

SPORTS

Cougars Come Close To Complete Game

By JOHN K. WILEY
Associated Press Writer

PULLMAN, Wash. (AP) - The starter took himself out to be replaced by a freshman with little playing time, yet for the first time in weeks, everything seemed to come together for Washington State.

For the first time since their 55-16 rout of Oregon Sept. 27, the Cougars put together a 34-19 victory over Arizona State on Saturday with contributions from the offense, defense and special teams, WSU coach Bill Doba said.

Despite the win, WSU remained at No. 8 in the AP poll. The Cougars hope the victory will move them up from No. 10 in Bowl Championship Series standings on Monday.

The Cougars (9-2, 6-1 Pac-10) play Washington next Saturday in Seattle for a chance at a third straight 10-win season and the possibility of a bid to either the Rose or Holiday bowls as Pac-10 co-champion.

The Cougars scored after recovering a blocked punt on the ASU 1; on a 39-yard interception return by backup linebacker Pat Bennett; on a 15-yard run by Jermaine Green; and a 22-yard TD pass from backup quarterback Josh Swogger to Devard Darling. With two field goals, kicker Drew Dunning broke Jason Hanson's school field goal record of 63.

"I thought we played pretty close to a complete game," Doba

said. "We played well on defense. I thought offensively, we ran the football well. All three phases scored. We had a blocked punt, Bennett's interception for a touchdown, and offensively, we were able to run and throw the football."

Swogger, a freshman, came off the bench after starter Matt Kegel took himself out of the game with a sore shoulder that was injured for the second time last week against UCLA.

"I wasn't confident in myself. I think a quarterback needs to be confident in his arm and I wasn't," Kegel said. "I came off the field and gave Josh a little wink and said, 'Your time has come, babe.'"

Swogger, who took the majority of snaps last week in practice, responded by completing 14-of-20 for 207 yards and a touchdown, with no interceptions.

"I think you guys got introduced to the real Josh Swogger this week," Cougars defensive end Isaac Brown told reporters. "He got a lot of reps and he was well prepared. He is probably the future quarterback at Washington State and the future of this program."

ASU coach Dirk Koetter saw that, too.

"You could see how poised he was, he really didn't make any mistakes," Koetter said. "He played very solid."

Washington State rolled up 402 yards of offense, and held the Sun Devils (4-7, 1-6) to 60 yards rushing. Andrew Walter was sacked three times.

"There were four big plays; a blocked punt, interception returned for a touchdown, and two long passes over our head," Koetter said. "When we had our chances, we just didn't capitalize."

Walter threw a 25 yard scoring

pass to Derek Hagan, who had seven catches for 109 yards, while Skyler Fulton hauled in five passes for 100 yards.

Bennett's interception and 39-yard scoring return of a pass intended for Moey Mutz late in the second quarter was "a big momentum swing," Doba said.

"It boosted us," Bennett said. "We have been looking to score on defense and the last couple of games, we didn't get it. This game, we actually got one. It gives us more room to work with on defense, and once we scored again, right before the half, we came out ready to go."

Swogger threw his first collegiate TD pass when he hit Darling in the end zone for a 24-10 lead just before halftime. Darling had five catches for 108 yards.

WSU special teams got things rolling.

Erik Coleman blocked Tim Parker's punt and it was recovered on the Arizona State 1. Jonathan Smith ran it in on the next play to take a 7-0 lead.

Arizona State came back on the next possession with a 54-yard scoring drive as Cornell Canidate rushed from the WSU 1.

Jesse Ainsworth kicked a career-long 47 yard field goal to pull even at 10 in the second quarter. He had a 34-yarder in the fourth quarter.

The Cougars, who had 14 turnovers and three safeties in their last two home games, turned the ball over only once against ASU, when Chris McKenzie intercepted a pass from Kegel to Darling.

The next series, Swogger was under center Mike Sheldford.

"I feel like when Swogger stepped in today, there wasn't too much lacking," Sheldford said. "Everything came together."

Hedges Says Gilbertson's Future Unaffected By Blowout Loss To Cal

(AP) - Washington coach Keith Gilbertson will return for at least one more season despite a crushing loss to California. Huskies athletic director Barbara Hedges says.

Gilbertson signed a four-year contract with two years basically guaranteed when he was hired in late July after the firing of Rick Neuheisel.

"He stepped into a very difficult situation at a very late date," Hedges told The Seattle Times. "Some things this season have not gone as expected, but he is an outstanding coach."

Even if the Huskies (5-6) lose again to No. 8 Washington State (9-2) in the Apple Cup after their utter collapse in a 54-7 loss to the Bears last weekend, Gilbertson's job is safe, she said.

"All the coaches on this staff have my full 100 percent support," Hedges said. "They are working as hard as they can work. That is all you can ask for. I think we are very fortunate to have Keith Gilbertson as the coach at the University of Washington."

A loss Saturday would end the Huskies' streak of 26 years without a losing season, the fourth-longest active string behind Nebraska (42), Michigan (36) and Florida State (27).

Hedges, 66, criticized for a number of high-profile problems in the athletic program during her 13th year at Washington, confirmed last week that her own contract had been extended through June 30.

Neuheisel, accused of gambling in violation of NCAA rules and of being untruthful when first questioned about the matter, is suing

the university on a claim of breach of contract and the NCAA on claims of defamation, conspiracy and wrongful interference with his job.

In a separate matter, state and federal authorities have begun a joint criminal investigation of a former team doctor who admitted improperly handing out thousands of doses of prescription drugs to Washington athletes.

Black Colleges Football Scores & Highlights

Alab St 55, Miss. Valley 31
Albany St 27, Fort Valley 17
Alcorn St 20, Alab A&M 15
Benedict 23, Lane 18
Beth-Cook 21, Howard 7
Del. St 36, Norfolk St 25
E. Kentucky 43, Tenn. St 38
Ed Waters 58, Georgia St 0
Fayette St 23, Va. Union 19
Grambling 33, Savan. St 17
Miles 32, Morehouse 28
Millersville 39, Cheney 0
N.C. A&T 38, Hampton 28
S.C. St 27, Florida A&M 15
S.E. La 64, Prairie View 10
S. Dakota 56, Lincoln 7
Southern 24, Tx Southern 17
Stillman 17, Clark Atlanta 0
Tuskegee 16, KenT. St 14
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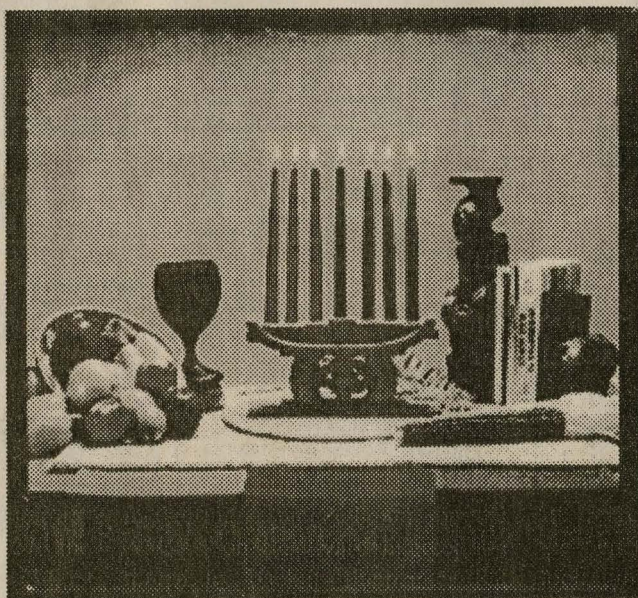
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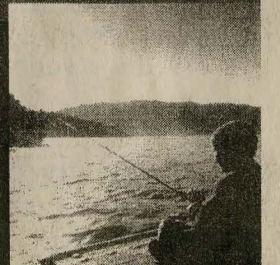
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