

USC-UCLA winner should pick roses

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Rodney Peete vs. Troy Aikman, Southern Cal vs. UCLA.

The battle of Los Angeles could decide the Pacific-10 Conference football championship for the second straight season.

The two teams will battle for city supremacy Nov. 19 at the Rose Bowl, and one of them could return to Pasadena Jan. 2 to face the Big Ten champion.

Peete and Aikman, both seniors, are two of the best quarterbacks in the country.

In his first season at UCLA after transferring from Oklahoma, Aikman completed 159 of 243 passes for 2,354 yards and 16 touchdowns during the regular season to rank second in the nation in passing efficiency.

Peete was ranked fourth in the country after completing 175 of 291 passes for 2,460 yards and 19 touchdowns.

UCLA and Southern Cal tied for the Pac-10 title at 7-1, but it was Southern Cal that went to the Rose Bowl after upsetting the Bruins 17-13.

Michigan State beat the Trojans 20-17, the Pac-10's only loss in four bowls. Southern Cal finished 8-4.

Peete, who holds 12 school records, returns for his fourth season.

UCLA, 10-2, beat Florida in the Aloha Bowl. The school returns only 10 starters, the fewest in the Pac-10. The Bruins also have a chance at setting a national record if they can win a seventh straight bowl game.

Peete and Aikman are two of nine starting quarterbacks returning in the Pac-10. Erik Wilhelm of Oregon State, Troy Taylor of California and Timm Rosenbach of Washington State also threw for more than 2,000 yards in 1987.

Washington lost starting quarterback Chris Chandler to the NFL Indianapolis Colts, but the Huskies think they have a strong replacement in junior Cary Conklin. Conklin had planned to red-shirt last season, but had to play when Chandler got hurt.

The Huskies have been to nine consecutive bowls, including last year's Independence Bowl, where they beat Tulane 24-12.

But the last three seasons have been disappointing for Coach Don James, as the Huskies went 7-5, 8-3-1 and 7-4-1 when they were supposed to be Rose Bowl contenders. Washington was 4-3-1 in the Pac-10 last season.

With three league victories, James, 55, will break former Southern Cal Coach John McKay's conference record of 70 victories. James is 133-62-3 overall in 13 seasons at Washington.

The Oregon Ducks enter the season with most of their big guns back from last season's 6-5 campaign.

A second-straight upper-division finish is predicted for Oregon, which finished tied for fifth with Stanford at 4-4 after beating Washington and Southern Cal in the same year for the first time since 1971.

49ers, Saints should pace NFC West

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The San Francisco 49ers and New Orleans Saints lost only five regular-season games between their last season, but they share an ironic destiny this year:

Both may be better but wind up with worse records.

The 49ers were 13-2 last year and the Saints 12-3. But both were soundly beaten by Minnesota in their first playoff games and enter this season with schedules that by themselves could drag them down.

They should still lead the division. But the Los Angeles Rams, who faded to 6-9 last season could surprise if they get quick help from their rookies, particularly running back Gaston Green and wide receiver Aaron Cox. Atlanta will still trail.

San Francisco is still haunted by its 36-24 playoff loss to Minnesota and also faces a killer schedule the first half of the season with several new players in a lineup that showed its age against the Vikings.

The 49ers open on the road at New Orleans and the New York Giants. Before October is over, they will have played Denver and Minnesota at home and the Rams and Chicago on the road.

The 49ers won Super Bowls in the 1981 and 1984 seasons and have captured five division titles in the last seven years, but for the third year in a row they lost their first playoff game decisively last season.

"I don't think we have any real severe weaknesses," says Coach Bill Walsh. "More likely, we're good in some areas, but maybe not great. What we have to do is find what it takes to make that last difference to take us to the championship, and we're hoping we can do that this year."

Walsh expects quarterbacks Joe

Montana and Steve Young and receiver Jerry Rice to repeat their spectacular play of last year. They will be augmented by receivers Dokie Williams and Wes Chandler, acquired from the Raiders and Chargers in trades.

Montana has looked as strong in preseason as he did last year when he threw for 3,054 yards and 31 touchdowns. In one stretch, he completed 22 consecutive passes against Cleveland and Green Bay.

Young played superbly as a backup, throwing 10 touchdown passes and running for 190 yards while starting three of the eight games he appeared in. Montana will open as the starter, but Walsh says Young will play a prominent role.

Rookies Danny Stubbins at defensive end and Bill Romanowski at linebacker should bolster a pass rush with lighter, quicker Michael Carter at noseguard and Charles

Haley moved to strongside linebacker.

Cornerbacks Tim McKyer and Don Griffin held out for a month but give the 49ers one of the best pairings in the game.

The big star last year was Rice, the league's offensive player of the year. He set a team record with a league-leading 138 points, including an NFL record 22 touchdown catches and one TD run in just 12 games. He also set an NFL record by catching TD passes in 13 consecutive games.

With Williams and Chandler taking some of the pressure off Rice could be even better. Roger Craig, lighter and quicker, is the key to the running game.

After its first winning season ever, that gaudy 12-3, New Orleans was shocked by Minnesota 44-10 in the NFC wild-card game.

The Saints should be strong again under Coach Jim Mora. But their schedule problems come in the sec-

ond half, when they they face the Rams twice, Washington, Denver, the Giants, Minnesota and San Francisco.

Ruben Mayes, who led the Saints last year with 917 yards rushing, had off-season surgery on his left knee and has been brought along slowly.

If he can regain his form, the Saints' running game, which averaged 146 yards in 1987, should be even stronger with the addition of top draft pick Craig Heyward, a 260-pound fullback with good hands.

Quarterback Bobby Hebert is coming off his first full season as an NFL starter and has shown maturity and confidence this summer. Hebert has a good, accurate arm and could blossom this year.

Late last year, teams loaded up the defensive front and dared New Orleans to go deep, knowing there wasn't enough speed to burn them. But Brett Perriman, of Miami, the No. 2 draft choice, could change that.

Trade

(Continued from page 8)

he was sorry to see Guerrero leave the Dodgers.

"All of us in the Dodgers organization wish Pete Guerrero the very best with the Cardinals," Claire said. "Pete has been a member of the Dodgers organization for 15 years and he has established himself as one of the outstanding hitters in baseball."

Claire said Tudor would be a vital addition as the Dodgers fight to stay in first place in the National League

West with left-hander Fernando Valenzuela on the disabled list.

Tudor said he was sad to leave St. Louis.

"No matter what happens in LA, the fans here have been the greatest," he said. "It's been almost four years for me here and this has been a fun place to play. The town is great, the fans are great and Whitey's been great. I'm going to miss them."

In announcing the deal, St. Louis general manager Dal Maxvill said Guerrero agreed to a three-year

contract worth \$6.2 million through the 1991 season.

Maxvill said the Cardinals parted with Tudor because they needed, and had the opportunity to get, an "everyday player with outstanding run-producing potential."

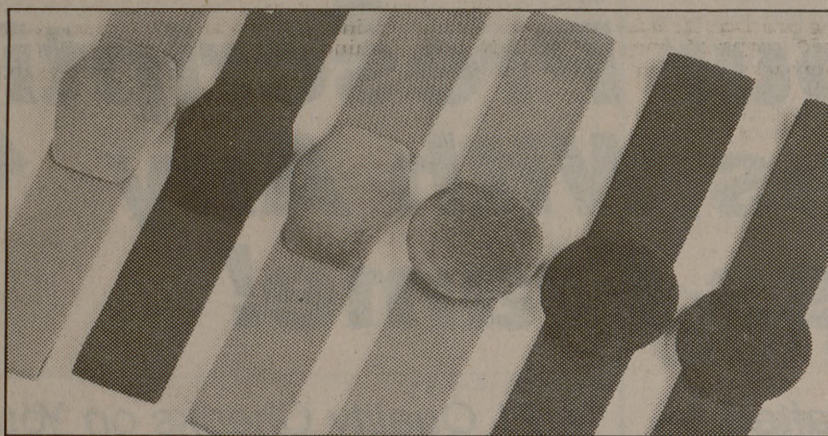
The Cardinals lineup has lacked potency ever since Jack Clark bolted to the New York Yankees as a free agent in the off-season.

Herzog said Guerrero would play first base, a position that has seen a cast of characters come and go. He will hit third or fourth, Herzog said.

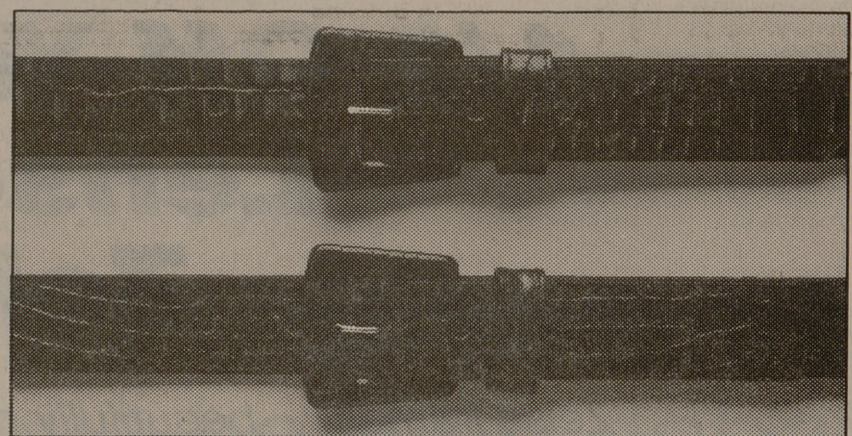
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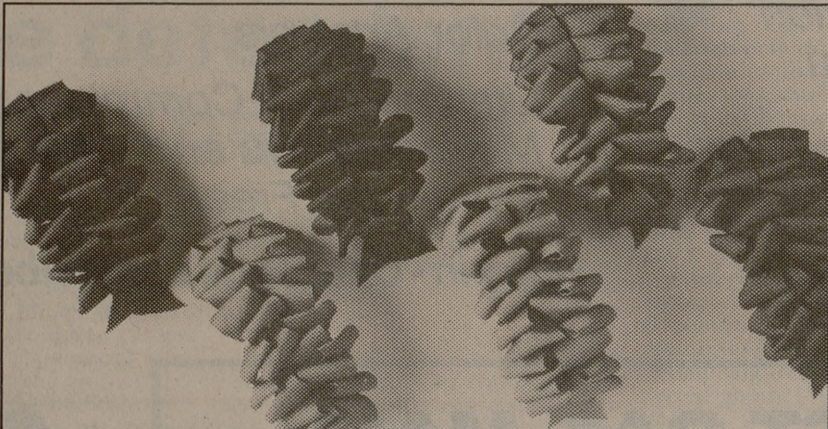
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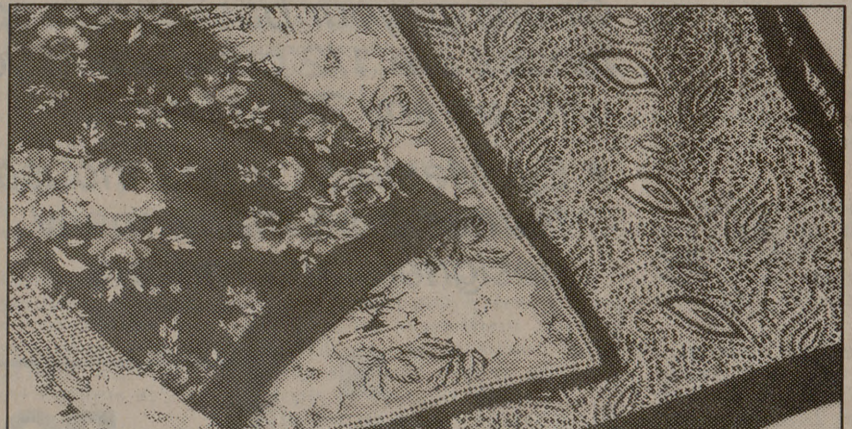
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