

Roth Gets the OK and He'll Play

BY BOB OATES
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Joe Roth, Cal's injured quarterback, will make the trip to Los Angeles and will play against USC at the Coliseum Saturday, coach Mike White announced after practice at Berkeley Thursday.

Wesley Walker, the injured flanker, is coming, too, "but if he plays," White said, "he'll have to play in pain."

Walker's sprained arch hasn't made as much progress medically as Roth's sprained knee.

Those closest to Roth and White believe the 6-4 quarterback will start or move into the lineup early in the game.

White said a final decision hadn't been reached, adding: "We'll make up our minds Saturday morning whether to go with Roth or Fred Besana. They both know the offense."

Besana, a senior who is usually described at Cal as "the Pac-8's second best quarterback" was seen last week in an extended tour for the first time this season and showed the effects of his long layoff as UCLA won, 35-19.

Talking about Roth, White said: "Joe has improved every day this week."

The injuries to Roth and Walker have deleted Cal's biggest and second biggest threats. Because of his speed and ability to get open deep, Walker has been the key to the Bears' pass offense. Last Saturday, with Walker missing, UCLA's defensive backs all took two steps forward.

As a running team, the Bears are adequate but not dangerous with Tom Newton at fullback and Oliver Hillmon sharing the tailback position with Markey Crane. Although Hillmon has the speed, Cal's linemen specialize in pass blocking, and the run block is different.

The Bears without Roth become a defensive team essentially and they have enough seniors to contain Ricky Bell at least some of the time.

They show quality in the defensive line with Jeff Barnes and at linebacker with Phil Heck and others as well as in the secondary. No one has passed consistently this year on the Bears.

Morale might be their problem. This will be the first game they've played in the almost certain knowledge that they aren't going to the Rose Bowl this year.

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UCLA will be meeting one of the league's youngest teams, Washington, in Seattle Saturday. In a season of youth in the Northwest, the Huskies are clearly keeping up.

Coach Don James, who is only in his second season there himself, decided Thursday to start freshman Joe Steele at tailback with junior quarterback Warren Moon and the veteran fullback, Robin Earl, who gained 169 yards last year as the Huskies upset UCLA, 17-13.

Only nine seniors are starting for Washington, which is 4-3 (2-1 in the conference). James dressed 10 frosh, including Steele, a 195-pounder who at 6-4 is one of the nation's rangiest tailbacks.

Junior college transfer Ronnie Rowland, the first-string tailback until this week, leads the Huskies in ground gaining. Combined, he and Steele have rushed for more than 1,000 yards.

James said he'll run on the Bruins if he can, using everybody including Moon, who likes to sprint out and throw or take off, threatening both ways. For a quarterback, Moon runs well enough. As a passer he's passable.

Last year Moon started James' first six games as coach. His main target is flanker Scott Phillips, Washington's all-time leader in catches.

On defense the Huskies are second in the conference to USC. Until last week they were first. Their nose guard, Charles Jackson, is an All-American candidate who has been the Pac-8's player of the week twice this year.

Their youth extends to the secondary, where they line up four sophomores, including Don Heinrich's boy Kyle.

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Against the Seattle Seahawks Sunday in the Coliseum the Rams will be in with an expansion team that differs from all other expansion teams in one respect: it can score.

After seven weeks, the Seahawks are third in the Western Division in scoring behind the 49ers and Rams.

Their problem is they have given up more points than any other team in the league except Kansas City. So with Jim Zorn at quarterback the Seahawks have been in high-scoring games—30-24 with St. Louis, 37-21 with San Francisco, 27-20 with Green Bay.

Zorn is a scrambling southpaw—an ideal quarterback for an expansion team—with a cast of good receivers, Steve Largent, Sam McCullum, Steve Raible and tight end Ron Howard.

Coach Jack Patera was even better off for receivers when he had Ahmad Rashad, whom he traded to his pal, Bud Grant of Minnesota, in a deal that might give the

Vikings the conference championship this year.

McCullum, now starting, was at Minnesota last year. Grant evaluated him as expendable and put him on the expansion draft list.

In the backfield Patera starts a good big rookie, Sherman Smith, 6-4, 217, with former Cleveland fullback Hugh McKinnis. The old pros in the line are Norm Evans, John Demarie and Fred Hoaglin.

Seattle's defensive nucleus includes former Steelers Dave Brown and Ed Bradley at free safety and middle linebacker, Mike Curtis as an outside linebacker and top draft choice Steve Niehaus in the line—plus ex-Rams Ken Geddes and Eddie McMillan. That isn't a bad group.

Note Dept.

TROJANS: Fullback Dave Farmer practiced Thursday and will probably face Cal, coach John Robinson said. Ricky Bell and Anthony Munoz are ready . . . Munoz, the freshman tackle who lists at 6-6 and 260, had the speed to get in front of the play on Charles White's 35-yard touchdown run last week. He made the key downfield block . . . Bell needs 392 yards to pass Anthony Davis as the Pac-8 all-time rushing leader.

BRUINS: It rained Thursday in Seattle but the weather forecaster predicted clearing Saturday . . . Coach Terry Donahue said the starters at his three most competitive positions this week will be split end Homer Butler, nose guard Steve Tetrick and free safety Pat Schmidt . . . Linebacker Raymond Bell, injured two weeks

ago, will start . . . Linebacker Jerry Robinson (Achilles tendon) is expected to play . . . Washington coach Don James on the jinx: "It doesn't put any points on the scoreboard, but it might give our kids more confidence." . . . In the last four years, the Bruins are 24-6-1 in their last 30 in the Pac-8. They have lost three each to USC and Washington.

RAMS: A "peace committee" from the eastern precincts of the NFL has been here this week talking with Ram owner Carroll Rosenbloom, who lately has publicly criticized commissioner Pete Rozelle. Those trying to end the Rosenbloom-Rozelle argument were Edward Bennett Williams, president of the Redskins; Leon Hess, vice president of the Jets; and Charles W. Sullivan, a director of the Patriots . . . John Cappelletti (hamstring) is expected to be ready Sunday . . . Seattle's Jim Zorn has thrown six touchdown passes in seven games . . . His big target, Steve Largent, is second in NFL catches . . . The Rams are first in rushing in the conference, fifth in passing, 10th in defense. . . Chuck Knox has delayed his decision on a starting quarterback for Sunday "until later"—perhaps today.

