

Rikli has best chance for Ducks

Iowa St. favored in NCAA meet

The season that started out with so much promise for Oregon's high-flying gymnastics team turned into a shambles over the weekend in the Pacific-8 championships.

Coach Bill Ballester can pick up the pieces next year. The Flying Ducks return 17 of the 19 men who gave Oregon its finest season in history.

For two of those performers, floor exercise specialist Bob Rikli and high bar man Greg Maxwell, there is more to come. The NCAA championships begin at Mac Court Thursday afternoon with team compulsory exercises and continues through Saturday night.

Rikli faltered on the first day in the Pac-8 meet and in a pressure-packed per-

formance came up with a 9.15 for second place and a berth in the NCAA.

Maxwell was more consistent. He had a 9.08 compulsory mark and 9.10 in the finals to finish third in the high bar.

Both Oregon performers are longshots, although Rikli's floor exercise potential is in the 9.4 to 9.5 class. That could be good enough to make the top three.

Teamwise, the field this year is loaded.

Two weeks ago Indiana State became a favorite to win the championship by defeating defending NCAA champion Southern Illinois in the Eastern Independent regional qualifying tournament with a record 321.85 team score.

But Indiana State has already been replaced as the team favorite after a phenomenal performance by Iowa State in

the Big Eight championships last weekend at Nebraska. The Cyclones compiled an astounding 330.35 point total in the Big Eight meet.

The Cyclones were 11-0, including a 165.45 - 163.35 win over the 1972 champions at Southern Illinois, for the dual meet season.

Iowa State qualified individuals in 12 of 18 slots in the individual events, plus three all-around men, which helps the Cyclones and certainly establishes Iowa State as the team to beat for the NCAA title.

Jim Stephenson led the Iowa State attack winning the all-around with a mark that puts him into a favorite's role in the upcoming NCAA meet. Stephenson's all-around total surpasses the mark recorded



Marshall Avenier

by Penn State's Marshall Avenier two weeks ago in the Eastern Intercollegiate regional tournament. Avenier scored an impressive 107.80, while Stephenson topped him with a 109.65 mark.

The Iowa State star dominated the Big Eight meet, winning three events and taking second in another. His two scores in winning the still rings and high bar were the best marks of the meet. In the still rings he scored an excellent 9.75 in the tough compulsory routine and added 9.50 and 9.40 optional marks for a total of 19.025 (a total compiled by adding his final optional to the average between his first optional routine and his compulsory routine).

Stephenson matched the mark in the still rings, where he recorded 9.70 and 9.50 optional scores to go with a 9.35 compulsory mark. Stephenson also won the parallel bars with a 18.350 total.

Coach Ed Gagnier has had his Cyclones in the final three each of the past four years, the only team to make the finals all four times. Iowa State was first in 1971, second in 1970 and 1972, and third in 1969. The 1970 team lost the title on the final performance in the horizontal bar when Michigan outscored the Cyclones by one-tenth of a point.

Iowa State has held the No. 1 ranking among the nation's gymnastics teams all year, averaging 165.564 for its 11 dual meets. Against Kansas State the Cyclones scored a national record team total of 169.10. The qualifying score of 330.35 in the Big 8 meet was a national best, too.

"We have had a good year," Gagnier admits, "but now we must start all over again. What has happened up until we arrive in Eugene is now history. It may give us confidence but it also means we have a great deal to live up to if we are to have the right to be called the meet favorite."

Ducks try to get game in again today

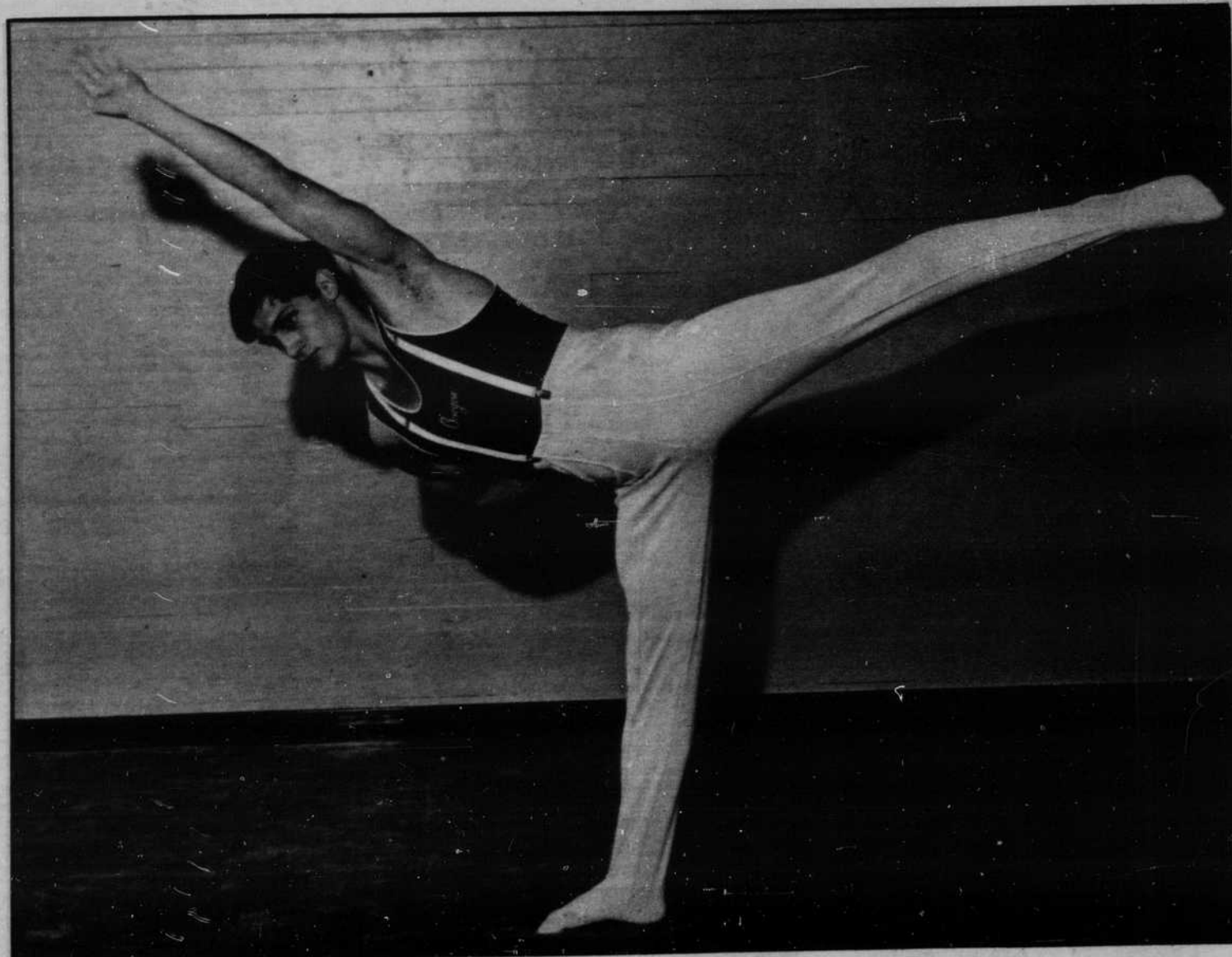
Guess what happened to the Oregon baseball team Monday? Right—the Ducks' game was again postponed. This time it wasn't because of rain.

Even though yesterday was probably the best weather-wise of spring, Pacific was forced to cancel because of a league commitment with Linfield.

That scratched the scheduled matchup for the second straight time and now Mel Krause's team will try to get a game in today—with Southern Oregon at 3 p.m.

Phil Schneider, unbeaten this year at 3-0, is set to start against the Red Raiders. The Ducks begin league play over the weekend at Howe with three games against WSU.

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Oregon floor exercise star Bob Rikli



Photo by Steve Twedt

Bowerman has kind words for Hearvey

Oregon's former head track coach appeared at Hayward Field Saturday sans movie camera and wearing a cowboy hat. After Al Hearvey's easy 200

meters victory in the Oregon Invitational he offered his congratulations.