

# Duck Tracks

By Bob Robinson  
Emerald Sports Editor

Talk about having the wool pulled over your eyes! We think that the Oregon State Barometer sports department has really gone "bugs" with a recent article they printed on Beaver basketball coach, Slat Gill.

To quote the Barometer exactly: "Slat Gill is in our opinion the best basketball coach in the nation!" Whooh! We wonder what such stalwart hoop mentors as Adolph Rupp of Kentucky, Phog Allen of Kansas, Howard Hobson of Yale, and numerous others would think of that statement.

Don't get us wrong. We are not saying that Gill isn't a good coach. What we are wondering about is this statement which they made saying he is the greatest coach of them all.

## No Higher Than Fourth

Gill has turned out many fine teams at Oregon State but then so have many other coaches. It is interesting to note that the Beavers have never placed higher than fourth in the N. C. A. A. play-offs. It seems to us that in as many years of coaching as Gill has spent he would have been able to produce at least one national champion if he is the "greatest coach in the nation."

Hobson, although he spent much less time in one place as a coach, guided the Oregon Ducks to the N. C. A. A. title in 1939. And that is not the only coast school which has attained college basketball's throne room. Stanford won the championship in 1942 and Washington State placed second in 1941.

Why hasn't a Gill-coached team ever been able to ascend title heights? It couldn't be said that he never has had the material. In Skeet O'Connell, Ed Lewis, Cliff Crandall, Red Rocha, Lew Beck, Erland Anderson, Alex Peterson, and Dick Ballantyne, Gill has had some of the most capable hoopers the Pacific Coast conference has ever seen.

## Coach Makes a Difference

The fact that OSC has never been able to quite reach the N. C. A. A. championship is in itself an explanation of why Gill is not the top coach in the country. It is our belief that the difference between a great team and a very good one is the coach.

With the tremendous amount of capability that hoopers have attained in the last 20 years, good basketball teams have become more and more in number. By the time that the top fives of this select group have eliminated themselves down to a final eight, which take part in the N. C. A. A. tourney, there is very little difference in their players' capabilities.

This is where top-flight coaching becomes apparent. When ten cagers of very even ability take to the maple boards to play each other, what happens? Usually, not always, the team with the best coaching strategy behind it comes out on top.

## Strategy Important

One point of clarification. When we speak of coaching being the determining factor, we do not mean to infer that a coach whose team doesn't win any cups is not capable. What we do mean is that after a quintet has won its way all the way to the regional play-offs of the N. C. A. A. tourney, oftentimes coaching strategy is the determining factor in just how far they get in their quest for the title.

If Gill can be termed the best hoop mentor in the business it seems to us that in all his years of coaching he would have been able to guide at least one of his potent teams to the very top of the heap.

## Shaw's Joke Backfires

George Shaw, Oregon center-fielder, came up with a joke at last week's Oregon-Willamette baseball game that had everyone who heard it rocking with laughter. But, ironically, within one hour after he had pulled his bit of humor, Shaw was forced to bite his lip and wish that he had never opened his mouth.

Just before the start of the Bearcat-Duck diamond fracas, tutor Don Kirsch of the Ducks asked Shaw if he hadn't better wear a pair of sunglasses, considering the brightness of the gleaming sun. Shaw replied: "No. Don, my brother Jerry is coming to the game afterwhile and he will stand behind the backstop and blot out the whole sun so I won't need them."

When players and other officials along the players' bench heard this comment the whole group of them became wild with laughter. Almost all of them knew George's brother, rotund, 240 pound Jerry, and the humor of the statement hit everyone at the same time.

A few innings later George was quite embarrassed when a long fly ball off one of the Willamette bats dropped harmlessly within five feet of him while he stood unable to see it because of the shiny sun.

Good sport that he is, Shaw saw his mistake and sent shortstop John Keller in to get the glasses during a time-out period called specially for the purpose.

## Legal Eagles Upset Hale Kane Squad

The Legal Eagles pulled a big surprise in intramural softball action Thursday afternoon when they upset highly favored Hale Kane, 9-3.

In other Thursday games; Chi Psi walloped Delta Tau Delta, 11-2; Campbell Club stopped Phi Gamma Delta, 10-6; Pi Kappa Alpha rolled over Tau Kappa Epsilon, 14-3; Phi Delta Theta shut out Delta Upsilon, 9-0; and Merrick and French halls battled to a 4-4 deadlock in a game called because of the time limit.

The Eagles scored their startling triumph as a result of several good hits in the right spots and some poor pitching on the part of the losers.

The Phi Delt won over the DU's with a neat display of class that should make them a serious threat to any team planning on taking the softball title this season.

Campbell Club looked good in winning over the Fiji's. Larry Beckius paced the hitting attack for the Clubbers with two hits and a walk in his three times at bat.

## UW Hosts Idaho In N. D. Opener

The surprisingly - successful Washington Huskies get their first 1954 taste of Northern Division baseball this weekend as they open the league campaign at Graves field against University of Idaho. The teams meet at 3:30 Friday afternoon and at 2 o'clock Saturday.

Coach Bill Marx, obviously pleased with his team's performance in winning six of its first seven non-conference encounters, will lead with his ace, Bill Reams, in the Friday opener. Roy Velling, the big curve - baller who has notched two wins in relief, will go to the mound Saturday.

With Washington State's strong Cougars rolling into town for games on Monday and Tuesday, Marx is hoping that his top pitchers will go the distance so that he can use either Kit Gorohoff or Bob Graff, both sophomores, on Monday, and Reams again on Tuesday.

The rest of the Washington lineup for the Idaho opener may look like this: Jack Ballard, catcher; Larry Watson, first base; Harvey Jarvis, second base; Bill Stuht, shortstop; Jack Scott, third base; Roland Halle, Lou Roselli and Rod Pressey, outfielders. Should a southpaw go to the mound for the Vandals, though, the Husky outfield probably will undergo two changes, with only Halle remaining as a starter.

"We've come a lot farther than I thought we would," Marx says as his Huskies await the opening series, "but our hitting has been a bit on the anemic side against the good pitchers, and we must tighten our infield defense before we can become pennant contenders."

Some idea of the Huskies' running speed can be gathered from the stolen base statistics. In seven games, they've stolen 33 bases, or nearly five per contest. The speed has proven invaluable in the outfield, too, where it is one of the keys to that fine defense.

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## Duckling Baseballers Schedule 12 Tussles

The Oregon Frosh baseball team will play a total of 12 games this season according to the schedule released by the Oregon athletic department Thursday afternoon.

The Ducklings, who have as good a group of young players as they have had in many seasons, opened their slate last Monday afternoon when they walloped Springfield high school by the lop-sided score of 13-1. The Frosh were to play Eugene high on the Axemen's home diamond Thursday in their second tussle.

Coaching the Ducklings this year is Ray Coley, who came to the Webfoots from Boise junior college in 1949 after two years of competition in both the collegiate and semi-pro leagues of southern Idaho. He was a standout shortstop for the Ducks in 1950 and 1951 prior to his graduation.

Following is the 1954 schedule for the Frosh nine.

- Apr. 15 Eugene at Eugene
- 17 Central Catholic at Frosh diamond.
- 20 Eugene at Frosh diamond.
- 23 OSC Rooks at Frosh diamond.
- 29 McChord Air Force Base at Frosh diamond
- 30 OSC Rooks at Corvallis
- May 1 Eugene at Frosh diamond
- 7 OSC Rooks at Frosh diamond
- 8 OSC Rooks at Corvallis
- 14 Medford at Frosh diamond
- 15 Springfield at Springfield.

## Beavers Stop Wash. State

By the Associated Press

Oregon State came from behind in the last innings at Corvallis Thursday, to win its second straight baseball game from Washington State in Northern Division action. The score was 6-4 in favor of the Beavers.

Infielders Jay Dean and Bobby Buob provided the scoring punch for the winners. OSC trailed 3-2 until the seventh inning, when Dean came to bat with two men in scoring position. He lashed a single that scored both.

Shortstop Buob then provided two insurance runs by singling home another pair of tallies in the eighth frame.

Washington State had taken the lead in the fourth, when a double by Terry Sparks, an error and singles by Jack Hardman and Ernie Cecaci produced three runs.

After two were out in the ninth inning, Washington State started a rally. There were successive hits by Ron Foisey, Sparks, and Earl McIntosh for one run before relief pitcher Al Guidotti, who entered the game in the fourth, managed to retire the visitors.

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