

"We've been answering questions about Oregon for four weeks, so it is nice to finally be playing them."
OSU quarterback Jonathan Smith
"It's going to be World War III."
-UO cornerback Rashad Bauman



Civil War isn't only key game in Northwest

The Apple Cup's outcome will help determine who plays in Pasadena on New Year's Day

By Scott Pesznecker
Oregon Daily Emerald

It's hard to imagine any Pacific-10 Conference football game this weekend being nearly as important as Oregon's Civil War.

However, looking toward the cold, snowy city of Pullman, Wash., such a game does exist.

Washington and Washington State prepare for the 92nd edition of the Apple Cup, which starts at 3:30 p.m. Saturday at Martin Stadium. Just like the Civil War, this intrastate matchup has Rose Bowl implications.

If Oregon State beats the Ducks in

Corvallis Saturday afternoon, then the Huskies clinch a Rose Bowl appearance if they beat the Cougars.

"Our focus has got to be on this Saturday," Washington head coach Rick Neuheisel said. "I just don't want us thinking about anything other than the Cougars."

To make circumstances even more interesting, the Huskies were ranked fifth in Monday's Bowl Championship Series standings behind Oklahoma, Miami, Florida State and Florida. Considering that Florida and Florida State face each other this Saturday, Washington has a mathematical chance of playing for the national title at the Orange Bowl

in Miami — if it beats the Cougars.

"If we can win this Saturday, it will be interesting to watch," Neuheisel said. "We're excited about where we sit."

Meanwhile...

Southern California, picked to win the Pac-10 title before the start of the season, plays UCLA at the Rose Bowl Saturday in a typically meaningful matchup.

Unfortunately for the Trojans, this weekend's game will be the closest they get to the Rose Bowl this season — or any bowl game, for that matter. USC is last in the conference standings with a

1-6 Pac-10 record.

The Apple Cup may be of importance to USC. If the Trojans win and Washington State loses, then USC won't be dead last in the conference standings at the season's end. Southern California can also avoid sole possession of last place if it wins and either Arizona State or California loses.

Regardless, USC coach Paul Hackett looks forward to Saturday's game.

"It is very easy to get distracted right now with the kind of year we've had," Hackett said. "We'll have the bell out at practice and we'll do our best to focus on this week."

Ducks shocked by the wily Athletes

The Oregon men's basketball team suffers a four point loss to Athletes in Action in its final exhibition game of the season

By Peter Hockaday
Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon men's basketball team just couldn't get any action Tuesday night.

The Ducks lost 84-80 to Athletes in Action, a touring basketball team composed of former college players, in front of 7,428 fans at McArthur Court.

Oregon couldn't contain what Oregon guard Freddie Jones called the "crafty veterans" of the AIA team.

"These guys have played a lot of basketball," Oregon head coach Ernie Kent said. "We knew coming into this game that this team was going to make us think."

AIA certainly made the Ducks think all game, especially in the first half. The Athletes jumped out to an early 11-2 lead as Oregon committed five fouls in the first six minutes. The Ducks' defense, which Kent had pointed to as an area that the team needed to work on, looked like Swiss cheese at times as the AIA veterans slashed and drew foul after foul.

But midway through the first frame, the defense toughened up and Jones started creating plays on offense. At the 10:41 mark of the first half, the guard stole the ball and took it coast-to-coast for a reverse dunk that got the fans at Mac Court out of their seats for the first time. After an AIA time-out, Jones took a pass from Bryan Bracey and laid it in to bring the Ducks within four points.

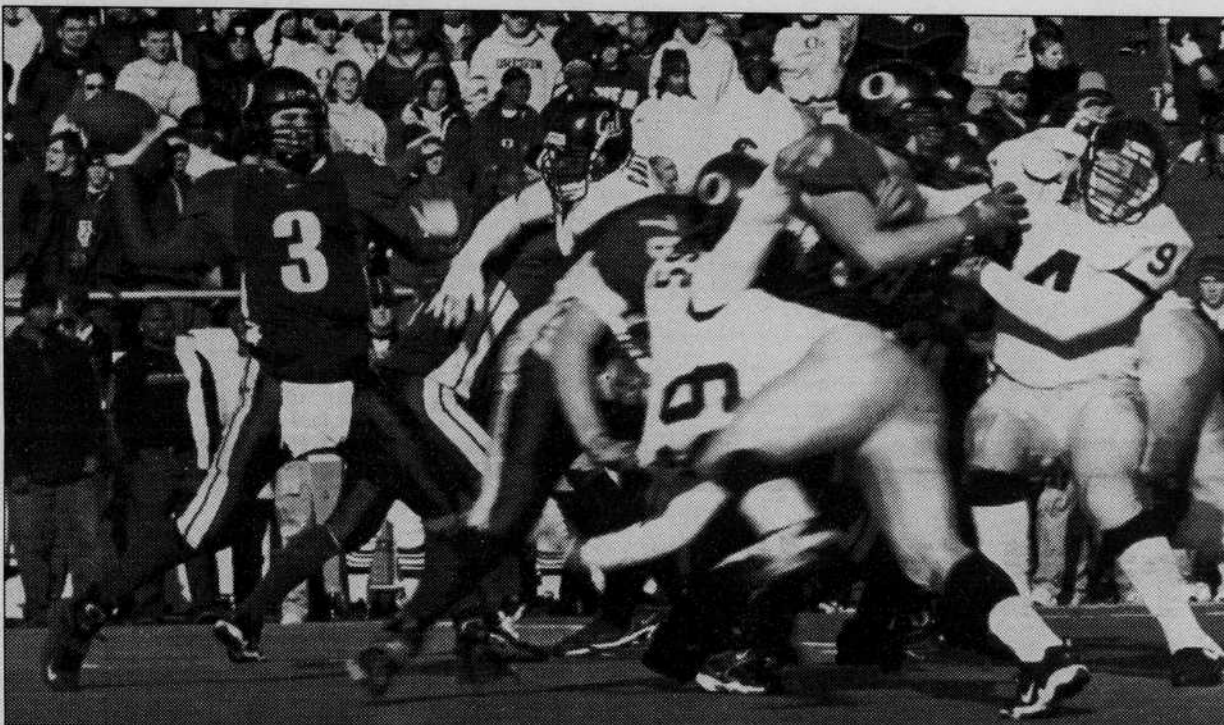
"I was just trying to make a play," said Jones, who played all 40 minutes.

Despite Jones' efforts, the situation at halftime favored the Athletes in Action. The Athletes took a 48-39 lead into the half and had some impressive numbers to go with the lead, including 17-for-30 shooting and 6-for-10 from three-point land. The Ducks went into halftime shooting 1 of 7 from beyond the three-point arc and 15-for-26 overall.

The hero of the second half was undoubtedly freshman point guard Luke Ridnour. With 10 minutes left in the game and the Ducks trailing 63-52, Ridnour rattled off 11 points in less than two minutes to cut the deficit to 66-63.

Freshman James Davis then added a three-pointer of his own to knot the score at 66 with exactly eight minutes left.

But the Athletes were persistent



Eric Martin for the Emerald

Junior quarterback Joey Harrington (3) knows as much as anyone how important the Civil War is. The native Oregonian grew up watching and attending the rivalry game and can't wait for the game to arrive. He says that his season will not be complete without a win Saturday over OrState.

Rivalry week reaches halfway point

■ One more day of hype ends, as much more begins for the highly anticipated Civil War

By Jeff Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

As if Oregon needed any more motivation than it already had for this weekend's Civil War, it got some Sunday night in the Valley River Center Red Robin, of all places.



Oregon's George Wrihster, a redshirt freshman tight end, was enjoying a meal with a friend when he was spotted by none other than Oregon State flanker T.J. Houshmandzadeh.

The Beavers leading receiver, who so far has been just as hard to stop as it is to spell his name, went up to Wrihster and cupped his hand above his mouth and let out a few spicy words.

"Hope you have fun at the Sun Bowl again," Houshmandzadeh said, or something to that extent.

At least that was the story from Oregon's Steve Smith and

Rashad Bauman Tuesday.

"We're definitely going to post that in the locker room up there," Smith said. "I wasn't there, but George called me Sunday night and told me what he said. I don't know what T.J. was doing in Eugene, but it makes you look forward to the game a lot more."

"Yeah, I heard about that and heard he was feeling pretty confident," Bauman said. "We'll see if he can back his talk up. I heard that T.J. was in Red Robin talking big trash and how he told us to get ready for the Sun Bowl. Hey, so be it. It's good."

"And I'm sure after the game when we got roses in our mouths, he'll remember the things he said."

And so Civil War week continues — with just three days remaining.

A selected number of Oregon players meet with the media for the last time today before the team focusses its full attention toward Saturday's game. Meanwhile, in Corvallis, Beaver players have finished their media circuit and are practicing behind closed doors with security positioned outside of Reser Stadium.

Oregon State tailback Ken Simonton — who scored the game-winning touchdown in the

Beavers' 44-41 double overtime Civil War victory in 1998 — enjoys all the attention the game is getting, but will not be one to feed the team any more material.

"I guess [Oregon would] be the people you'd love to hate, if you're going to use hate, but I wouldn't use those words," Simonton said at a recent media luncheon. "It's all fun. It's competition at the highest. It's a rivalry, so you take that and let [the media] build that as high as it can get and try to have fun."

Oregon junior quarterback Joey Harrington has viewed his fair share of Civil Wars during his years while growing up in Portland, and can hardly wait to participate in one of this magnitude.

"As the week goes on, it kind of becomes a slow boil," said Harrington, who made sure to point out that he has always been a Ducks fan through and through. "By Thursday and Friday, you're about ready to explode."

The 104th edition of the Civil War finally explodes at 12:30 p.m. Saturday in Corvallis' Reser Stadium. It will be telecast on a regional basis by ABC, with Keith Jackson giving the play-by-play.

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Joey Harrington
Oregon
Quarterback