



By CARL STEWARD
Of the Emerald

Stu Jackson leaned back on his bed at the Sea-Tac Motor Inn in Seattle, fielding informal questions about the victory over Washington. Up to then, he was jovial. Suddenly, he pondered the immediate foe.

"You know, those Beavers are going to be tough," he said. "They've been playing good ball lately. And they get up for us."

The juices were already flowing.

Similarly, Coach Ron Finley leaned back on his chair Monday morning, fielding informal questions about his 5-0 wrestling road trip, in which the Ducks whipped 13th-ranked Cal Poly 20-14 and humiliated the rest. Up to then, he was in good spirits. Suddenly, he directed his attention to the immediate opponent.

"I have to believe they'll have their No. 1 lineup against us," he said. "Right now I see the matches at five apiece."

If you haven't already noticed, it's Beaver week. The best, or worst, depending on your point of view, week of the athletic year.

Only Don Van Rossen can feel safe enough to breathe easy as he views Wednesday's swim meet with Oregon State. His continually improving unit is a sure bet to take the Beavers at Mt. Park.

But for Dick Harter and Finley, such blessings from above are non-existent. While Harter must return to the site of his favorite crowd in Gill Coliseum, Finley worries by the minute as to whether his wrestlers can end a phenomenal streak of 32 matches spanning 18 years by Oregon State.

It seems ironic that Finley himself had a part in maintaining the streak way back in the early 1960's when he wrestled under Dr. Dale Thomas, who is still the coach and still as thrilled to beat the Ducks as ever. It was 1957 when the Ducks last beat OSU in a wrestling match. And Oregon had to scratch and claw to squeak out a 14-13 win. Finley was thinking about the high school prom.

But when Finley took over the reins as head coach of Oregon five years ago, his burning desire to beat his old mentor has evolved into a frustrating passion. Last year, when the Ducks posed the most significant threat since Eisenhower, Oregon State twice came from behind to take the ultimate team advantage. In the first meeting, the Ducks and Beavers were tied 15-15 going into the heavyweight match. The Beavers' freshman heavyweight Larry Bielenberg pinned an unaware newcomer Greg Gibson.

The second time around, Oregon rolled to a 15-3 lead, and were leading in the 167 match when OSU got an unexpected pin and eventually won the meet 21-18 when Bielenberg beat Gibson—again—this time when Gibson was disqualified for three stalling calls. A mere decision would have at least tied it.

This Wednesday's encounter at McArthur Court promises to be just as exciting, and again Gibson must face Bielenberg, now 12-0 with 8 falls, and the man he has never beaten among his many triumphs since becoming an Oregon wrestler.

But Finley feels that Oregon must win the meet before the heavyweight match, although the prospects of that happening seem remote.

"We match up wrong with them. As a team, they are weaker than us, but they have the right people at all the right weights. I think Bielenberg will be the national champion. And we'll have to come back in the later weights, and that's going to be tough."

To complicate matters, 134-pounder Shuichi Shoji is in doubt for the meet. He reinjured rib cartilage against UCLA and his status for competition won't be known until Wednesday. Not only that, some of Finley's best wrestlers are not in top form. Susumu Hagihara, Joe Sade, Shoji, Kevin Kramer, Duane Stutzman, Wes Hines and Gibson are wrestling well. But Dean Dixon and Buck Davis, two wrestlers who finished second in the Pac-8 a year ago, are having their problems.

"Dean had a good match against UCLA," said Finley, "but Buck still is not doing the things he can do."

And finally, for a topper to the whole build-up, Finley predicts, "We can't afford to get pinned or even have a superior decision go against us."

Right, Ron. But for once, neither can they.

You may be missing one of the exciting athletic events of the year if you miss this meet. Skeptics may have their doubts after watching Oklahoma State walk over the Ducks. But Finley's team deserves another chance. They've become a better team since then, and in summation, if the Ducks win, it will be the most satisfying triumph in the wrestling program to date. It all starts at 7:30.

And now, Lonnie Shelton and Co. It is hard to figure the Beavers. They were at their worst at the Far West Classic, but now pose as just another threat to the Ducks' Pac-8 hopes. Harter sees the game in a different light, though:

"It'll be another tough one. But how about that, us and the Beavers playing for first place? No one else plays this weekend so whoever wins will enjoy it for a couple of days."

While the Chancellor's Trophy is no longer at stake (the Chancellor returned it himself), the conservatively labelled "heated rivalry" continues. "We have not played well up there," said Jackson.

"They always play us tough at Gill Coliseum," said Dick Harter.

The Ducks, however, are a different team, and will have to alter their strategy in preparing for OSU. No longer do they have to contend with two post men; they have to stop Shelton, if that's possible.

Lonnie, like Greg Ballard and Stu Jackson, has refined his skills and now is the most devastating offensive force for the Beavers. Just ask George Raveling, if you can catch him before he leaps. He seems to have shaken his fouling problems.

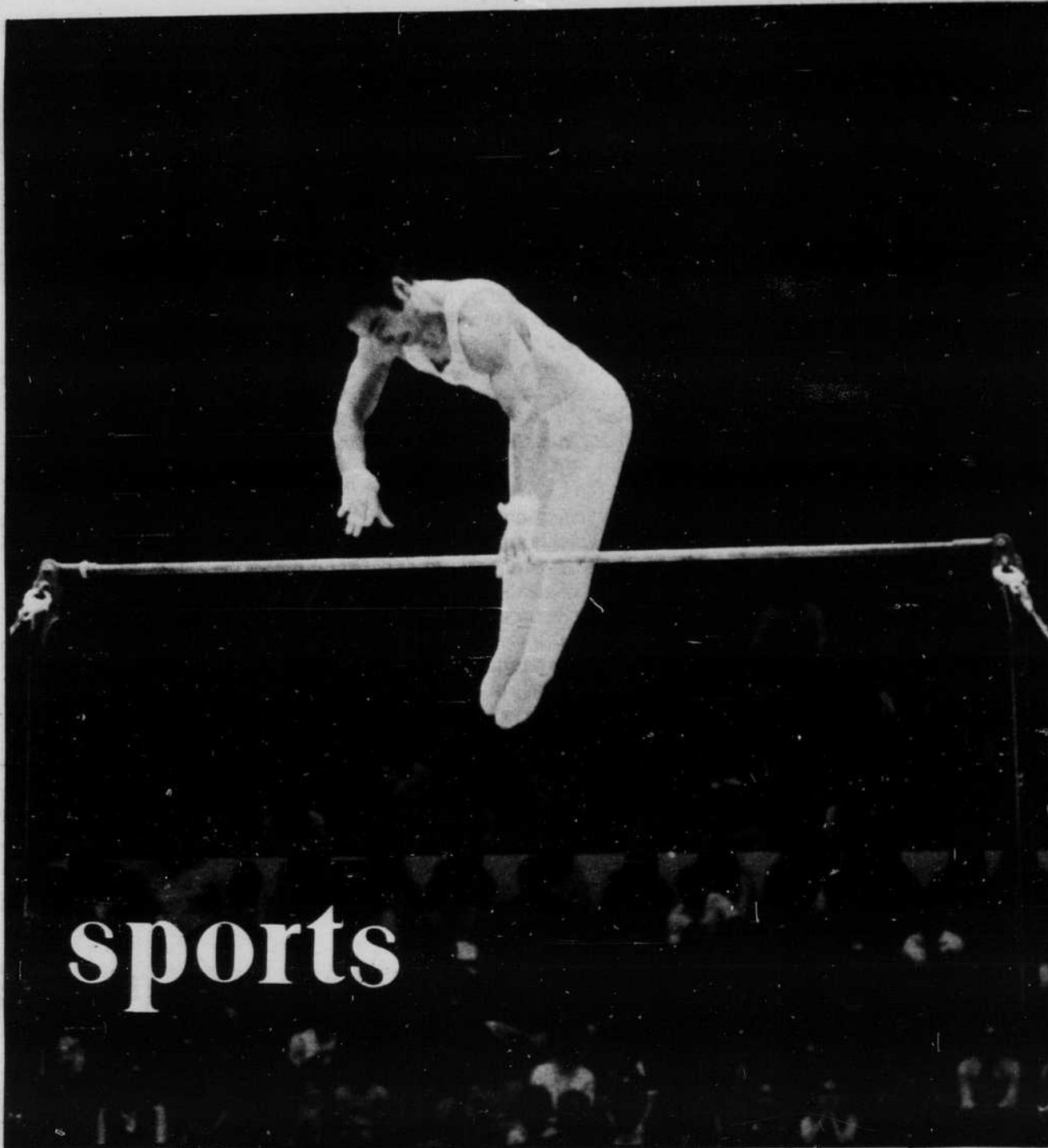


Photo by John Dong

sports

Japan's Mitsuo Tsukahara wows 'em with a 9.9

Gym meet successful

Bill Ballester can be thankful that the University of California won't be as tough as the Japanese were Sunday night, even if it was probably the most exciting night gymnastics has had in the city of Eugene.

As well as raking in much-needed money from the 6,500 who attended, the Japanese may have given gymnastics the shot in the arm it has needed to succeed at the University. The meet was heavily promoted by former sports information director Hal Cowan, and the buildup was no let down. It was a grand show.

While the Japanese dominated the primarily entertaining affair, Ballester got to display most of his team before the largest gymnastics audience ever at Mac Court.

The highlight of the evening was a 9.9 on the high bar by

Olympic gold medalist Mitsuo Tsukahara, who duplicated many of his award-winning maneuvers to earn the top score, which looked perfect, and probably was.

Needless to say, it was the finest performance ever recorded in "The Pit."

The American team, star-studded with many of Oregon's own gymnasts, also provided some individual highlights. The Ducks' Joe Percival captured the sidehorse with a record 9.6, and Leonard Henderson and Scott McEldowney tied for first in the floor exercise and rings, respectively, Henderson with a 9.65 and McEldowney with a 9.45.

Now Ballester can turn his attention to a dual with California, the next home appearance for the Ducks on Feb. 13. Cal is the Pac-8 favorite, but Oregon is considered the darkhorse to take the crown.

Geis scratches Indoor

Oregon standout distance runner Paul Geis will not participate in the Oregon Indoor Track and Field Meet in Portland, Saturday night, as had been reported earlier. Geis, who has not been up to par since early last fall, has a test the morning of the meet and decided not to run. Contrary to prior reports, Geis had never entered the meet and never had any intentions of doing so.

It had been reported that Geis

would run against Steve Prefontaine in the two-mile.

Despite Geis' absence, 24 Oregon track-and-field athletes will compete in the annual event. Included in the meet will be milers Scott Daggatt and Mark Feig, two-milers Terry Williams and Dave Taylor, pole vaulter Craig Brigham, shotputters Howard Banich and Bruce Hill, and hurdler Stan Whigham and Mike Chriss.

STEWARD'S FOLLY

Not only that, but Paul Miller, the gunning forward who shoots better than 50 per cent from 30 feet, is recovered from his ankle problems. Toss in Charlie Neal, George Tucker, Doug Oxsen, Rickey Lee and Leon Jordan, you have a team. Sometimes, I think.

"They are not an emotional team like us," said Jackson. "But they love to play us, and always play their best against us. We have to play better than we did last year."

Right Stu. Right Ron. Right Don. It's Beaver week. And the juices are flowing.



TUESDAY, Jan. 21

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: Oregon vs. Portland State at PSU 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 22

WRESTLING: Oregon vs. Oregon State at Mac Court 7:30 p.m.
SWIMMING (men): Oregon vs. Oregon State at Mountain Park (Lake Oswego) 7:30 p.m.
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: Oregon vs. Willamette Univ. "B" at Gerlinger 4:30 p.m.
All-campus championships schedules available at IM office—men's tennis (singles and doubles), men's handball (singles), and women's handball (singles).
WRA deadlines for badminton (women and mixed), water polo (women and mixed), 5 p.m.

THURSDAY, Jan. 23

WOMEN'S BOWLING: Oregon vs. Oregon State at Corvallis 3:30 p.m.
WRA captains meeting in Gerlinger (check 171 for meeting place) at 4:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, Jan. 24

J.V. Basketball: Oregon vs. Oregon State at Corvallis 5:45 p.m.
WRESTLING: Oregon vs. Washington at Seattle 7:30 p.m.
J.V. WRESTLING: Oregon vs. Lane C.C. at Lane 7:30 p.m.
SWIMMING: Oregon vs. Utah at Leighton Pool 7:30 p.m.
GYMNASTICS: Oregon vs. Washington at Mac Court 8 p.m. (men)
GYMNASTICS: Oregon vs. Washington at Gerlinger-B54 (women)
CLUB SPORTS: Skiing vs. Coll. of Idaho at Bogus Basin, Id.

SATURDAY, Jan. 25

VARSITY BASKETBALL: Oregon vs. Oregon State at Corvallis 3 p.m. (TVS—channel 9)
TRACK AND FIELD: Oregon Indoor Invitational at Portland 7:30 p.m.
SWIMMING: Oregon—Willamalane Open Meet at Willamalane Pool of Springfield 10 a.m. (men)
SWIMMING: Southern Ore. Coll. Invite at Ashland 1 p.m. (women)
GYMNASTICS: Oregon vs. Washington at Mac Court 12:30 p.m.
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: Southern Ore. Coll. Invite "A" at Ashland 1 p.m.
CLUB SPORTS: Skiing vs. Coll. of Idaho at Bogus Basin, Id., Rugby vs. St. Mary's at Moraga, Calif. 1:30 p.m., Handball vs. Albany YMCA at Oregon 11 a.m.—2 p.m., Soccer "O" vs. Bend at Autzen 1 p.m.

MONDAY, Jan. 27

VARSITY BASKETBALL: Oregon vs. Air Force at Mac Court 8 p.m.