

Oregon begins Pac-10 season with ugly Civil War win

■ **MEN'S BASKETBALL:** The Ducks were forced to play the Beavers' style in order to pull off the win.

By **Andrea DeYoung**
Sports Reporter

Eight days after clobbering Oregon State 75-50 in the consolation game of the Far West Classic, the Ducks beat the Beavers on Sunday, but this time not as easily.

The Civil War contest signified the first Pacific-10 Conference game of the season for the two teams. The Ducks came in with an overall record of 7-4 but had problems beating the 2-7 Beavers.

Much to the chagrin of most of the 7,665 fans in McArthur Court, the Beavers stayed in

control for the first seven minutes of the game as they jumped to a 14-8 lead with three three-point shots and a couple of easy baskets underneath.

But the Ducks took over for the next 11 minutes, holding Oregon State scoreless as they scored 19 straight points to take the lead 27-14. The Beavers were able to come back in the last two minutes of the half and score seven straight points of their own to narrow the Ducks' lead to four points.

Junior guard Jamal Lawrence, however, was not worried about the Beavers coming so close before halftime.

"I wasn't too concerned," Lawrence said. "I just knew that the momentum had switched back to their side and that in the second half, we would come out

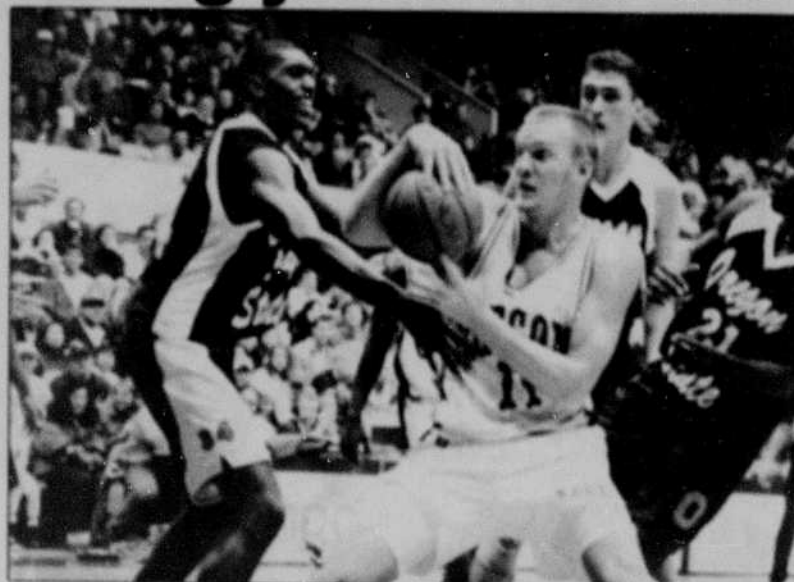
and play better."

The second half did not start smoothly. Both teams committed a foul before scoring a single basket. But the Ducks and Beavers eventually got down to shooting the ball and went back and forth as neither team was able to pull ahead.

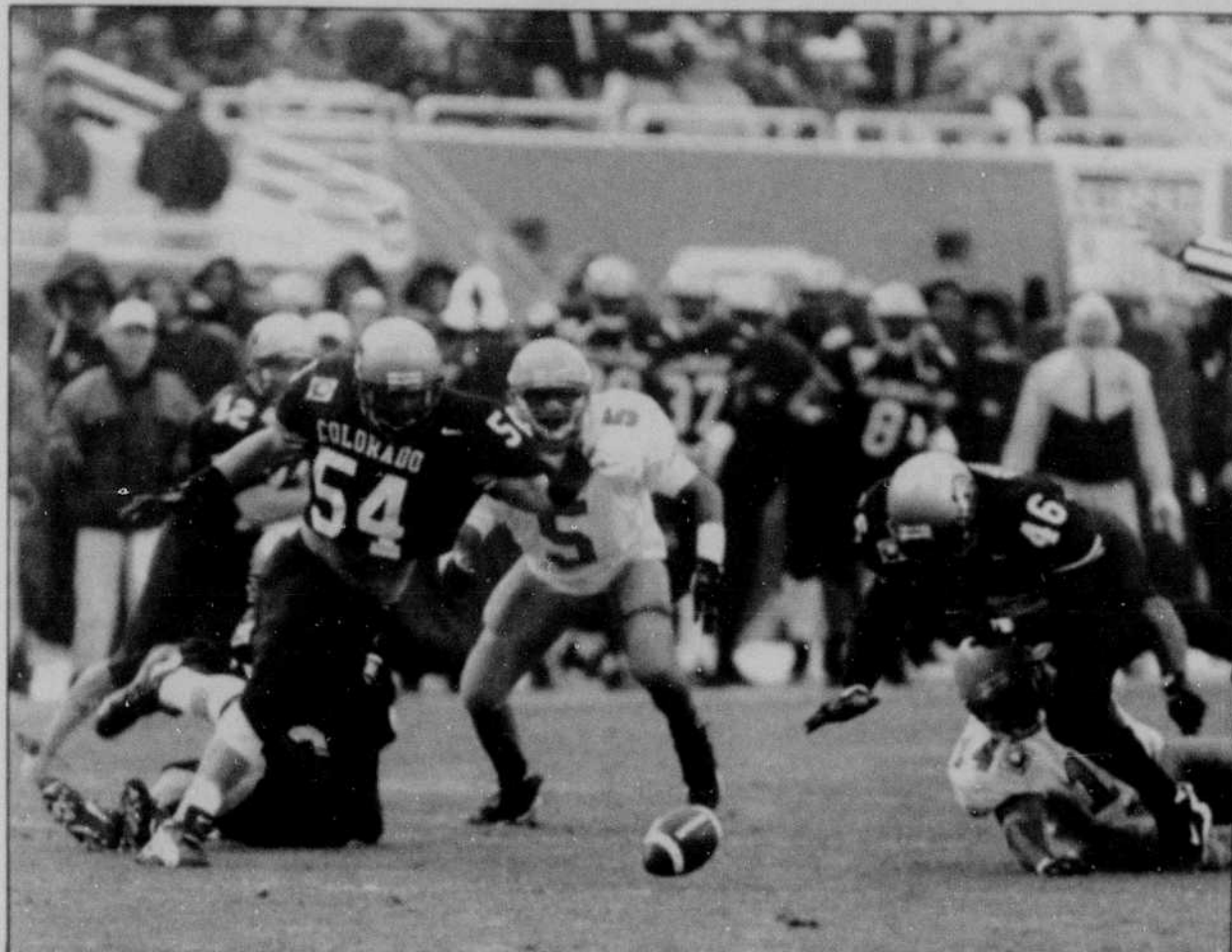
Oregon's largest lead of the half came with five and a half minutes to go when the Ducks went up by 12 points. Although Oregon State continued to score with a combination of layups and jump shots, the Ducks countered with 17 points from the free-throw line, including eight in a row, to finish off the Beavers 70-59.

Oregon was led by junior guard Kenya Wilkins with 16 points. Junior forward Kyle

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Physical play between the Ducks and Beavers led to several technical fouls, including a first half call against junior forward Kyle Milling.



The Ducks fumbled the ball three times and tallied five total turnovers on the day in their 38-6 Cotton Bowl Classic loss to Colorado on Jan. 1.

Colorado defense stops Oregon cold

■ **FOOTBALL:** The Ducks commit too many turnovers to pull out a victory

By **Trevor Kearney**
Sports Editor

The pregame hype surrounding the 1996 Cotton Bowl Classic pitted Oregon's Gang Green defense against Colorado's tenacious offense.

The buzz after the game, however, concerned the other half of the game.

Colorado came into the game averaging 486.6 yards per game and Oregon boasted the 12th-ranked defense in the nation, but it was Colorado's defensive efforts and Oregon's offensive self-destruction that caught the spotlight in Dallas.

While the Cotton Bowl matchup was not what the media built it up to be, Oregon head coach Mike Bellotti predicted that the struggle between the Oregon offense and the Colorado defense would be important. And it was.

"Colorado's defense is also very good, and I think overlooked," Bellotti said two days before the game. "I think probably, this will be the unsung part of the game, in the sense of how our offense does against their defense. It is half of the game. Maybe, if one of those sides steps up and plays great football, it will be a bigger impact on the game than the expected matchup between our defense and their offense."

Bellotti was right.

It was when Oregon's offense and Colorado's defense were on the field that the big plays came, and those big plays killed the Ducks. The Buffaloes kept the Ducks' offense off balance

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Five years and three bowl games later, 12 men leave Oregon

■ **SENIORS:** An impressive group of players leave their uniforms behind to be filled by others

By **Mark McTyre**
Assistant Sports Editor

The Ducks' 38-6 loss to Colorado on Jan. 1 at the Cotton Bowl Classic marked the end of an era for the Oregon football program as 12 players walked off the field for the final time.

Each of the seniors came to Oregon as a freshman hoping to impress the coaches — as most newcomers do — and eventually get the green jersey that places a player on the game squad. Some took longer than others, but each of the dozen earned their position.

While making the game squad was important to each player, the newcomers put that goal aside and made a pact for a higher achievement — a top bowl appear-

ance.

"As freshmen we talked about how some of us could have gone ahead and played our first year," Oregon tailback Ricky Whittle said after the Cotton Bowl loss, "but instead we wanted [the enthusiasm] to eat inside of us. To come from a high school where you're the star, you have to be put in your place. We basically sat down and said, 'We'll use this whole year to get ready.'"

During their year of preparation in 1991, the Ducks finished the season with a 3-8 record, losing their final six games. With that in mind, the freshman class had nowhere to take Oregon but up.

The next year brought dramatic changes to the fallen football program.

Whittle exploded into the Oregon spotlight as a redshirt freshman, carrying the ball 133 times for 634 yards. Defensively, cornerback Alex Molden posted career numbers as a redshirt with four interceptions and three tackles for losses.

Their play along with others earned the Ducks a 6-5 record — good enough for an invitation to the 1992 Independence Bowl.

Although Oregon lost the bowl game 39-35 to Wake Forest, the newcomers that saw action became seasoned veterans, prepared for the following season.

In 1993, more of the 12-man clan saw action — Jeremy Asher, Troy Bailey, Eugene Jackson, Dante Lewis, Cristin McLemore, Rich Ruhl and Isaac Walker — in a season that started quickly with three consecutive wins, but ended with a disappointing loss to Oregon State at Autzen Stadium.

Using the previous season to rebuild, nobody knew what the Ducks would be capable of in 1994. Some predicted a Rose Bowl berth while others predicted another 3-8 season.

At the beginning, it seemed as though the latter predictions would prevail as the Ducks started 1-2 with losses to Utah and Hawaii. However, as the season moved

along, Oregon found ways to win.

When the wins began to pile up, and the Ducks began to break into the national spotlight, the birth of Gang Green took place with defensive stands against nationally-ranked Southern California, Arizona and Washington.

Once the Ducks had defeated the Huskies it became obvious that Oregon would not be denied of a trip to Pasadena.

After a disappointing 38-20 loss to Penn State at the Rose Bowl, the Ducks and the 12 seniors knew now that they had been to a New Year's Day bowl game and lost, they had to return and win.

"Anything short of a New Year's Day bowl would be a disappointment," Bailey said prior to the beginning of this season.

When the Ducks finished their 11-game schedule with a 9-2 record and received an invitation to the Cotton Bowl Classic, they had completed part one of their two-

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