

Quack Cracks



Sooners Are Superlative

By DAVE BARONTI
Emerald Sports Editor

YOU WOULD HAVE TO GO back to when Mark Antony said, "I have come to bury Caesar" to find a bigger understatement than the one wrestling Coach Art Keith came up with Monday.

That was when he called Oklahoma "good."

Oregon's got a good team, too. But had Keith said, "I expect to win," he would have been even more historical than Antony. It would have been the biggest overstatement since Samson said he trusted Delilah.

In a word, the Oklahoma wrestling squad that meets Oregon December 20 in McArthur Court is superb—nothing less.

It's the same team that hasn't been out of the top three in the NCAA tournament since somewhere in the early 1950s; the same team that snapped NCAA champion Oklahoma State's 84-match winning streak last year, 17-12; the same team that won NCAA championships in 1960, 1961, and 1963—and the same team that was edged out for second place by Iowa State in 1966 by a single point, 70-69.

And nothing has changed—except possibly for the better—in Sooner land this year. Take it from Keith: it's the best squad to appear in the Northwest since the NAAs were held in Corvallis five years ago.

Two Big Eight champions are back—123-pound Bryan Rice and 152-pound Wayne Wells—in addition to two third placers. That's in a conference which delivered the top three finishers in the NCAA last year.

In fact, Oklahoma hasn't failed to produce at least one individual NCAA champion since 1953 when their present coach, Tommy Evans, was a junior. Evans that year suffered the only defeat of a collegiate wrestling career that included national championships his sophomore and senior years and a second in the 1956 Olympics.

Oregon has yet to produce its first NCAA champ. 130-pound Curt Scott—who will be in action against the Sooners—has come the closest, getting a fourth last year.

So Keith would have to be stretching it a bit to predict an Oregon upset December 20.

However, the spirit with which the Ducks are preparing for the match doesn't indicate a defeatist attitude. In fact, in a recent letter to Evans describing Eugene motel accommodations, Keith was moved to add, "You'll have to beat us on the mats." In explanation, Keith said he means no one on the sophomore loaded Webfoot team will be walking out there expecting to do anything but win. **BUT TALK ABOUT GOOD SQUADS.** You don't have to wait until December 20 to see one.

The touted Duck freshman wrestlers see their first home action of the year this afternoon against Treasure Valley (Wash.) Junior College at 3 p.m. in McArthur Court.

Don't let the word "freshman" mislead you, either. The 11-members of this team have won 13 A-1 and one state A-2 high school championships between them—and are the foundation of a rebuilding program that Keith hopes will take Oregon "up to the Oklahoma" level in collegiate wrestling within the next few years.

Two matches to watch are: 1) the 126-pound one which will send Oregon's Greg Morgan (three time state champion from David Douglas) against TV's Ralph Carter (A-2 champ from Nyssa), and 2) the 163-pound competition between TV's two time state A-1

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High Flying Bengals Due

UO Meets Speedy ISC

By RON EACHUS
Emerald Sports Writer

Idaho State holds a lot of fond memories for Oregon head basketball coach Steve Belko and his assistant Frank Arnold. But the Bengals won't hesitate to dampen them when they take on Oregon's Ducks in McArthur Court tonight at 8 p.m.

It will be the first time the two teams have ever met.

Belko came to Oregon 11 years ago after six successful years of coaching at Idaho State, in which he posted a won-loss record of 108-52, made four trips to the NCAA regional playoffs, and won four Big Sky conference titles.

And Arnold played under Belko during three of those seasons.

Now Belko is looking for his first win of the season after dropping two games on a road trip to the Midwest, and the Bengals are once again challenging for the Big Sky title.

Title Contender

The Bengals will be the third conference title contender the Ducks have faced in three games this season. Last weekend they lost 79-56 to Nebraska, the favorite to win the Big Eight crown, and they dropped a 52-47 game to Kansas, another Big Eight contender.

Belko looked upon such an opening with mixed emotions. "Losing doesn't help," he said,

"but it's good competition and that's what you need to improve."

"That was one of the best opening schedules we've had in a long time," he added.

Playing Nebraska particularly may have helped the Ducks in their preparation for the Bengals, who, like the Cornhuskers, are quick and good leapers.

Lacks Height

Idaho State lacks height, but the Bengals have three 6-5 starters, John Wilson, John McCals, and John Parks, whom coach Arnold reports "can play like they are 6-10."

The best of the trio is probably Wilson, the center, a "tremendous" rebounder who blocked 14 shots in the Bengals' rout of Nevada Southern.

At the guard positions will be John Boone, 6-1, and John Mosier, 6-0. Boone is likely to give the Ducks their biggest defensive problem. He scored 37 points against Nevada Southern and is considered to have more potential scoring power than Dave

Students and faculty members will be admitted to Friday night's basketball contest with the Australian All-Stars upon presentation of their student athletic cards or faculty season tickets.

Wagnon, last year's Bengal star who was second in NCAA scoring.

The Bengals are a thrilling team to watch according to Arnold and, like Nebraska, they rely on the fast break and a full court press. Adding to the teams' exciting character is their head coach, John Rutherford, who is considered one of the coast's most colorful mentors.

Belko will start the same team which opened the Kansas game—John Pinkstaff at center, Bob Craven and Bill Thomas at forwards, and Rick Abrahamson and Nick Jones at the guards, with Kenny Smith and Mike Nicksic slated for major reserve duty.

Wants Improvement

Belko seemed satisfied with the way the Ducks played against the Big Eight teams but indicated he felt there was plenty of room for improvement. The Ducks he said, "played quite sound defensively."

Belko was also pleased with his team's rebounding. But Idaho State's abundance of speed will present some problems on the boards for Oregon. "We may have to retreat and give up a few rebounds," he explained.

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