

Duck Tracks

By JERRY RAMSEY
Emerald Ass't Sports Editor

High school basketball in the state of Oregon seems to have settled down to business following the usual early-season rat-race of invitational tourneys, jamborees, etc. Though some of the current leading prep lights are old familiars, a few new identities have edged into the lime-light this year.

The Journal's second Board of Coaches Prep Poll reveals this situation, as most teams head into second and third-round conference action this weekend.

For example, the Journal's Poll taps Eugene as one of Oregon's two strongest basketball powers, and this is no rare honor for the often-successful Axemen; but the other member of the first-place deadlock is Central Catholic of Portland, a relative stranger to the rarified heights since the fabled days of Bob Altenhofen, Phil McHugh and Hal Duffy.

Axemen, Kuchera Do Well

Eugene, as local fans will tell you with pride, has the practical and enviable habit of winning most of their ball games, and this has been going on since the advent of Hank Kuchera, one of the most successful Oregon prep coaches of modern times. Under Kuchera's direction, the Axemen grabbed second in the 1953 State Tourney, repeated in 1954, won the crown in 1955 and "fell" to fifth last year.

Now it looks like Kuchera's troops are on their way to another headline season: they currently hold a 10-1 record and evidently have power to spare. Big Charlie Warren, a discussion-topic at the State Meet last year as a sophomore, has been even better thus far, and as usual the Axemen don't lack in depth.

The elevation of Central Catholic into a first-place tie with Eugene may have been prompted in part by two near-upsets of the Axemen last week, although there's no doubting that the Rams have a fine club in their own right. Albany pushed the locals to a double-overtime thriller last Tuesday, and Corvallis came up with a 46-45 near-miss Saturday night. This obviously cost Eugene some prestige.

Central Catholic was once the stronghold of the Altenhofen clan and Coach Bob Mulder, and this combination produced a really fine team in 1952 that would have won any tourney except one that included Wade Halbrook. The Splendid Spire of Lincoln put in 51 points in the 1952 final to deny the Rams their championship that year, but they could go all the distance this season.

The Rams picked up 73 points in the Poll, same as Eugene, and they sport a 10-1 record against rugged Metropolitan League foes.

Techmen Back Again

For the third-place slot the coaches chose Benson Tech, although their record of six wins, three losses isn't particularly impressive. The Techmen were last heard of at length in 1954, when Johnny James led them to Eugene for a tournament berth.

Then follows Klamath Falls, with huge, graceful Glenn Moore picking up more experience as the season progresses, and Southern Oregon power Medford, with a 7-3 record, in a fifth-place tie with Jefferson. The Jeffersonians thus join the Rams, Benson, Lincoln and Roosevelt in the state's top 20 squads, according to the Poll, and this may or may not be indicative of new power in the Rose City schools.

Eastern Schools Listed

With Lincoln listed as number eight with a 6-2 record, the seventh, ninth and tenth places fall to schools east of the Cascades. With a lone loss to mar seven victories, Pendleton's Buckaroos are in seventh, with a later-season showdown expected between them and arch-rival Hermiston, ninth with 10-1.

Tenth spot went to Madras' White Buffalos, the only A-2 school in the top ten, and possessing the sole perfect record of the elite group.

So there it is for at least until tonight; upsets and near-upsets and poor performances could easily change things completely on the high school front. One thing stands out so far: with the exception of Madras, no fragile and extended win-strings are on the block, and this is something of a rarity so early in the game.

Theta Chi, Sig Eps, ATO Get IM Wims

Alpha Tau Omega, Theta Chi and Sigma Phi Epsilon scored victories in "A" class basketball yesterday in a light schedule that featured only three games. Victims of the days action were Delta Tau Delta, Phi Gamma Delta and Beta Theta Pi.

Theta Chi Wins Again

Theta Chi moved steadily away from Phi Gamma Delta in the second half of their encounter and went on to win 36-24.

At halftime Theta Chi lead by a score of 18-13 and then compiled 18 points in the second half to the Fiji's 11 to give them the winning margin.

High point man was Dave Pearson of the Fijis with 12 tallies. Vance Savage and Dennis Olsen of the winners each had eight.

Willamette Valley Hosts Hoopsters

By the Associated Press

Oregon's small-college basketball teams will be crammed into the northern Willamette Valley this weekend for a full round of games.

In the Northwest Conference leading Lewis and Clark will play Linfield at McMinnville tonight, then swing onto its home floor at Portland for a repeat game Saturday night. Pacific will be at Willamette tonight, the teams switching to Forest Grove tomorrow night.

In another Northwest Conference series College of Idaho will be at Whitman both nights.

In the Oregon Collegiate Conference Southern Oregon will be at Portland State for a two-game set, and Eastern Oregon, the conference leader, will be at Oregon College of Education both nights.

Fiji (24) Powers (6) F Sandgren Duggan (3) F (6) Diddock Pearson (12) C (7) F'tzsim'on Knight (2) G (8) Savage Anderson (1) G (8) Olsen
Scoring subs: Theta Chi — Leland (7).

ATO Travels

Alpha Tau Omega had an easy go if it, romping over Delta Tau Delta 46-21.

Utilizing their superior height ATO controlled the boards throughout the game. At halftime the score was 27-8 with Bill Kotila having scored eight points for the Deltas.

Kotila came out on top with scoring honors with 15 followed by the ATO's Bob Curtis with 14 and Dave Wanaka's 13.

Delta Tau Delta (21) (46) ATO Bates (3) F (2) McClain Zimmerman F (2) Peterson Brown (1) C (13) Wanaka Holland (2) G (14) Curtis Kotila (15) G (5) Huggins
Scoring subs: ATO — Basham (10).

Sig Ep Edges Beta

Sigma Phi Epsilon fought off a last minute rally to triumph over Beta Theta Pi 24-22.

With 1½ minutes to go Sig Ep led 23-22 with the Betas in possession, but a foul on Don Spinas of the Sig Eps ended the drive.

Spinas led the winners with 12 while George Twidwell had six for the losers.

Beta (22) Grant F Sullivan Basher (5) F Fratzke Adams (2) C (8) Steen Pool (4) G (12) Spinas Twidwell (6) G (2) McCoy
Scoring subs: Beta—Compton (5). Sigs — O'Brien (2).

Handball Results

In yesterday's handball action

Sigma Nu swept the two singles games and the doubles match to beat Tau Kappa Epsilon 3-0.

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IM Schedule

Friday, Jan. 18
Basketball

3:50 McClure A vs. Young A, Court 40.
Stafford A vs. Sheldon A, court 43.

4:35 Alphaholics A vs. Cherney A, court 40.
Hale Kane A vs. Campbell Club A, court 43.

5:15 Phi Gamma Delta B vs. Delta Upsilon B, court 40.
Theta Chi B vs. Alpha Tau Omega B, court 43.

Handball

4:00 Phi Gamma Delta vs. Phi Kappa Sigma, courts 42, 44, 46.

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