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Ticket sales slow for bowl trip

By Erick Studenicka
Emerald Sports Reporter

In 1989, with the Oregon football team appearing in its first postseason game in 26 years, Sunrise Travel of Eugene sold 80 Independence Bowl travel packages.

In 1992, with the Ducks appearing in their third bowl game in four years, the agency has sold only 20 travel packages.

"There is not as much interest in the bowl game this year," said Sunrise travel agent Sara Wolf. "People aren't as enthusiastic this time around."

Wolf said there were a number of reasons for the slow sales of the bowl packages.

"The game is at a bad time for some people, right after Christmas," Wolf said. "Plus, a lot of people just don't want to spend New Year's in Shreveport."

Wolf also said increased airfare has made the packages much more expensive than they were in 1989.

"In 1989, airfare to Shreveport was \$278. Now the flight costs \$406," Wolf said. "Money's a lot tighter these days."

Sales are also slow at Red Baron Travel, which has organized a charter flight from Eugene to Shreveport in conjunction with three other Eugene travel agencies.

"We have space for 124 passengers, and we've sold 60 seats," said Red Baron representative Bill Davis. "Interest in this game is way down. It doesn't even compare to 1989."

Travel packages range in price from \$528 to \$725, but some packages do not include costs such as game tickets, insurance and transfers. An Independence Bowl ticket costs \$30. Red Baron's package includes extras such as a pre-game rally and a New Year's Eve party.

Athletic department ticket office manager Hunt Holsapple said the office has sold between 900 and 1,000 orders for tickets to date.

"Ticket sales are fine, really," Holsapple said. "The two years are not comparable because in 1989 the game was played on Dec. 16, which

'The game is at a bad time for some people, right after Christmas. Plus, a lot of people just don't want to spend New Year's in Shreveport.'

— Sara Wolf,
Sunrise travel agent

meant that people only had two weeks to purchase tickets. I think people are still finalizing their travel plans this year, so sales should increase in the upcoming weeks."

Margaret Feller, assistant manager of the athletic department ticket office, said it is too early to estimate final ticket sale totals.

"Over-the-window sales of tickets won't begin until Dec. 15," Feller said. "Until then, we are taking orders for tickets. A person can order their ticket now, and then pick the ticket up later."

Feller said that souvenir tickets could also boost total sales. For the \$30 face value of a ticket, a person can receive a souvenir ticket from the game and allow the seat to be used by a needy child from the Shreveport area.

Holsapple said the athletic department would be pleased if ticket sales approached the numbers reached in 1989, when more than 5,000 supporters made the trip to Shreveport.

As part of its Independence Bowl agreement this year, the University has purchased 8,140 tickets.

Wolf foresees the Oregon booster contingent this year being much smaller than the group that made the trip in 1989, falling fall short of the 5,000 people hoped for by the athletic department.

"The way sales have been going, I'd say at the most 2,000 to 3,000 people might make the trip," Wolf said.

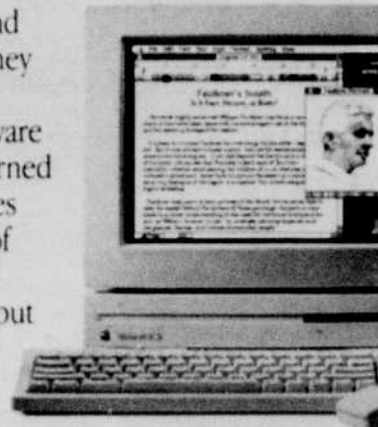


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