

Duck Tracks

By Don Dewey

The clutching hands of professional baseball have ruined what otherwise might have been an extremely interesting Washington-Washington State basketball series next weekend.

Pro baseball in general—and the National League Boston Braves in particular—removed from the collegiate scene the player that should have met Washington's Bob Houbregs in a great duel of great pivotmen this year. Gene Conley, the Washington Stater who led Northern Division point producers as a sophomore in 1950, won't match shots with Houbregs. Instead he'll serve up pitches in the National league... in what should have been his senior year in college.

As a sophomore Conley pumped through 220 points to lead his team-mates from Pullman to a run-away championship. Houbregs, who also led the league in scoring his sophomore year, was less productive than Conley by 22 points.

Baseball Talents Wanted

But it was Conley's baseball talents that attracted the scouts. The six-foot, eight-inch pitcher showed next to nothing in his mound performances here in Eugene, but the Boston Braves saw what they wanted and signed him.

This is to be Conley's year in the majors according to Braves' Manager Tommy Holmes, who managed Conley at Hartford last year. In the Eastern league Conley pitched 20 victories against nine defeats, compiled a nice-looking earned run average and walked off with just about all the "most valuable" awards the league could offer a pitcher. Now, Holmes doesn't see how Conley can miss in the major leagues. He's got a lot of height to throw the ball down from, and, what's more, he has control.

Another former Northern Division hoop star who will have a chance to display his baseball talents in the Bean City will be tricky Sammy White who left the University of Washington in 1949 after twice making the ND all-star basketball team. White's batting average was only .271 in the class A Eastern league, but 11 of his 115 hits were homers. He'll probably get close attention at the Boston Red Sox' training camp, since catchers, especially good catchers, are a rarity these days.

One of Conley's team-mates also forsook basketball to try his hand at the professional side of the national pastime. When Ted Tappe, a howitzer-hitting sophomore guard, left school to sign with the Cincinnati Reds as an outfielder, he was much lauded for refusing to sign to a bonus contract. Everyone figured he was wise in keeping out from under the "bonus baby" rule which would probably have forced him to move up too fast through the minor leagues. It was a wise move, all right, but what good did it do him? A couple of weeks ago he was inducted into the U.S. air force.

At least four of the University of Oregon's contributions to the professional baseball picture are still taking their cuts each spring. Joe Gordon, of course, is still managing the Sacramento Senators, and he still has quite a few base hits left in his bat, judging from his 1951 performance.

Oregon's Contribution

Two up-and-comers who hope to stick with the Portland Beavers this year are Dick Waibel and Dick Bartle. The former, a pitcher who was plucked by the Beavers before he ever tried on an Oregon varsity uniform, will be running in pretty stiff competition. Bartle, however, is assured of at least a good look-see before being relegated to the more minor of the minor leagues. The Beavers played all last season without a real first baseman and they'll probably do their best to see that a good one (if that's what Bartle is) doesn't slip through their fingers.

A third former Webfoot is trying to get on with the Beavers. He's Dick Whitman, who center-fielded for Hoby Hobson's Northern Division champions of 1941 and 1942. Whitman is evidently settled in the minor leagues after brief stays with the Brooklyn Dodgers and the Philadelphia Phils. He has indicated that he'd like to spend at least some of the rest of his playing days in the confines of Portland's Vaughn street ball-yard.

One ND basketball great has elected to stay in the hoop game—unlike Conley, Tappe and White—and it looks like he made a wise decision.

Still Ranks Among Greats

It was two weeks ago in the National Basketball association all-star game that Oregon State's Red Rocha proved he still ranks among the nation's truly great ball players. The slim red-head started at forward for the East All-Stars and collected 12 points and third scoring honors for the victorious East. Only Paul Arizin and Ed Macauley, a pair of one-time All-Americans, added more to the East's cause than did Rocha.

Four Meets Left For Aquaducks

The University of Oregon swimmers, with four meets left on their schedule, will close out their Northern division dual meet season against the Oregon State Beavers on Saturday.

The Ducks now have a 2-2 record in ND competition. Following the OSC meet, Oregon is slated to enter the Northern division meet at Corvallis on March 8, the Far Western AAU meet and the NCAA meet, both to be held later in the month.

Oregon holds one win over the Beavers already this season—a 58-28 triumph on February 2. With this in mind the Ducks will be heavy favorites to repeat.

PE Honorary Pledges Five

Five men were pledged by the Omicron Chapter of the Phi Epsilon Kappa national physical education fraternity on Sunday afternoon, February 24.

These men were John Bachman, Jack Gamet, Kenneth Hodgerf, William Hoss and Arthur Thompson.

The local chapter was installed at the University of Oregon in March 31, 1928 and is the only active chapter in the state.

Bridge Champions Wait for Invitation

With the four winning partners of the inter-collegiate bridge tournament awaiting an invitation to the nationals, the SU recreation committee is cluminating its winter activities.

Only event remaining is Thursday night's session of bridge lessons by Gunning Butler. At that time Gunning will present his last instruction for this term's series, which have attracted several students.

Of the four partners competing in the inter-collegiate bridge tournament last Thursday night only two will be selected for the national bridge tourney in Chicago April 18 and 19. Selections will be based upon the bids made and tricks took by each team last Thursday. These statistics have been sent to Chicago for judging.

U. of O. bridge finalists were John McAloon and Gunning Butler, Rhoda Gow and Pat Ruan, Marilyn Patterson and Barbara Burke, and Ron Clark and Lew Langer. Those four partners eliminated Betsy Erb and Mary Lou Hanson, Monroe Blackwill and Robert Lucas in the pre-semi-finals last Wednesday night.

Thus ended the term's SU organized recreation. Last week's ping pong tournament and dance contest selected Doug Hunt best ping pong player and Donna Ringle with Donald Monte best dancers. Champion billiard players, selected by a recent tournament have been awarded free billiard privileges in the SU basement.

SPORTS STAFF

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