

wrestling

Duck wrestling pin mark not safe while 'No Neck' Brown is around

By NICK DAWSON
Of the Emerald

Don Brown is a sophomore out of Oakland, Calif., wrestling his first full year at Oregon. Already, he is making a name for himself, and at the same time he is putting a school wrestling record in jeopardy.

The record belongs to former Duck All-American heavyweight Greg Gibson. Gibson was very good, and in fact was probably the best heavyweight to come out of Oregon's wrestling program ever. During his senior year, Gibson set the present school pin record at 14.

Don Brown, whose nickname is No Neck, needs just two more pins to erase Gibson's name from the record books. It is interesting to note Brown still has about one-third of the season to get those two pins.

Of Brown's 16 wins this season, 13 have come by pin. He is one of the team's top scorers this year, amassing 88 points thus far this season.

Ron Finley, Oregon's wrestling coach, knows that he has a valuable commodity in Brown. "He either pins them or he doesn't win," said Finley of his 190 pounder. "Old Donny, he's really strong. He's got a good body."

"He's improved tremendously since last year," Finley explained. "He feels he can pin anybody at any given time. With some wrestlers it's too easy to give up when they're behind. With Don it doesn't matter. Donny's been behind in several matches this year and still pinned the guy."

Brown has the potential to be a national placer this year according to Finley, but he needs to push himself harder to reach that goal.

"He doesn't push himself hard enough. He's had matches out there where he just dies. There were times as a freshman when he was almost disqualified because he just died out there," Finley stated. "He's getting better, but he's still got a long ways to go."

One of Brown's major problems in collegiate wrestling comes, interestingly enough says Finley, from his great success in high school. Brown was a third place state finisher his senior year at Oakland High School. Finley ex-

plained Brown's problem.

"Donny was so successful at throwing people with the lateral drop that was all he did in high school. Being so successful in high school hindered Donny's development, because he didn't have to work at it."

Finley has been working with Brown on many of these aspects, but Brown still relies mainly on strength, according to Finley.

Strength may come in handy this Friday night when Brown attempts to tie Gibson's school mark against the Oregon State Beavers. Currently, the Beaver team is ranked sixth in the country. Oregon, in the meantime, is still below the .500 mark in dual meet competition, but three victories have come at the expense of top twenty-ranked teams.

Oregon, of course, would like nothing better than to add the Beavers to that list. Brown's match should be important. The

fact that he will be attempting to tie the pin mark only adds to the excitement.

Finley is unsure as to who Brown will have to wrestle. Oregon State has been using Gary Yarco in the 190 pound slot, but heavyweight Howard Harris could come down a weight notch to face Brown.

Either way, Brown could have his hands full. Harris has defeated some of the wrestlers that knocked off Brown earlier this year, and Yarco is a capable wrestler. "Harris is better than Donny at this point," said Finley. "Yarco and Donny should be a good match."

But no matter if Brown ties the record or not on Friday, he will have plenty of shots later this year.

He may even have a shot at the nationals. As Finley said, "the whole thing depends on how hard he pushes himself."

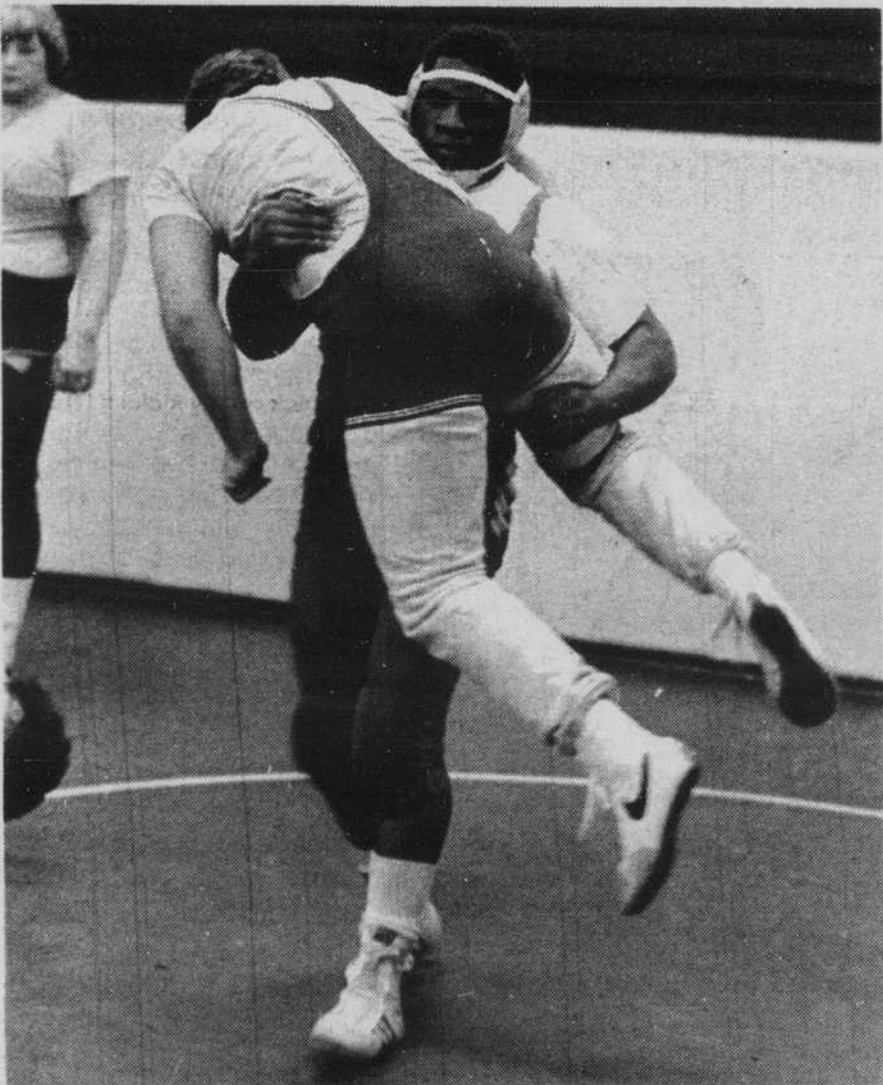


Photo by Mike Baer

Greg Gibson's school pin record is in jeopardy of being broken by Don Brown (in headgear), Oregon's 190 pounder. Brown will be looking for his 14th pin of the year this Friday against Oregon State.

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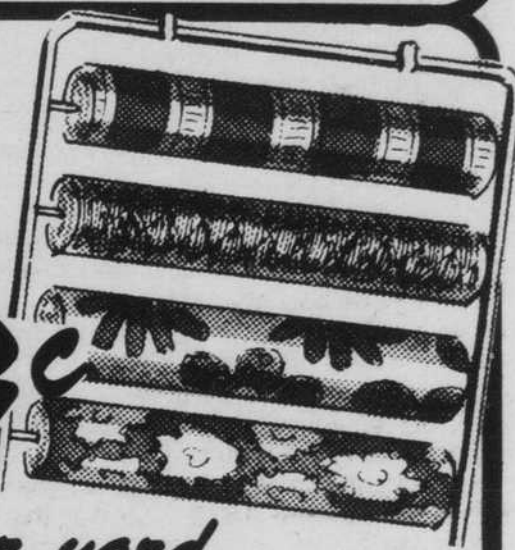
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