

Can rodeo survive a liberal arts college?



The rodeo club is small now — four members — and could soon become extinct

By RICK BELLA
Of the Emerald

"You want to find the *what* team?" said the secretary in the athletics office.

"Rodeo. You know, horses, cowboys, and all that other stuff."

"Well, I never knew we had one, and I doubt if we still do," she said with uncertainty.

But the truth of the matter is, the University has a rodeo team on the club sports roster alive, but not doing so well.

Student-coach Phil Bevans, who makes up one-quarter of this year's team, is spending more time recruiting and fighting for funds than he is on the back of a bull. Club sports are funded by incidental fees and must submit a budget request to the Incidental Fee Committee (IFC). Last year, the rodeo team was awarded \$676, but this year, they had to make do with \$136.

"I guess they got down on me because the club doesn't have that much participation," Bevans says. "Last year, we had nine members. This year, we

started with the same number, but a lot of the guys dropped out or graduated, and we only have two eligible participants."

And even the other club sports programs got down on him. Members of all the teams got together in the end of April and voted to give Rodeo only \$80 out of its budget until the team could come up with some more participants. And that pulls the purse strings pretty tight.

"We compete in the Pacific Northwest Collegiate Rodeo Association meets which take place during spring term," Bevans says. "And you've got to buy a \$50 entrance card with your own number. It'll get you into all the rodeos and take care of insurance. But then there are entrance fees — \$10 an event, 50 cents for a secretary's fee, and another \$3 an event for schools not hosting a rodeo."

But Bevans is not complaining. He loves it.

"I had fun last year getting bucked off everything I got on," he says. "And it's still fun. Scary, though."

Bevans, a broadcasting major from

Springfield, just got into it on a whim.

"I just saw it on the club sports roster," he says. "And I always thought it looked like fun. Also, I wanted a reason to stay in shape. I was in pretty good shape already from running and lifting weights."

emerald sports

And I stay limber by taking dance classes."

Dance classes?

"You bet," Bevans says. "Being limber really helps you to avoid injuries. And I've been pretty lucky. I've never gotten hurt badly — just the little muscle strains and soreness. I guess I've got a pretty good sense of self-preservation. I know when to bail out. And," he laughs, "You've got to know where the ground is."

Bevans especially likes bareback riding and bull riding, two events known for

their spills. He says to get good you have to practice and keep at it to stay sharp. While he doesn't expect to see a full-bore program at the University ("This isn't known as a cowboy school, anyway") a twinge of envy creeps into his voice when he talks about the opportunities at other schools.

"You know, at Blue Mountain Community College they get \$30,000 a year for the team, stock to practice on, and a paid coach. They also get their entry fees and travel paid."

He also points out that some of the amateurs from the 25 regional schools who compete in the college rodeos eventually turn pro. And, while money was a factor, it wasn't everything.

"This year, the top cowboys are making \$60,000-70,000 a year, for riding in about 300 rodeos," Bevans says. "But that means driving up to Canada a couple times a week, and the gas and expenses eat most of it up. The vast majority of the guys don't win anything at all." They do it because they love it — because it's in their blood."



Photo by Phil Waldstein

Ducks whip Lewis & Clark, 16-4

PORTLAND—Oregon exploded for eight sixth-inning runs to cap a 14-hit team performance, on the way to a 16-4 victory over Lewis and Clark College Tuesday night at Skavone Park.

Outfielders Dave Ulrich and Paul Kirsch were big bats for the Ducks. Ulrich blasted two hits including a first-inning, two-run homer, and drove in five Oregon

runs. Kirsch was four-for-five at the plate with a double and three RBI's.

Junior righthander Craig Fetzer, despite hitting two batters, pitched a solid seven innings to record his second win of the season. Fetzer fanned nine L&C batters while walking none.

Vic Kelley, another Oregon

righthander, pitched the final two frames and earned his initial save this year.

"I was really pleased with Fetzer," said Oregon Assistant Coach Larry Holbrook. "He settled down, put the pitches where he wanted them, and pitched much better than he has all year."

The Ducks took an early 2-0 lead on Ulrich's first-inning home run, but Lewis and Clark came right back with four runs in its half of the first. Fetzer had his shakiest inning by allowing all four Pioneer runs — the big blow, a three-run homer by Dave Short, and George Weatheroy's solo four-bagger one out later.

"We were aggressive at the plate and up attacking the ball," reasoned Holbrook. "That makes a lot of difference."

Oregon, 13-11 overall, will be seeking its first Pac-8 win Friday with a Northern Division doubleheader at the University of Washington. Friday's twinbill is followed by league-counting doubleheaders on Saturday and Sunday in Seattle.

Seaside pitcher inks Oregon letter-of-intent

Lee Wilson, a strong right-handed pitcher from Seaside has signed a national letter of intent to attend Oregon.

Wilson has a 26-7 career record and owns five no-hitters, the latest coming in a 19-0 win Tuesday. He has also pitched five one-hitters, five two-hitters and four three-hitters. He has 14 career shutouts.

Among Wilson's seven losses are three 1-0 games.

He has a career earned run average of 1.36 and has struck out 371 hitters in 212 innings. Wilson carries a 6-2 record this year with an ERA of 0.82. He has struck out 90 in 44 innings this season.

"Lee is an outstanding pitcher and a great competitor," Oregon coach Mel Krause said. "There is little question that he will go high in the draft this June and we just

hope he decides to postpone professional baseball and join our program."

Wilson was an all-league pick as both a sophomore and junior, and has been named to the all-state (AA) team each of the past two years. He was a unanimous pick to the all-state team last year.

Wilson has also lettered in both football and basketball at Seaside and was a starting forward on Seaside's state tournament basketball team the last two years.

IM track prelims to start Friday

Preliminary competition for this year's team and individual track titles will be held Friday at Hayward Field. All entries will be accepted (no spikes allowed), but contestants should sign in at the track prior to 3:30 p.m. Friday.

Team rosters must be turned in by 5 p.m. tonight at the track. At least four contestants must enter the meet to qualify for a team score.