

Gordon Oregon's Most Famous Star

Former Duck Has Excellent Baseball Career

By Sam Fidman

About this time of year, throughout the country, the old codgers like to prop their feet up on the pot-bellied stove, munch on cheese and crackers, drink beer and talk baseball.

Maybe that is why the game is called the national pastime. In the dreary winter months, with football and all its mobbish sensationalism just mellowed into history, and basketball, with its humorous spectacle of gangly nakedness, popping out of hibernation, majestic king baseball takes the spotlight.

The oldtimers back in Iowa usually get the "hot stove league" into full swing with the first soft snow. They have lots to talk about—Bob Feller, how Stan Hack will do with the Des Moines Bruins next year, and so on into the night.

Down in Georgia they haven't got the snow, but they do have Ty Cobb and a long string of baseball immortals.

Right here in Eugene they like to talk about Joseph Lowell Gordon. And there is lots to talk about.

Among other things that happened on Feb. 18, 1915, at Los Angeles, Joe Gordon was born. Los Angeles lays claim to him.

Later, he lived in Portland, and attended Jefferson High School there. Portland lays claim to him.

He attended the University of Oregon, where he received his BA in 1939 as a Physical Education major. So, Eugene claims him, too.

1941 SERIES

Joe Gordon was making his finest hay early in the present decade. It was in the 1941 world series that, as second baseman for the New York Yankees, he batted .500 against Brooklyn. That, plus his sensational fielding made him the toast of the baseball world.

Joe liked Eugene then—and he likes it now. He chose to make his home here rather than move to the big city as so many players do when they make the major league grade.

After that dazzling series performance, Joe returned to Eugene, and nobody made a fuss over him. He likes that about his neighbors. It was after this same '41 series and season that Joe was named the "Most Valuable Player" in the American League.

FELL IN '42

The next year an odd thing happened. Instead of collecting 7 hits in 14 trips to the plate as he had done in 1941, Joe got 2 for 21 and a sickly .095 batting average as the Yankees lost the world series to St. Louis.

But when he came back to Eugene, although some sports scribes tabbed him the "goat" of the series, he was as warmly received as the year before when he had set the baseball world on its ear.

After the boys stir up the fire, and fill up their glasses again, they sit back and observe that the Yankees had their eye on Joe when he first entered the University of Oregon.

While at Jefferson, he also made a name for himself as the running mate of Bobby Grayson, who was to become an All-American half-back at Stanford.

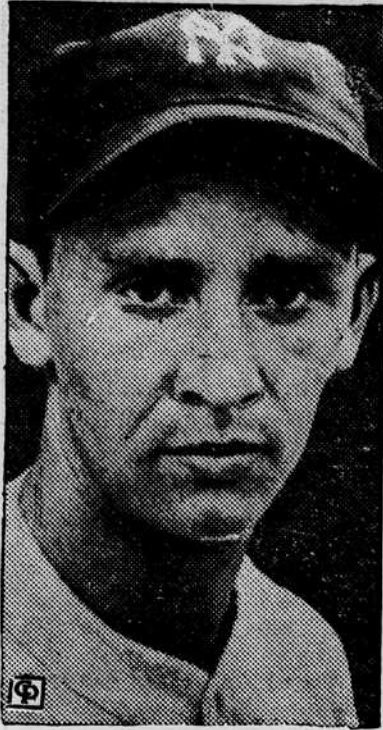
JOINED ACORNS

The Yankees advised him to keep away from football; so he concentrated on baseball. He paced Oregon to the Northern Division flag in 1934 and 1935. Then, after his junior year on the campus, he joined the Oakland Oaks of the Pacific Coast League.

His trail to the big time then led him to the Newark Bears, from where he was called up to the world champion Yankees in 1938.

Oregonians like Joe as much for his personal life as for his amazing feats on the diamond.

It was love at first sight for Joe and the former Dorothy Crum. They



JOE GORDON

were married in 1938, his first year with the Yankees.

"I was scared to death," Joe said, "because I knew McCarthy (Joe McCarthy, then Yankee manager) didn't like his players to get married during the season. But when I asked his permission, he said, 'Sure. Can she cook?' 'Yes sir,' I told him—and left as fast as possible."

The day after his wedding, with his bride looking on, Joe smashed out a pinch-hit home run.

"THE FLASH"

Most ball players pick up at least one good nickname. Joe was handed two of them—"Flash" Gordon, in reference to the comic strip character, and "Trigger," devised by his teammates because of his love for hunting and tinkering mechanically.

As far as hobbies, "Flash" lists aviation, hunting, fishing, and dogs. A man who loves his leisure time, Joe uses every opportunity to take advantage of the wonders of Oregon. He usually spends his off-sea-

Want To Buy a Duck?

The Emerald sports staff disagrees on some things, and one of the biggest issues at present is who will win the Rose Bowl game between the California Bears and the Ohio State Buckeyes January 2.

Ace Reporter Sam Fidman and Coasting Columnist Bill Willard have disagreed so completely on the outcome that they have compromised the issue.

If California wins, Fidman must sit in front of the College Side Inn with blind man glasses and an old hat on, and selling pencils for one day. If the Buckeyes come out on the long end of the score, look for Willard in that spot.

son working at his downtown Eugene hardware store, but don't look for him there when nature calls.

The Yankees traded Joe and infielder Eddie Bockman to the Cleveland Indians on Oct. 19, 1946. In return they got pitcher Allie Reynolds. Cleveland did not suffer too greatly on the deal—in 1948 they became the world champions, with "Flash" Gordon welding the center

of the tightest infield in baseball.

As the coals die down in the old stove, the boys look back on the sparkling major league record of Eugene's Joe Gordon.

Complete official statistics, up to and including the 1948 season, show that Joe has a lifetime fielding average of .969. His average in 29 world series games is .976. In seven all-star games it is 1.000.

Student Injured in PE Class

Mervyn Hampton, sophomore, was released from the Infirmary yesterday following treatment for a broken nose and eye injuries suffered in a tennis class Monday.

Hampton said the rain Monday forced him and three others from the class inside and they were practicing in a handball court. They were hitting the ball against the walls of the small court when Hampton was hit by someone standing in front of him who swung his racket back in preparing to hit the ball.

Hampton was hit by the wooden part of the racket. His nose was broken and his glasses smashed. Doctors removed bits of glass from his eyes Monday.

Hampton told the Emerald that he was "angry enough to do something about this. They never should teach PE classes winter term anyway."

Paul R. Washke, instructor of the class, said he didn't want to make a statement until he had talked to Hampton.

Fog Causes Crash

A car driven by Byron E. Lippert, freshman, was slightly damaged Sunday morning from a collision at Monroe and West Fifth Street. The other car was driven by James F. Frantz, 91 N. Polk Street.

Fog was blamed in the accident. Damage to Lippert's car was \$75, and to Frantz's car, \$50.

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