

Auburn without sprints

Spikers face slowed foes

By JOHN HEALY
Of the Emerald

Sprinters are to Auburn what tailbacks are to USC or distance runners are to Oregon.

They're a given, something you can count on whenever a new football or track season rolls around.

Until now, at least in Auburn's case.

The Tigers, who boasted of having the world's best sprinter last year in Stanley Floyd, are sorely lacking this spring in sprint talent.

Lacking to the point that they may lose the 100-, 200- and 400-meter races to traditionally sprint-thin Oregon when the two schools hook up in a dual meet this Saturday at Hayward Field.

Floyd, who won track's triple crown last spring in the 100 meters — the NCAA, Track Athletic Congress and Olympic Trials — was the latest in a long line of NCAA champions, following on the heels of Harvey Glance and Willie Smith.

But Floyd has transferred to the University of Houston.

His expected return to Auburn for his sophomore season forced most of the prep sprinters that the Tigers were recruiting to look elsewhere.

By the time Floyd announced he was taking his spikes to Houston, the top prep sprinters in the country had already tossed in their lots with other schools, and Auburn was left with Steve Strother (10.77) in the 100 and 200 (21.35) and Joe Toles in the 400 (48.99).

Last year, those times would have guaranteed the Tigers



Photo by Steve Dykes

Larry Bradley is one reason Oregon is making a showing in sprint events this year, posting season bests of 10.53 in the 100 and 21.22 in the 200.

wins against Oregon in at least two of the three sprints.

Not this year, though, as the Ducks have shored up their sprint squad with the addition of University of Portland transfer Larry Bradley. He has bests of 10.53 in the 100 and 21.22 in the 200 this year and last week against Washington took a second in the 200 and a third in the 100.

Bradley is just beginning to return to the form he displayed two years ago, when he posted bests of 20.95 in the 200 and 10.37 in the 100, according to Oregon sprint coach Dennis Whitby.

The 400 is another event where the Ducks are markedly better than the Tigers, as sophomore Parrish Nixon knocked his personal best down to 47.41 last week against the Huskies.

The Ducks have posted superior times in every track event this year except the 110 meter high hurdles, where the Tiger's Mike Benjamin has a season best of 14.05.

The men's meet gets underway at 12:30 p.m. with exhibition competition in the hammer. The first running event for the men will be the 400 relay at 2 p.m.

Series brings Huskies to plate against Ducks

When Oregon takes on Washington today in the first of a three-game series, the Ducks will be up against some heavy timber.

"They have some offensive stats that make ours look pretty bad," says coach Mel Krause of Washington's hitting.

Krause has reason for concern. The 16-10 Huskies are hitting .326 as a team, led by outfielder Jeb Best's astronomical .518 mark. In addition, the Huskies have scored 178 runs to only 117 for their opponents.

"I didn't realize they were that good," says Krause.

The Ducks, meanwhile, have been struggling lately. After a quick 6-1 start, they have dropped six of their last nine games to fall to 9-7.

In Tuesday's 6-4 win over Willamette, Oregon looked sloppy in the field and tired at the plate. The pitching has been below Krause's expectations, and it will take a big effort for the Ducks to stop the Washington bats, Krause says.

"It will be a tough ballgame for us."

The teams have one common opponent. Gonzaga defeated the Huskies 4-3 earlier this year, while the Ducks opened their



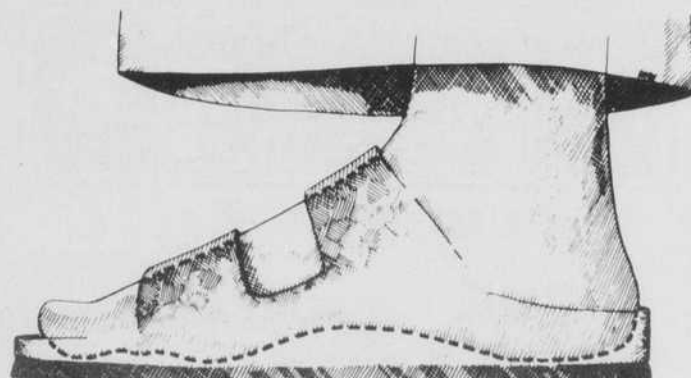
Emerald photo

Coach Mel Krause expects some problems from Washington this weekend.

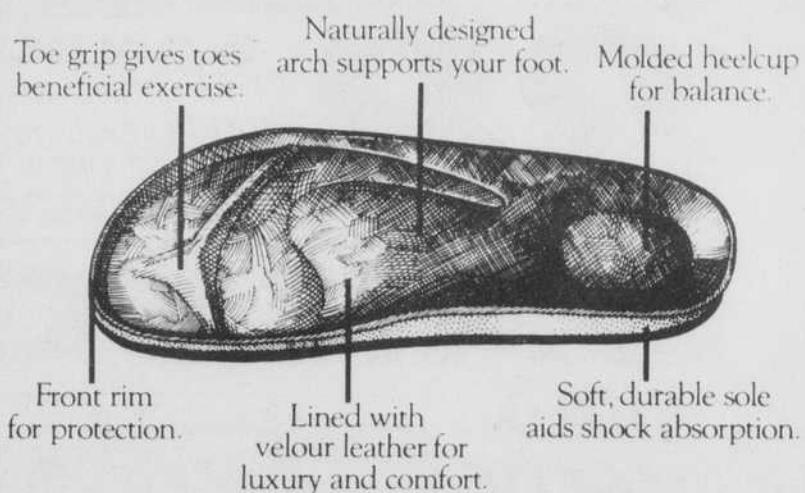
season by sweeping a doubleheader from the then-15th-ranked Bulldogs.

Today's game at Howe Field will start at 3 p.m., with Bill Gwinn (0-0) the expected starter for Oregon. The teams will play a doubleheader Saturday beginning at 1 p.m.

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