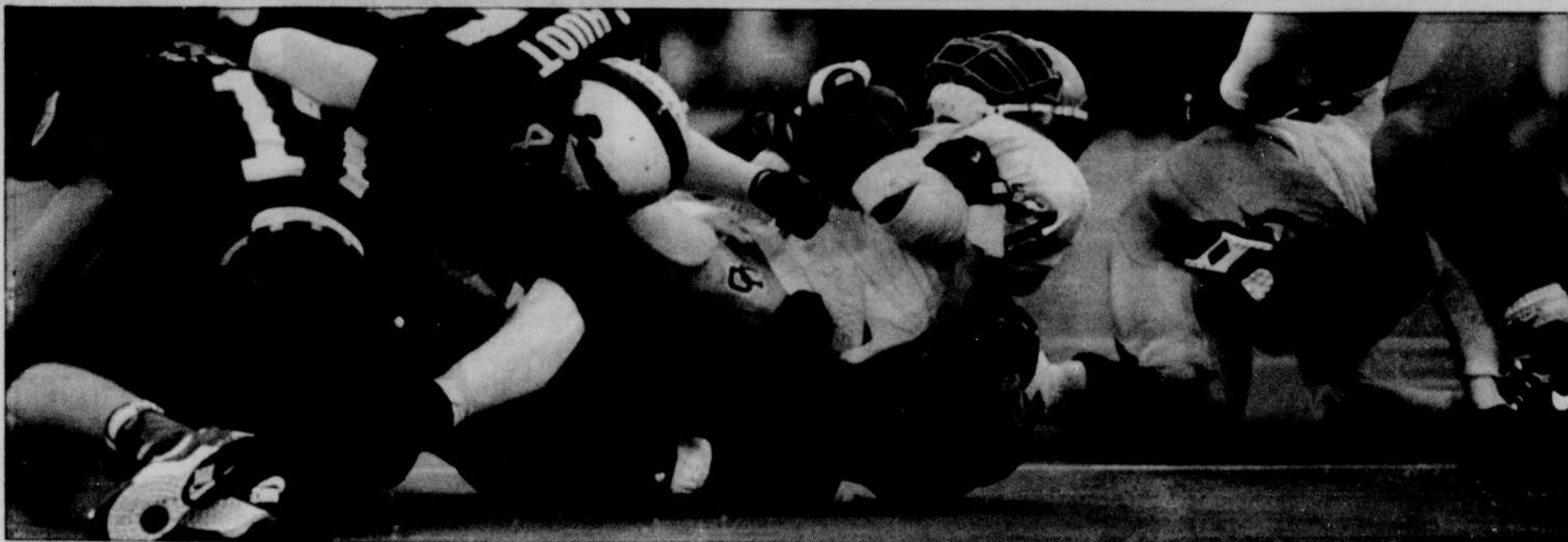


CIVIL WAR

OREGON VS OREGON STATE



Last year's Civil War victory gave Oregon the conference title and a trip to the Rose Bowl, but this year Oregon State is looking to snuff out the Ducks' Cotton Bowl aspirations. Emerald



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Bowl scenarios taking shape

■ **OPTIONS:** Oregon can finish as high as second in the Pac-10 with a win against Oregon State or sink as low fifth with a loss

By Pete Schneider
Sports Reporter

There is really no scientific formula that will determine the Oregon football team's post-season future this season; the only concrete thing the Ducks do know is that they must beat Oregon State this weekend to keep an advantage over any team in the Pacific-10 Conference.

Oregon could possibly be invited to four different bowl games. The Cotton Bowl selection committee's decision on which team they invite will influence the Ducks' other three Bowl bids. In a teleconference Wednesday, Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti hinted that he would prefer to go to the Cotton Bowl.

"I've been told that they are looking for the team that has the best record and the best national ranking," Bellotti said. "9-2 would be the best record. We

would be the highest rated team other than USC, and we would have beaten (Washington) in head-to-head competition. I think that ought to end the discussion."

In addition to the Cotton Bowl, Oregon has the opportunity to go to either the Holiday Bowl on December 29 in San Diego, the Sun Bowl on December 29 in El Paso, Texas, or the Aloha Bowl on Christmas Day in Honolulu. These are the four Bowl games in which Oregon has the best shot at getting an invitation from the respective Bowl selection committees.

Here's where things get tricky. Currently, the Ducks (5-2 in the conference) find themselves in third place in the Pac-10, behind Washington (5-1-1) and USC (6-0-1). If Oregon wins this weekend against the Beavers and Washington loses to Washington State, the Ducks still are not guaranteed a trip to the Cotton Bowl even if Oregon has a better win-loss record. Basically, the Cotton Bowl Association gets to pick which team gets to represent the Pac-10 in Dallas, once the Rose Bowl team is determined.

"First of all, you look at where the team is ranked," said Charlie Fiss, director of media relations at the Cotton Bowl. "Then you look at their overall record, then their conference standing. We know that Oregon would be a great choice, but so would Washington."

Fiss said the Cotton Bowl selection committee will meet next Monday, so it is possible Duck fans will know next week if Oregon will play in Dallas on New Year's Day.

If the Ducks lose to the Beavers and the Huskies beat the Cougars, then Oregon will have a slim chance at going to the Cotton Bowl. To throw a wrench into things, the Cotton Bowl also could end up inviting the Western Athletic Conference Champion. That could be BYU, Air Force, Colorado State, or Utah. Each team has a shot at winning the WAC.

"Chances are that Oregon has the inside track for the Cotton Bowl if they win this weekend," said Tom Starr, executive director of the Sun Bowl. "I think that

Turn to **OPTIONS**, Page 11B

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