

Bowl bids cementing Irish, Mountaineers look to Fiesta

Associated Press
Miami will probably stay home for the holidays. But Notre Dame and West Virginia apparently are heading for a Fiesta in Arizona. Although bowl bids don't officially go out until Saturday, many of the nation's top college football teams are already making travel plans. Fourth-ranked West Virginia seemingly locked up a Fiesta Bowl date against No. 1 Notre Dame with a 35-25 victory over Rutgers, leaving No. 3 Miami as a likely opponent for the Oklahoma-Nebraska winner in the Orange Bowl.

"We're going to be participating in a major bowl and there will be plenty of time for people to make their arrangements," West Virginia athletic director Fred Schaus said.

Schaus wouldn't name the bowl, but there was little doubt he was talking about the Fiesta.

Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz, whose team is also being sought by the Orange, was coy when asked about the bowl situation.

"What bowl can we go to to possibly enhance our standings?" he said. "Winning the national championship is nice. It's not an absolute necessity, and it's not something everyone's obsessed with, but if you are going to do something in tradition with Notre Dame's history, let's be the best we possibly can be."

Translation: Look for a Notre Dame-West Virginia matchup in the Fiesta, no matter what happens the rest of the season.

Both teams are currently undefeated, although the Irish still must play Penn State and No. 2 Southern Cal.

West Virginia has a date with No. 15 Syracuse on Saturday.

Notre Dame handed Miami its only loss this season, 31-30. But the Irish have no desire for a rematch, so the Hurricanes will probably have to settle for an Orange Bowl berth against the Big Eight champion.

The tentative lineup for the other bowl games is: Michigan vs. the Southern Cal-UCLA winner in the Rose; Arkansas vs. Florida State or UCLA in the Cotton; Auburn or Louisiana State vs. Southern Cal or Florida State in the Sugar;

Clemson vs. the Nebraska-Oklahoma loser in the Citrus; and Syracuse vs. Auburn or LSU in the Hall of Fame.

Michigan clinched the Big Ten championship and the Rose Bowl berth with a 38-9 victory over Illinois.

But Michigan coach Bo Schembechler said he's only thinking about Saturday's upcoming game against arch-rival Ohio State.

"We're playing the biggest game of the year next week," he said. "The Rose Bowl doesn't mean as much to me as playing at Ohio State."

LSU clinched at least a tie for the Southeastern Conference title with a 20-3 victory over Mississippi State, but they haven't clinched a spot in the Sugar Bowl.

If Auburn beats Alabama in Birmingham Nov. 25, it will share the league championship with LSU.

If that happens, the Sugar Bowl committee will choose the league's representative in New Orleans.

Arkansas, which beat Texas A&M 25-20 to remain undefeated in 10 games, locked up the Southwest

Conference title and a Cotton Bowl berth several weeks ago. Their opponent in Dallas figures to be Florida State or UCLA, if the Bruins lose to Southern Cal.

Clemson beat Maryland 49-25 to gain its third straight Atlantic Coast Conference title and a trip to the Citrus Bowl against the loser of Saturday's Nebraska-Oklahoma game.

Here's the tentative lineups for the other bowls:
Gator — Georgia vs. Michigan State, Pittsburgh or Colorado.
Sun — Alabama vs. Army.
Aloha — Washington State vs. Houston.

All American — Florida vs. Illinois or Michigan State.
Holiday — Wyoming vs. Oklahoma State.

California — Western Michigan vs. Fresno State.
Freedom — Brigham Young vs. Arizona or Colorado.
Independence — Southern Mississippi vs. Texas El-Paso.
Liberty — Indiana vs. South Carolina.

Peach — Iowa vs. North Carolina State or Pac-10 team.

Lewis' 196 yards not enough to put A&M in win column

By Hal L. Hammons
Sports Editor

Player of the Week
Darren Lewis

The Aggies obviously were going to win or lose with Darren Lewis Saturday. They did both.

Apparently Jackie Sherrill didn't care that Arkansas' run defense was ranked No. 1 in the country. Apparently he thought his star running back would be able to handle them.

Apparently he was right. The sophomore from Dallas Carter rambled for 92 yards in the first quarter on his way to a 196-yard performance — his second best of the year.

He carried the ball on Texas A&M's first five plays. He earned A&M's first six first downs. He ran on eight of the first nine Aggie first down plays, including the first five.

Was it to open up the rest of the offense, or was it to run Lewis for its own sake? Either way, it worked. The first quarter may even have been too slanted toward Lewis. His 92 yards rushing accounted for all but seven yards of A&M's total offensive output.

It ended with Lewis carrying the ball three plays in a row for 31 yards, taking the ball to the Arkansas 34. He got 12 more on the first play of the second quarter.

Then Robert Wilson got the ball — the first play of the drive that anybody but center Mike Arthur, quarterback Bucky Richardson, and Lewis had touched the ball at all.

Wilson fumbled.

It didn't discourage Sherrill from getting away from the one-dimensional attack, though. And diversification worked the next time.

The defense might have figured with the ball back on the A&M one yard line. Lewis was sure to be the man. Instead he carried the ball only three times for eight yards on the drive, as the Aggies took the ball the length of the field behind Wilson's running and Richardson's passing.

But in the end the Aggies could never count on anything else but Lewis' running.

Wilson met a brick wall most of the times he tested the Arkansas line. And Richardson threw two key interceptions — one that went for a touchdown, another in the other end zone that killed a sure scoring drive.

Arkansas could afford to overkey on Lewis the next time the Aggies had the ball inside their own five, and it resulted in a safety.

The Hogs stopped Lewis on a key third down play, forcing the Aggies into a punting situation with less than eight minutes remaining.

The attempted fake that followed resulted in an 11-yard loss, giving Arkansas the field position to tack on a field goal to extend the lead to 25-14, essentially icing the game for the Razorbacks.

Sometimes it just doesn't pay for me to leave town



Hal L. Hammons
Sports Editor

Friday night, 10 p.m., Fayetteville, Ark. My family van plows into a dingbat high-school girl's Mustang in front of a shopping mall. Of course, I wasn't at fault. The dip-ette cruised on through a flashing red light doing about 30 on a wet road. We didn't have a prayer of stopping. Actually I wasn't even driving at all. It was my mother — the epitome of paranoia. If *anybody* could have avoided the accident, she could have.

But she couldn't and didn't. The mental equivalent of Chuck Barris — obviously a future physics major at the University of Arkansas — could've and didn't. The result was pretty much what you would expect. Squash city.

Now, I don't *really* believe in omens, buuuuuuuuuu.

Ya kinda figger I should've been expecting the worst Saturday afternoon.

I mean, Arkansas *did* seem to have everything going for them. They were 9-0. They *did* match up pretty well with the Aggies.

And if that weren't enough, there's always the Texas A&M-Hal L. Hammons road game curse.

I don't know what it is, but I can't seem to

be present at an Aggie road game when the Aggies actually show up themselves.

OK, this year's Cotton Bowl win over Notre Dame is a notable exception. I was there, and the team was too. Instead it was Lou Holtz' brain that didn't make the trip. And the Auburn win too — I was there for that one.

But other than that, my record stands at 6-2 — 3-0 this year. Pretty impressive, huh?

As much as I like for the Aggies to win road games, as well as home games, you'd think I'd learn. You'd think I'd stay home.

quarters rolled by. A&M wouldn't blitz him, and eventually he found receivers. Result — a Texas Tech win to kick off the conference season.

Wins against Baylor and Notre Dame made me think that feeling that's always telling me the Aggies aren't going to do well was just paranoia. But this year has been atrocious for me and the Ags on the road.

I went to the Kickoff Classic. I went to Louisiana State. And now I've gone to Arkansas. Three for three.

How much do you believe in stuff like that? I never really have, but it's always been fun to fool around with it.

My sophomore year I wore the same sweater to three critical games in a row at the end of the season. Arkansas, SMU and Texas. The Aggies won all three. Of course, all three were at home.

I know none of that really matters. The team isn't going to play any better or worse one way or the other. That's why I'm not going to feel guilty about going to the Texas game. Even though it's in Austin.

Maybe I got a big head when A&M beat Texas — in Austin, and in *my presence* — to clinch the Cotton Bowl in 1986. But then again, I didn't have any idea what was in store. The game, plus the 1986 Cotton Bowl against Auburn, actually had me with a losing record — one I enjoyed fully.

But Ohio State would bring me and the Aggies down to earth.

I travelled all the way to Lubbock to watch the Aggies play another stupid game. Billy Joe Tolliver just sat back in the pocket as the

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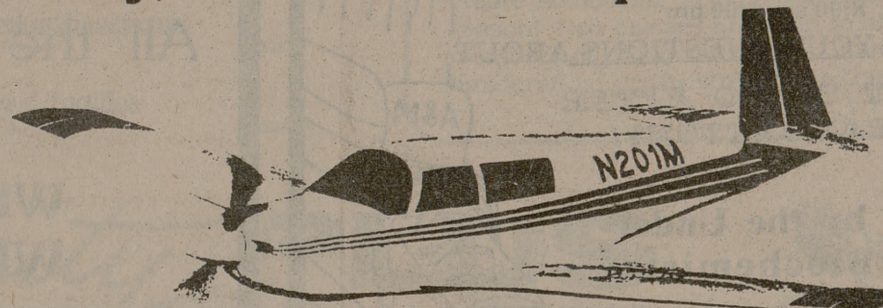
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