to give up big running plays. The key for the Bears will be blanketing the Ducks' two star receivers. If the Bears can take away those two guys, then Oregon's offense becomes one-dimensional. And with Oregon's weak kicking game, stopping the Ducks anywhere on the field is likely to result in reasonable field position for the Bears, as long as they keep them out of the end zone. Another important key is turnovers--Oregon is prone to them. The Bears need to be opportunistic here and try to force turnovers. While I don't think turnovers will decide this game, they could play a crucial role.

This will be a very fun game, interesting to see how well the coaches second-guess each other and whether last week's results were coincidental flukes or true statements about these teams. I think Cal's result was indicative of a team that has turned the corner and is very confident and hungry. I like the Bears' chances, and I think this matchup favors Cal's offense over Oregon's defense.

I think this will be a reasonably high-scoring affair, and I think the Bears win this one 7 or 8 times out of 10. Final score: Cal 42, Oregon 32.

Go Bears!

©Copyright 2003, GoCyberBears.com and The Insiders. All rights reserved.

=====

CyberBear Staff Writers regularly visit the [CyberBears Insider](#) board, and are available to discuss questions you may have about this article or about Cal Athletics.

If you haven't done so already, subscribe to CyberBears so that you can participate in the CyberBear Insider community - and get access to the premium content across the entire Insider's network.

= GreyBear, Webmaster

Related Stories

[Cal 51, Arizona State 23 - The Whole Story](#)

-by [CalSportsDigest.com](#) Nov 5, 2003

[McArthur: Sometimes It's Scary Out There](#) 

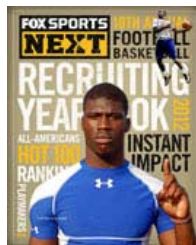
-by [CalSportsDigest.com](#) Nov 6, 2003

[Fun With Numbers - Around the Pac-10](#)

-by [CalSportsDigest.com](#) Nov 5, 2003

MAGAZINE COVERAGE

Get the 2012 Scout.com Recruiting Yearbook with an annual Total Access Pass



Upgrade your account ADD a Magazine! GO!

AdChoices

Free Email Newsletter



Don't miss any news or features from CalSportsDigest.com. Subscribe to our newsletter to have our newest articles emailed to you on a daily or weekly basis. Click here for a [list of all Team Newsletters](#).

Daily Format

Weekly Digest

Add Topics to My HotList



Get free email alerts with news about your favorite topics. Click link to add to My HotList.

[Football > California](#)

[\[View My HotList\]](#)

Boy Scout

Looking For Boy Scout? Find It Nearby With Local.com!
[Local.com](#)

Scout

Search local and national job listings. Apply Now, Start Tomorrow.
[www.JobsOnline.net](#)

53-Year-Old Mom Looks 27

Follow this 1 weird tip and remove 20 years of wrinkles in 21 days.
[SmartConsumerMagazine.com](#)

Woman is 53 But Looks 25

53yr Old Mom publishes 1 simple wrinkle trick that has angered doctors.
[www.ConsumerLifestyleMag.com](#)



Places to go:

Scout.com

College

Teams

College

Basketball

College Football

Junior College

Football

Recruiting

Football

Recruiting

Basketball

Recruiting

NFL

MLB

NBA

High School

FOX Sports

Things to do:

Sign In

Sign Up

Contact Us

Things to buy:

Tickets

Team Gear

Things to

know:

About Us

Privacy Policy

NEW!

Terms of Service

Copyright © 2012 CalSportsDigest.com and Scout.com. All rights reserved. This website is an unofficial independent source of news and information, and is not affiliated with any school, team, or league.

