

Oregon vs. Washington: A brief history of the rivalry

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Body

Since first playing in 1900, the Oregon-**Washington** rivalry is widely considered one of the most outwardly bitter rivalries in all of college sports.

Over the last 40 seasons in particular, both teams have reached new heights, adding more fuel to the fire. Now, with game day in the near future, the rivalry has reached a fever pitch.

Although **Washington** leads the series 60-46-5, the historical rivalry has overgone several ups and downs.

The 1980s belonged to a series of dominant **Washington** squads. The Huskies beat the Ducks all but three times the entire decade. At that time, **Washington** football was among the best programs in the nation, ranking well into the top 25 for most of the decade. The Huskies took two trips to the Rose Bowl in the '80s, losing in '81 to No. 5 Michigan and winning in '82 over No. 13 Iowa.

Washington began the 1990s resuming its winning ways, beating the Ducks for four straight seasons and reaching the Rose Bowl in '91, '92 and '93.

The tide started to turn in the season of '94, when the Ducks defeated the Huskies 31-20 and found their way to their first Rose Bowl since 1958. Despite falling to No. 2 Penn State in the Rose Bowl, the '94-'95 season was a major turning point for the Ducks. Oregon defeated **Washington** in '97 and '98.

As the Ducks began the 2000s, it became clear that they'd turned a corner. The Ducks started the new decade strong, defeating a strong Huskies squad that went on to win the Rose Bowl 34-24 over No. 14 Purdue.

After not playing the Ducks in '01 due to conference rescheduling, **Washington** went on to gain lopsided victories in its next two contests with Oregon in '02 and '03. It would be the last time they'd defeat the Ducks for over a decade, as Oregon went on to beat **Washington** in 12 straight meetings between '04 and '15. These are known widely to be some of Oregon's most successful years as a program, appearing in three Rose Bowls and two National Championship games.

Offensive guru Chip Kelly and quarterback Marcus Mariota were crucial to Oregon's consistent success between 2012 and 2014. With Mariota at the helm of a highly talented Ducks offense, the program earned victories in the Fiesta Bowl, Alamo Bowl and Rose Bowl and also made an appearance in the National Championship, where they fell to No. 4 Ohio State.

Mariota became the first player from the University of Oregon to win the Heisman Trophy in 2014.

Since 2015, the Ducks are 1-2 against the Huskies, dropping games in both 2016 and 2017, but proving victorious in last season's matchup in Autzen Stadium. **Washington** demonstrated that it was an incredibly impressive team

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last year. With now-pro quarterback Jake Browning at the helm on offense, the Huskies were able to win a Pac-12 title and make it back to another Rose Bowl game, where they lost to No. 5 Ohio State.

Now, with both teams ranked inside the AP Top 25, the rivalry has reached a new level. With Washington quarterback Jacob Eason commanding a revenge-hungry Husky team and Oregon quarterback Justin Herbert playing at a near-perfect level, the battle for the Pac-12 North is sure to end in fireworks.

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