

sports

Commentary

It looks like a race in the northern division

Mike Marino

It makes it an easier spring when Oregon baseball is doing well. It renews your faith in the game, and you realize that baseball isn't a game played by Keystone Cops in knickers.

When the Ducks flounder, you don't give a damn. But when they are doing better — like now — everyone's a critic. A few bum plays and everyone's moaning. Last year, when Oregon made mistakes, it hurt, just as it hurt anyone in the Northern Division of the Pac-8 except Washington State.

But this year, a few little mistakes don't hurt as much. "This year, the league is down," said Oregon State head coach Jack Riley over the weekend. "But it makes it a lot more balanced — and a little more exciting."



Dean Kegler
One of the leaders

As a result, the fact that the Ducks dropped two of three to the Beavers in the three-game set Sunday and Monday isn't the end of the world. They stand at 5-3, in second place behind the Cougars — whom, rain permitting, Oregon will face in a stint at home this weekend.

One has to hope, though, that a few of the little errors that Oregon has seen crop up recently don't appear when the Cougars come to town. This weekend a few little things made for at least a bit of

a chuckle. Sunday, in the doubleheader that Oregon split with the Beavers, both teams made some mistakes that begged an explanation. In particular, there was the play that allowed the Beavers their first run.

Oregon State's Gary Richter had taken third base on a fly ball to the outfield, but the Ducks appealed the play saying he'd left before the ball was caught. It didn't help, though, when pitcher Dean Kegler threw the ball into center field, allowing Richter to cross the plate. But on the other hand, Kegler won the game, 5-4, his seventh against no losses, and that at least is a plus. The freshman from Eugene's Sheldon High has responded well to being forced into the "act-of-the-staff" role — you don't make bones about a 7-0 record.

Typical of the season, however, dumb things happen. Adam Berlin, the walk-on hurler in whom the Ducks hold high regard, forgot to make the trip to Corvallis with the team Sunday, and as a result was suspended yesterday by Krause on the day he was to pitch.

"He thought," said Krause, "that because he was pitching today he didn't have to go (to Corvallis)." Instant pitching problems, right? Not really, as the resilient Ducks offered Ron Sloy, the guy with the big bat, who threw three innings of no-hit ball before running into some trouble in the fourth and fifth.

"I figured to get five or six good innings out of Sloy," Krause said. "And I wanted to bring in the experience at the end with John Lazarich." The latter saved Kegler's win in Sunday's nightcap, but the righthander from San Diego wasn't warmed up when Sloy faltered after four-and-a-third — so Krause went with inexperience in freshman Mark Thompson from Carlsbad, Calif. "He'd been throwing well on the JV's," Krause said, "and he had a good slider and a fastball that tails in well to a hitter. And, he's a kid with a lot of confidence in his ability."

Only one thing ruined it — a Jerry Yung homer for OSU in the eighth, good for three runs and the game. And Oregon lost ground to the Cougars, who lambasted Washington in Seattle on Sunday, 9-4, and 20-2. Therefore, this upcoming weekend the three games with WSU might just decide who wants to lay claim to the division title.

At least the Cougs aren't infallible anymore. Only one player of their incredible seven on the Northern Division all-star team returns — Dave Elder. "They aren't as good as last year," Krause said, "because they don't have those all-league guys back. And we're a little bit better than last year. We just have to continually improve with each game."

Despite some occasional snickers that may indicate the contrary, Oregon is improving, and has a darn good chance of upsetting WSU. They'll play either three or four games, depending on how the ND coaches vote on the 2-2 tie that happened between the Ducks and Cougs in Pullman two weeks ago.

"Our destiny is still in our own hands," Krause stressed. "All we have to do to win is beat the people that are contenders for the championship."

Realistically, it is hard to expect the Ducks to bounce back from their worst season ever to a division championship. But even if they don't — and that's not certain by any means — at least Oregon has the ability to bounce back from little annoyances.

Someone once said that if you can handle the little problems, the big ones are easier to handle. For Oregon baseball, that might be a motto.

Oregon Daily Emerald

Ducks drop out of division lead as Yung's blow gives OSU win

By MIKE GRADY
Of the Emerald

A three-run home run by Oregon State's Jerry Yung powered the Beavers to a 6-4 baseball victory over Oregon Monday afternoon. The loss dropped the Ducks out of first place in the Pac-Eight's Northern Division for the first time this year.

Oregon stands 5-3 in league play, one game behind Washington State. Oregon State is now within one game of Mel Krause's Ducks at 4-3.

Before Yung's 370-foot shot in the eighth, the Ducks appeared to have their second victory in as many days against OSU wrapped up. Back to back doubles by Glen Baggerly and Jerry Rinella in Oregon's fifth, followed by singles by Jeff Heaton and Tom Dodd, had given the Ducks a 4-3 lead.

And while Beaver starter Ken Noble settled down after giving up the big inning to Oregon, the Duck's Mark Thompson also seemed to have control on the mound. Thompson, a freshman making his first varsity appearance, had entered in relief of starter Ron Sloy in the fifth inning.

After giving up two singles in that frame, the righthander from Carlsbad, Calif. allowed only three hits the rest of the way. However, one of those was Yung's homer.

OSU shortstop Jeff Boyd started the eighth inning rally for the Beavers with a double just inside the right field foul line. Ken Rolfe followed with a bloop single to left, just out of the reach of Duck shortstop Glen Baggerly, setting the scene for Yung.

"Just one bad pitch," lamented Krause afterwards. "One swing made a one run deficit into a two-run lead for them. It was a breaking pitch that hung."

After going down in order in the

Women sign with Oregon

Oregon has signed four more women athletes for next year, including three field hockey players and a softball player.

Vicki Hogan, an outfielder from Hillsboro, is a three-year letter-winner. Last year she led Hillsboro to the Metro League championship while hitting .508. She hit five home runs, five triples, six doubles and had 48 runs batted in last year.

Nancy Pedrotti, a forward and Maureen Sullivan, a goalie, signed letters of intent to Oregon after leading Deanza Junior College to a second place finish among California state community colleges.

Forward Nancy Berry led Ohlone College to the California state field hockey championship for the second straight year.

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eighth, the Ducks managed to start a small rally in the ninth. Baggerly drew a base on balls from Noble to start the inning. OSU coach Jack Riley brought in Pat Barry to relieve his starter and Barry responded by getting Rinella to ground into a double play.

Heaton managed to reach base on an error, but it proved to be insignificant as Mike Connelly grounded into a force play to end the game.

"Noble throws all breaking stuff and keeps it down," said Krause explaining why the Ducks could

only put together one big inning against the senior right hander. "We scored four runs against him and you should be able to beat him with that many."

Oregon, 17-12 overall, travels to Portland State today before returning home on Wednesday for a game against Oregon College of Education.

OSU 000 120 030 — 6 7 3
Oregon 000 130 000 — 4 6 1

Noble, Barry (9) and Harper; Sloy, Thompson (5) and Tabler. W — Noble (5-4). L — Thompson (0-1). Home runs — Oregon-Elam (7); Oregon State-Yung (2).

Blazers hoping to survive playoff on teamwork, guts

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Bill Walton is out for the rest of the season with a broken foot, but the Portland Trail Blazers are counting on chutzpah to make up for the loss of their star forward.

The break in Walton's left foot was discovered when it was x-rayed Saturday. Blazer team doctor Robert Cook said the break occurred during Friday night's

96-93 playoff victory over the Seattle Super Sonics at Memorial Coliseum.

Coach Jack Ramsay told the rest of the Blazers of Walton's loss before a practice session at the coliseum.

"They took it well," Ramsay said. "The attitude was positive. They showed a 'let's do it anyway' attitude."

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