

Duck Tracks

By Bill Gurney
Emerald Sports Editor

Coach Don Kirsch's Oregon baseball team left by bus at 5:00 p.m. Monday for the Inland Empire and two games each with the Washington State Cougars and Idaho Vandals, after which they travel to Seattle for another pair with the Washington Huskies.

They won't return until May 14, making a nine-day period, during which they will pretty well determine how they will finish in the Northern Division race.

At this writing, Oregon State leads the ND with six wins and two losses, followed by the Ducks with four victories and two losses. Next comes Washington with a four and four record, followed by WSC with three and five, and cellar-dwelling Idaho with three and seven.

The big worry for Kirsch is pitching; his hitters have been fairly robust. After his number one hurler, southpaw Don Siegmund, he is hard put to choose between a number of others who have been rather inconsistent.

Trip Is a Toughie

There are Bill Bottler, sophomore righthander, Norm Forbes, a freshman from Victoria, B. C. with a highly touted curve ball, Stan Aune, veteran righthander and Bill Mays, curveballing senior righthander, all of whom are capable of effective performances.

The trip is a truly severe test, as the Ducks play six games in seven days. Wednesday and Thursday they face Idaho at Moscow; then WSC at Pullman Friday and Saturday, and swinging up to Seattle on their chartered bus for games Monday and Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Coach John Londahl's junior varsity outfit will close out its season this weekend when they meet the Oregon State jayvees at Eugene Friday, and at Corvallis Saturday.

Last weekend, the Ducklings lost a pair to OSC, and they have not been too potent all season. Since the varsity skimmed the cream off what was in the beginning a rather slim freshman crop, Londahl has not been overloaded with talent.

Several Talented Boys on JV's

However, he said he does have several boys who should help the varsity next year, with added steadiness and experience.

"That extra year of difference between the freshman and sophomore seasons means a lot to young ballplayers," he stated, "they develop poise and steadiness while working on their mechanical mistakes."

Londahl is not deep in pitching, although he thinks that two of his current hurlers have possibilities. They are Bill Blodgett and Farrell Albright, both freshman righthanders.

Blodgett performed for the 1951 Grant high school state champions as a prepster. Londahl stated that his big trouble to date has been a tendency to take too long a stride in his delivery, a fault he has been working to correct.

Albright, who hails from Milwaukie, Oregon, has been alternating between spring football practice and the Ducklings baseball team. He too has been improving steadily, according to Londahl.

In the infield, Londahl picks Jim Johnson, shortstop from Boise, Idaho, as the best varsity prospect at the present, largely because of his hustling proclivities.

Out of the Crowd Comes Johnson

Fans will remember Johnson as the young man whom varsity Coach Kirsch called out of the crowd to act as a baserunner when the Oregon bench was exhausted in the second WSC game. Johnson made a bad throw afield, but redeemed himself in the 13th inning of the wild game when he laid down a perfect drag bunt with the bases loaded to give the Ducks victory.

Also performing well has been Paul Byhre, a freshman from Portland's Washington high school who operates at second base. Byhre also played junior varsity basketball last season.

Outfielders Neal Marlett and Bob Wagner have shown considerable hitting promise, according to Londahl. Marlett was a catcher last season for Lincoln high school in Portland, and hits a long ball. Wagner performed for Parkrose as a prep, and has been plagued by a hitch in his batting swing this year. Also, he could use additional speed afoot.

There's an Art to Running

Londahl stated that several of his athletes would perhaps be benefited by workouts on the track team, as they do not know as yet how to run properly.

"They stay too long in one place," he stated, "and are on their heels too much."

Londahl is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army ROTC unit on campus, and is completing his first year of a three-year tour of duty in Eugene.

A former Oregon outfielder, he performed for Coach Billy Reinhart in the late 1920's.

JV's Drop Two Games

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and gave up five runs in the seven full innings that he pitched, but he was getting weak on the mound so Coach John Londahl pulled him and put in Lewis for one inning then substituted Bill Blodgett to finish out the last stanza.

Catcher Don Hedgepeth was the hitting punch of the JV's. Jim Spiekerman, Oregon centerfielder got one of his nicest hits of the season when he beat out a solid triple.

This win was the third for Nierman in his three starts in the series. Oregon has lost the unofficial crown between the two schools and OSC can be called the new State of Oregon junior varsity champs in their four wins so far out of the series of six to be played. The next two games will be played Friday and Saturday to conclude the season.

Golf Team Adds On WSC Victory

The University of Oregon golf team, coached by Sid Milligan, easily defeated the Washington State Cougars Friday at the Eugene Country Club by a 23½-3½ margin. The Ducks added the Cougars to its list of victories among which are the University of Portland and the OSC squad.

In morning best ball action the Duck squad trimmed the WSC golfers with the score of 7½-1½ and in the afternoon match play Oregon golfers completed their rounds victoriously with the wide margin of 16-2.

Letterman Fred Mueller turned in the best rounds of the day with a three under par 69. Sophomore Don Kreiger of Oregon and John Halin of WSC tied for second best with par 72.

Bob Atkinson and Al Mundle

combined their talents in the best ball action in the morning and ended up with the score of 72.

SUMMARY:

Best Ball: Ron Clark-Fred Mueller (UO) 69, 1½ v. John Halin-Larry Graft (WSC) 71, 1½; Bob Atkinson-Al Mundle (UO) 66, 3 v. Lew Williams-Chuck Kenny Kenney (WSC) 74-0; Don Krieger-Bud Cross (UO) 69, 3, v. Les Hilby-Tom Gullickson (WSC) 74, 0.

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