

'Not Swinging as Hard'

# Baldrige Tops Batters



DENNIS BALDRIDGE  
"He's More Versatile . . ."

By LYNN MUCKEN  
Sports Writer

On March 22 of this year, Oregon baseball coach Don Kirsch began searching for a new outfielder.

On that day the regular Duck centerfielder, Denny Baldrige, attempted a throw to the infield. The ball didn't go anywhere. Kirsch feared Baldrige might be out for the season.

Today Denny Baldrige is leading the Oregon hitters with a .391 average, including four doubles, three triples, and 14 rbis.

The supposedly-serious muscle and ligament pull has, if anything, improved Denny Baldrige as a ballplayer.

"I'm not swinging as hard," said Baldrige. "At first it was because my arm hurt me. Now it's just a habit. But I actually think it's helping me. Last year I was swinging too hard."

Last year the husky Baldrige swung too hard for a .333 average, including .345 in Northern Division play.

## List of Honors

But the success of the last two years hasn't brought attention to Denny for the first time. Baldrige strolled onto the Oregon campus trailing a list of honors

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as long as some of his home runs. A three-sport standout at McKenzie High, Denny compiled a 14-0 record and batted .465 while leading his team to the A-2 title. In the championship game he beat Oregon teammate John Conrad, then pitching for Bandon, 1-0.

Meanwhile, as a sideline, Baldrige led A-2 basketball scorers for two seasons, and in his senior year grabbed off a second-team all-state quarterback berth in football.

This year Denny is better than ever according to Kirsch. "He's more versatile this year. He's running well and putting the pressure on the defense."

## Has Weakness Though

If Baldrige has a weakness, Kirsch continued, it's his tendency to swing on the first pitch. "He needs to relax and wait for a better pitch. If he learns to wait, he'll be a better hitter."

Baldrige agrees. "The trouble is that I figure I can hit any pitch they throw up there. This isn't too good an attitude."

But then underconfidence has never been one of Denny's problems. "I intend to play pro ball," he said. "I don't know when or where, but I intend to play. In my own mind, I know I can make it. I've always wanted to play, that's what my whole life has been centered around."

As of now, the professional scouts agree with him. Baldrige

was drafted by the New York Yankees last June and offered a contract. "It was enough money," Denny said, "but not enough when you consider how much school I have left."

Baldrige hasn't closed the door, however, on signing a pro contract before his college eligibility is finished. "If I get a good enough offer, I'll sign. It's just a matter of money, that's all."

## Feels Ducks Strong

Meanwhile Denny seems to be thinking only of the Northern Division title race. "If we start playing ball, we can beat Washington State," he noted. "We coast a lot, get far enough ahead to win and then just play out the rest of the game."

He feels the Ducks can go a long way in the Conference race "but we're going to have to start hitting the ball. We can't seem to find ourselves. The team's hitting in spurts. Two guys will hit one game, a different two guys the next. We can't seem to get together."

In addition, Baldrige feels the Webfoots are better than state rival Oregon State, who beat the Ducks two out of three over the weekend. "We have a lot better team than they do," Denny said, "and we should beat them three times the rest of the way—if we hit. But anytime you get 11 hits to the other team's three, and lose 4-3, you deserve to get beat."



OREGON baseball captain Ron Delplanche is forced out on an infield play during a recent Oregon State-Duck contest at Corvallis. Delplanche, hitting .333 and accounting for 18 rbis, will be on hand at his shortstop position Friday and Saturday when the Webfoots host Washington in a three-game Northern Division series at Howe Field.  
Jim Chaskin Photo

## Duck Baseballers Meet Lewis-Clark

Oregon's baseball squad, currently standing in a third-place tie in the Northern Division race with a 1-2 won-lost mark, travels to Portland Wednesday for a 3 p.m. game with Lewis and Clark.

The Ducks own an overall 11-10 record and have won nine of their last 11 games. Lewis and Clark is currently in second place in the Northwest Conference, with a 5-3 league mark.

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## Baseball Stats

### OREGON BASEBALL STATISTICS (21 Games)

|                     | Hitting |     |     |     |    |    |    |    |     |     |   |   |   | Pct.  |
|---------------------|---------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|---|---|---|-------|
|                     | AB      | R   | H   | RB  | 2B | 3B | HR | SB | BB  | SO  |   |   |   |       |
| Dave Heuberger, if  | 1       | 1   | 1   | 1   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0   | 0   | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1.000 |
| Dennis Baldrige, of | 69      | 21  | 27  | 14  | 4  | 3  | 1  | 4  | 5   | 6   |   |   |   | .391  |
| Ron Delplanche, ss  | 81      | 21  | 27  | 18  | 3  | 1  | 5  | 3  | 13  | 8   |   |   |   | .333  |
| Steve Bunker, of-1b | 52      | 9   | 17  | 6   | 3  | 1  | 1  | 0  | 5   | 13  |   |   |   | .327  |
| Don Pooley, of      | 16      | 4   | 5   | 2   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 2  | 1   | 0   |   |   |   | .313  |
| Rich Armstrong, of  | 77      | 10  | 24  | 15  | 3  | 1  | 1  | 0  | 11  | 13  |   |   |   | .312  |
| Ted Amato, 2b       | 33      | 4   | 9   | 3   | 0  | 1  | 0  | 2  | 4   | 2   |   |   |   | .273  |
| Dick Ogan, 2b       | 31      | 8   | 8   | 7   | 4  | 0  | 0  | 1  | 10  | 6   |   |   |   | .258  |
| Dale Ehler, c-of    | 63      | 9   | 16  | 16  | 2  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 9   | 8   |   |   |   | .254  |
| Phil Olrich, 3b     | 30      | 4   | 7   | 4   | 2  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 5   | 9   |   |   |   | .233  |
| Bruce Robb, of      | 14      | 2   | 3   | 3   | 0  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 4   | 4   |   |   |   | .214  |
| Wayne Smith, 3b     | 52      | 6   | 11  | 6   | 1  | 0  | 0  | 2  | 6   | 10  |   |   |   | .212  |
| Bob Lindsay, c      | 19      | 4   | 4   | 2   | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1   | 2   |   |   |   | .211  |
| Jim Moore, 2b       | 16      | 4   | 3   | 0   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1  | 2   | 2   |   |   |   | .188  |
| Scott Cress, 1b     | 49      | 11  | 7   | 6   | 0  | 0  | 1  | 5  | 14  | 12  |   |   |   | .143  |
| Totals              | 671     | 124 | 174 | 111 | 24 | 10 | 15 | 24 | 100 | 109 |   |   |   | .259  |
| Opponents           | 683     | 110 | 166 | 86  | 28 | 13 | 12 | 15 | 80  | 126 |   |   |   | .243  |

|                 | Pitching |     |    |    |    |    |    |       |   |   |  |  |  | L |
|-----------------|----------|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|---|---|--|--|--|---|
|                 | IP       | AB  | R  | H  | ER | SO | BB | ERA   | W |   |  |  |  |   |
| Jim Donnelly    | 4        | 13  | 0  | 3  | 0  | 1  | 2  | 0.00  | 0 | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |
| Mike Nicksic    | 16       | 63  | 4  | 12 | 1  | 9  | 3  | 0.54  | 2 | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |
| Larry Hills     | 10-1     | 40  | 6  | 5  | 3  | 9  | 8  | 2.70  | 1 | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |
| Jerry Gjesvold  | 26       | 108 | 16 | 25 | 8  | 20 | 7  | 2.79  | 1 | 2 |  |  |  | 2 |
| Joe Kniser      | 26-1     | 97  | 10 | 18 | 9  | 21 | 9  | 3.15  | 2 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |
| Ken Hadden      | 32-1     | 118 | 16 | 23 | 12 | 23 | 11 | 3.42  | 2 | 2 |  |  |  | 2 |
| Randy Miller    | 2        | 8   | 1  | 2  | 1  | 3  | 1  | 4.50  | 0 | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |
| Charles Hopkins | 15       | 64  | 10 | 20 | 8  | 8  | 12 | 4.77  | 0 | 2 |  |  |  | 2 |
| Mike Snow       | 13-1     | 50  | 12 | 12 | 9  | 8  | 13 | 6.21  | 1 | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |
| Steve Bunker    | 13       | 58  | 16 | 24 | 13 | 13 | 5  | 9.00  | 0 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |
| John Conrad     | 10-2     | 51  | 15 | 18 | 12 | 9  | 5  | 9.81  | 1 | 2 |  |  |  | 2 |
| Mike Powers     | 1-2      | 9   | 3  | 3  | 3  | 2  | 2  | 13.50 | 0 | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |

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