

# Coach says baseball team talented

By Matt Bender  
Emerald Contributor

This year's Oregon club baseball team will start its season more experienced, better organized, and more talented than last year's team, head coach Steve Seki said.

The Duck baseball team will play its first official game of this season at 3 p.m. this afternoon at Sheldon High School against Western Baptist Community College. The Ducks have won all three of their preseason games, defeating Lane Community College twice last fall and once this spring.

The main difference between this year's team and last year's squad is organization. "Things are more organized this year," player Marty Passmore said, "because we have one person that's in charge of running the whole team."

Seki, who has been coaching since 1983, was most recently an assistant at Lane. He said this year's Oregon team will be better in every aspect of the game than last year's team, which failed to win a game.

"We will be better because every member of the team is committed to making this season successful," Seki said. "And plus we have more talent and more depth."

The team will also benefit from better practice conditions. This year the club team is using Sheldon's field for games and practices. The Ducks used to practice at South Bank Field.

"Last year the first time we played on a real field, it was our first game," Passmore said. "This year we will be more used to real game condi-

tions."

The Ducks return 14 players to this year's 21-man roster. Leading the list of returning players are last year's co-captains, first baseman Abe Deffenbaugh and outfielder-pitcher Tim Mooney.

Deffenbaugh led last year's team in hits and stolen bases. Mooney, who played at Oregon State and Linn Benton Community College, was last year's team leader in extra-base hits and ERA.

The Ducks will also be helped by the hitting of newcomers third baseman Craig Boling and catcher D.J. Perkins. Perkins transferred from St. Mary's College, Calif., and was an all-state selection in high school.

Seki said he expects this year's pitching to be much improved. The Ducks' staff is led by left-handers Jack Russell and Harley Tierheimer and right-handers Mooney and Chris Conway.

Tuesday's game is the first of 34 on the Ducks' 1992 schedule. The team hopes that the weather cooperates a little more than it did last year when the team had at least 25 rainouts, Passmore said.

This season the Ducks will play teams from Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Tuesday's contest against Western Baptist is a rare home game for the Ducks, as most of their games will be played on the road this season.

However, on the weekend of March 27 the Ducks will host the U-Lane-O/Selco Tournament. The four-team, double-elimination tournament will be held at Eugene's Civic Stadium and Lane and its participants will include Boise State, Humboldt State, and Lane.

## CHOKO

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three minutes en route to a 75-65 win over the Bruins.

As much as I don't like Duke, and as much as I didn't want the defending national champion to win Sunday, after the game I had to admit the Blue Devils deserved to win. They probably don't have as much physical talent as UCLA, but they make up for it in other areas.

Throughout the Duke-UCLA game I was periodically checking in to see how the Ducks were doing. At one point I even began to think the day might be salvaged, after all.

UCLA was up by five, and at a time when I just couldn't stand to listen any longer to Vitale's verbal imitation of fingernails being dragged across a blackboard, I switched on the radio and got a pleasant surprise.

Oregon was ahead by 10

points in the second half. A win would have been a big boost for the Ducks as they prepare to embark on a three-game road swing to end this dismal season.

Of course nothing of the sort happened, and Oregon — like UCLA — threw away a good chance at a victory.

Three for three. What a day.

*Jayson Jacoby is a sports reporter for the Emerald.*

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