

# Arizona Daily Star SPORTS

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WILDCATS BASKETBALL: NO. 1 ARIZONA 72, MICHIGAN 70

## Grabbing more attention



Arizona forward Brandon Ashley, left, claws the ball away from Michigan forward Glenn Robinson III in the second half of the Wildcats win in Ann Arbor, Mich. Ashley had a team-high 18 points to go along with six rebounds and two steals as the UA raised its record to 11-0.

### Gritty Cats rally, show national TV audience why they are No. 1

By Bruce Pascoe  
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Nobody was going anywhere soon in the snow-packed streets outside the Crisler Center on Saturday, and several hundred giddy Arizona Wildcats fans didn't want to anyway.

An hour after Arizona grittily came back to beat Michigan 72-70

#### UP NEXT

• **What:** Southern University at No. 1 Arizona  
• **When:** 7 p.m. Thursday  
• **TV; radio:** Pac-12 Arizona; 1290-AM

Saturday, clenching its grip on the nation's No. 1 ranking even tighter, its fans were still packing the corridor leading to the Wildcats' bus, waving signs and yelling.

"I love you, Sean Miller!" said one grown man.

Eventually, the party began to break up and just about the last guy out was the UA coach himself, making his way up the ramp to the bus with a content smile — but not a hint of surprise.

His Wildcats had come nearly across the country again for the second time in just over two weeks and knocked off a well-regarded opponent. But more so than during UA's 72-66 win over Duke on Nov. 29, this was a real road game against last season's national runner-up. It was on national television and at 10 in the morning

Arizona time.

It was the kind of game they could have easily lost and nobody would have been surprised. In fact, the game opened as a pick 'em in Las Vegas sportsbooks but moved to favoring the Wolverines by two points, suggesting the sentiment was clearly against the Wildcats.

Uh-huh.

"I don't know what other people think," Miller said as he headed outside. "I think we're a good

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NFL: CARDINALS AT TITANS

## Cards getting used to Arians' complex offense

By Kent Somers  
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Bruce Arians has the patience of a hungry toddler, so the Cardinals coach didn't pat quarterback Carson Palmer on the helmet and whisper "there, there" when Palmer had 13 interceptions and only eight touchdowns in the first seven games.

"He was pedal-to-the-metal," Palmer said. "That's just his personality. We aren't going to take it easy on you because it's your first year (in the offense). He is going to coach and do exactly what he does, whether it's Week 1 or Week 17. That's just the way he is."

Arians has never glossed over the fact that his offense is complicated. It requires quarterbacks and receivers to alter throws and routes based on coverages.

The Cardinals went 3-4 in the first seven games, mostly because the offense was dysfunctional.

For a handful of reasons, the offense improved dramatically over the next six games. Palmer has 12 touchdown passes with only four interceptions in that stretch. On average, he has been sacked one fewer time each game. The rushing game has produced 100 yards a game over the past six weeks,

#### TODAY

• **What:** Cardinals at Titans  
• **When:** 2:25 p.m.  
• **TV:** Ch. 11

18 more than in the first seven games.

"Just repetition and, quite frankly, doing it wrong," Palmer said, when asked about reasons for the improvement. "We have been on the mental-error list for so long — OTAs, training camp and the beginning of the season. After a while you start to get it."

It helped that the schedule softened.

In the first seven weeks, the Cardinals played against five teams with defenses ranked in the top 12: Seattle (1), Carolina (2), San Francisco (4), New Orleans (6) and Tampa Bay (12).

In the past six games, they have faced only one elite defense: Houston (3). The others range from 19th (Rams) to 30th (Eagles).

Today's opponent, the Titans, are ranked 14th overall.

Still, the Cardinals' offensive improvement is significant. In the

See CARDINALS, B8



After throwing 13 interceptions and eight TDs in his first seven games, QB Carson Palmer finally has grasped the Cardinals' complicated offense.

ARIZONA FOOTBALL

## Carey has new friend in BC foe Williams

By Daniel Berk  
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

If Ka'Deem Carey scores a touchdown in the AdvoCare V100 Bowl later this month, make sure you watch what he does next.

Now that he's got a friend on the other sideline in Boston College star running back Andre Williams, Carey has a little something fun planned.

"When I score a touchdown, you best believe I'm throwing up a '4-4,'" said Carey, referencing Williams' uniform number. "Now that I know him, I can do that because we have inside jokes."

Carey and Williams got some bonding time in this week while both were in Florida for the announcement of the Doak Walker

See FOOTBALL, B3

#### BOWL CONTEST

It's a Tucson tradition: Visit [azstarnet.com/bowls](http://azstarnet.com/bowls) to register for the Star's annual bowl contest. Look for details and sports editor Ryan Finley's picks this week.

HEISMAN TROPHY

## Freshman Winston runs away with prize

By Ralph D. Russo  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Jameis Winston left voters no choice but to give him the Heisman Trophy.

The Florida State quarterback became the second straight freshman to win the Heisman on Saturday night, earning college football's most prestigious individual award with a performance so spectacular and dominant that even a criminal investigation couldn't derail him.

"I cannot explain the feeling that I have inside right now," Winston said. "It's awesome."

When his name was announced, he quickly made his way to his mom and dad for hugs and kisses and got a bit choked up during his acceptance speech.

See HEISMAN, B4

#### HOW WE VOTED

• Star columnist Greg Hansen voted Florida State's Jameis Winston first, followed by the UA's Ka'Deem Carey and Northern Illinois' Jordan Lynch.  
• Reporter Daniel Berk voted for Winston first, followed by Auburn's Tre Mason and Carey.  
• Sports editor Ryan Finley voted Winston first, followed by Lynch and Carey.

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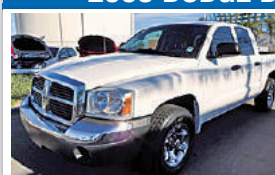
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